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HIGH SHOALS, GA 30645

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MAYOR TOBY P. BRADBERRY

POST 1: ERIC CARLSON

POST 2: JASON PRESLEY

POST 3: ANN EVANS

POST 4: HILDA KURTZ

POST 5: VIOLET DAWE

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**TOWN OF NORTH HIGH SHOALS, GEORGIA**  
**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING\***  
**April 20, 2020**

Council Present: Ann Evans, Violet Dawe (through telephone), Hilda Kurtz, Jason Presley, Eric Carlson

Council Members Absent: Toby Bradberry

Guests: Bruce Thaxton, Oconee County Fire Department

Call to Order

Greetings and Declaration of Quorum

- Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:30pm and declared a quorum.

Agenda Setting

- Council Member Evans made a motion to move Bruce Thaxton with the Oconee County Fire Department to Citizen Comments. Council Member Kurtz seconded the motion and it passed with no objection.

Presentation of Draft Minutes from March 16, 2020

- Council Member Kurtz noted a typo under Item 1 and Council Member Evans noted a few other typos throughout the document (no typos mentioned specifically).
- Council Member Kurtz made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting on March 16, 2020 with the stated corrections. Council Member Evans seconded the motion and it passed with no objections.

Presentation of Financial Statement

- Clerk Wilson explained to Council that the money market and the SPLOST09 accounts went dormant during the month of March meaning the accounts had no deposits or withdrawals. Once an account goes dormant it no longer earns interest. Discussion followed about whether to switch banks. Council Member Dawe recommended checking Synovus, 1<sup>st</sup> American Bank & Trust, and Robins Federal Credit Union.
- On the expenses side, Clerk Wilson informed Council that they would have to move money into the Newspaper account to cover the budget ads that need to be placed. She recommended moving money from the Public Safety fund.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson asked for an update on the projected shortfall from the 2015 SPLOST account. Clerk Wilson stated she had no new information and Council Member Dawe reminded everyone that the shortfall was likely to increase because of the COVID-19 restrictions.
- Clerk Wilson reminded Council that they had only spent \$72,000 of the budgeted \$120,000 for FY20 but had taken in \$118,000 in revenue.
- Council Member Evans made a motion to accept the Financial Statement. Council Member Presley seconded the motion and it passed with no objections.

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#### Citizen Comments on Non-agenda Items

- Bruce Thaxton from the Oconee Fire Department addressed Council regarding potential SPLOST 2021 funding for new fire equipment including a set of battery operated jaws of life to replace a current set operated by hydraulic fluid and station furniture. The total request amounts to \$43,000. Chief Thaxton explained that the fire department is asking each town/city in Oconee county that has a fire station in the boundaries to help purchase the new equipment for their respective stations.
  - Council Member Dawe asked what will happen to the existing sets of jaws of life. Chief Thaxton replied the county would likely keep two of the existing sets as backup and surplus the remaining five.
  - Clerk Wilson asked what the lifespan was for the set of jaws they wanted to purchase. Chief Thaxton replied 20-25 years.
  - Chief Thaxton informed Council that the new jaws sets come with back up batteries and a power cord to plug into a generator if the batteries fail.
  - Council Member Dawe requested a written proposal about the jaws. She also asked for further details about the station furniture. Chief Thaxton said they would like to purchase new tables and recliner chairs for station 6.
  - Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson asked if any other towns had committed yet and Chief Thaxton said no not yet.
  - Chief Thaxton indicated they would like to buy all seven sets at once, ideally in the first year of the SPLOST funding so all fire staff can be trained at once.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### **Item 1—Landscape Bid for Community Center and Town Park**

Clerk Wilson informed Council that the Town has received one bid thus far. She reminded Council the ad for the bid will run in the paper every week until May 7<sup>th</sup> and the bids are due by May 11<sup>th</sup>. Council Member Dawe asked for confirmation that the bid contained language specifying the winning company participate in e-verify and Clerk Wilson replied it did. Council Member Evans wanted to know how long Butler will continue to care for the lawn and Clerk Wilson responded through the month of May.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### **Item 2—FY21 Budget discussion**

To aid Mayor Bradberry in planning the FY21 budget, Clerk Wilson asked Council if they had any areas of concern that they would like addressed in next year's budget. Council Member Dawe listed roads and ditches as a major concern. She also listed expenses related to the open house and possible new park equipment. Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson listed expenses related to the new Community Center. Council Member Evans asked if we would be discussing the new SPLOST categories at the next council meeting as well.

Council Member Dawe asked about money for a sidewalk connecting the event door of the Community Center to the parking lot and the flagpole. Clerk Wilson reminded Council the money for that project was coming out of

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SPLOST during the current budget cycle. Council Member Kurtz suggested improving the basketball goals. Council Member Dawe recommended a drainage study before making improvements to the park.

Discussion followed about the process and timeline for deciding categories for the next round of SPLOST. Council Member Dawe reminded Council that the categories for the town had to be decided before the public voted to approve SPLOST. Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson asked Clerk Wilson to get information on when Council needed to submit their categories to Oconee County.

### **Item 3—Reallocation of Funds**

Council Member Kurtz made a motion to move \$200 from the Public Safety line item to the Newspaper line item to cover the required advertising for the FY21 budget. Council Member Evans seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Item 4—Oconee State Bank**

Council Member Evans and Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson agreed that the Town should look for a new financial institution. Clerk Wilson asked if Council was interested in diversifying and if they wanted to continue to carry such a large amount in the Town's primary checking account. Council Member Kurtz asked if the Georgia Municipal Association could provide recommendations and Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson agreed to investigate it. Council Member Evans said she would check with other local towns to see who they used. Council Member Dawe reminded Council to check with Woodman of the World. Discussion followed about interest rates on different types of accounts. Clerk Wilson will call around to local banks and report back next month.

Clerk Wilson asked Council if anyone knew what was in the safety deposit box at Oconee State Bank. Council Member Dawe thinks a copy of the Town Charter is in there along with some other documents.

### **Item 5—Erosion along Plantation Road and Speedway**

Council Member Dawