

Town of North High Shoals

Jeff D. Thomas
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

108 Jefferson Road
P.O. Box 129
High Shoals, Georgia 30645
706-769-4289
Cell 706-202-8995

Minutes

January 14, 2008

Present: Councilmember Steve Holzman
Councilmember B.J. Ivie
Councilmember Fred Johnson
Councilmember Violet Dawe
Councilmember Eddie Cape

Others Present:

Heike Muller	1150 Falcon Ridge Dr.
Judy Cantrell	2371 Rays Church Road
Tara Clark	190 Shadyfield Lane
Curtis Clark	190 Shadyfield Lane
Tony Capamacchia	2320 Elder Road
Susan Marcantonio	2320 Elder Road
David Lawrence	175 Hillsboro road
Horst Klein	1150 Falcon Ridge Drive
Karl Berg	307 Jefferson Road
Ellyn Berg	307 Jefferson Road
Jim Luken	23 S. Main Watkinville
John R. Lauth	254 Gober Road
Gabriello Carlson	328 Jefferson Road
Felicia Kautz	180 Plantation Road
Victoria Presley	110 Frazier Hill Road
Jason Presley	110 Frazier Hill Road
Wesley Donegan	202 Plantation Road

Steve Tucker
John Westman
Alan Campbell
Johnny Pritchett

Swearing-In of Jeff Thomas, Steve Holzman, and Eddie Cape

Monthly Business:

1. Presentation of the Financial Statement for the month of December, 2007. Motion to approve: Councilman Ivie; Second by Councilman Cape. Four in Favor; One (Councilwomen Dawe) opposed.
2. Presentation of the December, 2007 Draft Minutes. Motion to approve with minor corrections: Councilman Johnson; Second by Councilman Ivie. All in Favor.

Old Business:

1. City Park:

- Motion made by Councilwomen Dawe to fill the well as soon as possible; second by Councilman Johnson. All in Favor.
- Council Member Ivie offered to get a couple of bids for cutting and mulching the entire area.
- Motion made by Councilman Johnson to purchase 10 more cubic yards of mulch; second by Councilman Holzman. Four in Favor; One (Councilwoman Dawe) opposed.
- Council approved a work session on Saturday at noon to prepare the area by the wooden fences for planting of bulbs. Council Member Dawe will recruit people with tillers to help.
- The Council approved an MLK Day of Service in the park at noon on Monday to plant the bulbs with members of the community.
- Council Member Holzman reported a high end estimate of \$6,500 for replacing the roof on the barn. One upper support is rotted and needs replaced and trees need to be removed for work to be done.

2. Law Enforcement Update:

- Mayor Thomas talked to Sheriff Berry and Mayor Thomas was not sure how the agreement for contracting deputies would be worked out. He then asked Council Member Dawe to take point on this item.

- Council Member Dawe reported that she had talked to Sheriff Berry also. She discovered that the job would be posted at the Sheriff's office and deputies could sign-up as they desired. The rate would be \$30/hour. Council Member Dawe will put together a resolution expressing the town's desire to the Sheriff, and the Mayor suggested a short (10 Minute) session to be called to pass it.

3. Street Improvements:

- Council Member Johnson asked that the road sign for Frazier Hill Rd. be replaced at the intersection of Frazier and Gober. He also raised community concerns about the status and signage of the closed road section of Frazier Hill Rd. The Mayor assured the town that Attorney Haygood has completed all steps to turn that section over to the adjacent property owners. Council Member Ivie said steps will be taken to secure the road such as a private drive sign and gate.
- Dickens Ln and Hillsboro intersection needs more work. Council Member Ivie will take point on this item.
- Council Member Cape asked the council to ok estimates for repairing the one sewage drainage line in his front yard; Cape contends that trucks associated with repairing Hillsboro Rd damaged his drainage field. The Council pointed out that he did not need our approval to get estimates.

4. HSES:

- NHS Representative to the Planning Commission Karl Berg commented that they are still waiting on DOT permit for off site work on Highway 186 which entails lowering all the underground utilities.

5. City Web Site:

- Council Member Steve Holzman proposed putting contact information for council members on the web site. He provided his contact information to fellow members and asked them to send their wishes.
- Council Member Johnson asked that all electronic versions the Mayor has of past minutes and agendas and the town's Charter be placed on the web site; the council agreed.
- Resident Heike Mueller asked for more information on the town be placed on the web site. She also wanted all public notices to be placed on the web site.
- All members reported that they have email addresses except Council Member Dawe.

6. Audit Report:

- Accountant Jerry Hawkins(from Winder) will bypass Briscoe, former town accountant, by having the Oconee State Bank regenerate all statements for the town going back seven years to complete past audits. Council Member Dawe raised concerns about getting this done, involving the Sheriff, and different forms.
- By February Mayor Thomas said the last 5 years of audits will be finished and then he will move on to complete 2001 and 2002. He wants to make sure everything is done by the time the town celebrates its 40th anniversary in March.

7. Noise:

- Mayor Thomas said that he would pursue the idea of disturbance of the peace to resolve noise problems.
- No mediation was conducted by Council Member Cape.

8. Lot Size Variance Request (Shadyfield Lane):

- Vickie Presley stated that she wants to be able to sell these lots and was asking the council to grant her a variance.
- In order for the Planning Department of Oconee County to look at the site, the council has to ask Oconee County Chair Melvin Davis to make the request for the Planning Dept to look into it.
- Council Members pointed out that one of the steps that have to be taken is for the area to be rezoned from an agricultural to a residential zone.
- Resident Steve Tucker pointed out problems with surveys and sizes of all lots on the road.
- Planning Rep. Karl Berg echoed the need for all lots to be surveyed.
- Mayor Thomas advised the Presleys to go to the Planning Commission to get all aspects straightened out. Council Members Dawe, Cape, & Holzman echoed that idea.
- Vickie Presley requested the item to be tabled another month.

9. Fire Department:

- Council Member Dawe reported a list of needs and wants from North High Shoals Fire Chief Jay Daniels. Several of the items focused on helping the volunteers stay fit and encouraging them to come to the fire station.
- A thermal imager was requested from the county.
- Council Member Dawe reported that there was a plan to make the tanking station at the river operational.

- Mayor Thomas reported that the town had budgeted \$5,000 for spending on the Fire Department this year. Captain Daniel has asked us to wait for his request after he has received answers from the County.
- Council Member Ivie stated that the Oconee County Fire Department had the #1 response rate in the state during the last quarter. He was especially impressed due to the heavy reliance on volunteers in the fire department.

10. Building Codes Enforcement:

- Mayor Thomas reported that the town would need to pass a resolution to contract with the county for code enforcement according to Alan Theriault. The Town would keep the permitting process in the Mayor's Office.
- Council Member Dawe reported two other options: hiring a private company to perform the inspections or hiring an individual to perform this job for the city. Council Members Cape and Holzman discussed liability under different plans.

New Business:

1. Resolution to Disband Town

- Council Member Cape stated that he would like to postpone this item in light of possible legislation from the state of Georgia. He has tried a couple times to contact Representative Smith, but was not able to talk to him about possible legislation on small town status, i.e. townships.
- Council Member Johnson said he was happy about the withdrawal and spoke about the overwhelming support for the town by its residents as seen in attendance at meetings and the numbers of people voting.
- Council Members Dawe and Holzman asked about the legislation on townships. Council Member Dawe said she talked to Representative Smith about this pending legislation, but said there does not seem to be much clout behind the idea.
- Resident Jeff Campbell of Hickory Ridge asked that the council hear from Mayor Jim Luken of Watkinsville before it moved on to another subject. Mayor Luken made a very positive statement about the town and small towns around Georgia. He said small towns are doing well and local government is very important.

2. Budget Amendment

- We budgeted \$1,300 for the election; we exceeded the budget by \$576.37. A transfer of \$576.37 from the contingency fund was needed to the election account of \$576.37. Motion was made by Council Member Johnson and then seconded.
- No more expenditures will be made concerning the past election. It is completed as far as the town is concerned.
- Motion passed to move \$576.37 from the contingency account to the election account. Passed 5-0.

3. Mayor Pro-Tem

- Council Member Johnson made a motion for Violet Dawe to be the Mayor Pro-Tem and Council Member Steve Holzman seconded the motion. Passed 4-1(Council Member Cape voted no.)

4. Robert's Rules of Order

- Council Member Johnson suggested that the council consider having a written set of rules for running the council meetings in the future. An example from the city of Madison was provided.
- Council Member Cape motioned that the council adopt the complete Robert's Rules of Order. No second was made.
- The item was assigned to a work session.

5. Agenda Reformat, Posting, and Organizational Chart

- Council Member Johnson made a motion to have the agenda placed into the hands of Council Member Holzman and people contribute to the agenda directly to him or through the clerk or mayor to Council Member Holzman by the Town's deadline for agenda items.
- Motion seconded by Council Member Dawe. The council passed the resolution 3-2 with Cape and Ivie voting against it.

6. Election Board

- Council Member Johnson asked the council to consider designing an election board to help run future elections by answering questions of the election superintendent and making decisions.
- The item was assigned to the work session.

7. Advertising for an Election Superintendent

- Council Member Johnson asked the council to start thinking about the pending election now that the last one was over and consider advertising for the position of election superintendent.

- Council Member Cape objected saying we already had one.
- Mayor Thomas suggested that the council develop the idea of an election board and involve them in the advertising and hiring of an election superintendent.
- Mayor Thomas suggested the election board be discussed at a work session before the next meeting.

8. Hiring a Town Attorney

- Council Member Johnson stated that the town needed legal representation and suggested we contract with Lawyer Joe Reitman of Madison.
- The council decided to add this item to the work session and invite other members to bring their suggestions forward so that we could be prepared to act on hiring at the next meeting.

9. Computer Purchase

- Council Member Johnson suggested that the council needs to think about placing computer equipment on next years budget because we have been relying on the Mayor's computers and will lose their use when the Mayor resigns this year.
- Mayor Thomas pointed out that the Town's computer died 3 years ago.

10. Meeting Day

- Council Member Johnson pointed out some conflicts with our meeting date and asked the council to think about the possibility of changing it.
- Mayor Thomas added the item to our work session.

11. Recording of Meeting and Organization and Writing of Minutes

- Council Member Johnson offered to take over the recording of minutes from the clerk as the Mayor had done in the past when we did not have a clerk. The purpose of this would be to free up the clerk's time to hold office hours for the town during the day.
- Mayor Thomas told the council that we are required by law to have a clerk present at each council meeting. As a result the request was dropped.
- Mayor Thomas suggested this might be something we look at the work session.

12. City of Ethics Proposal

- Council Member Johnson asked the council to consider passing a resolution from the Georgia Municipality Association concerning the ethics of government officials and distributed information about this.

- Mayor Thomas added the item to the work session and suggested that council members will learn more about this during their training in February.

13. Election Challenge Report

- Superintendent of Elections Sandy Brooks reported that both challenges made by the election superintendent were denied.
- Council Members Johnson and Holzman repeatedly asked if this meant events associated with the election were over, and Clerk Brooks and Mayor Thomas said all was finished and no further action would be taken by the town.

14. Business Licenses

- Mayor Thomas explained business licenses. He asked the council to think about who we want to give these to and perhaps writing formal rules for them.
- Dr. John Lauth was granted a license to conduct water quality analysis. Motion was made by Council Member Ivie and seconded by Council Member Dawe to grant the license; vote was 5-0 in favor of the motion.

Mayor's Update and Agenda Requests

1. Aside from Old Business, no new items were requested for the agenda
2. The council set a work session for January 29th from 7-9 pm.
3. Motion was made by Councilmember Johnson to adjourn the regular session meeting; Second by Councilman Ivie for the purpose of an executive session to discuss personnel matters/conduct. Council members went into an Executive Session.
4. Council returned to regular scheduled session for the purpose of concluding/adjourning the meeting. Councilman Cape made a motion to adjourn; Second by Councilman Johnson. All present were in favor.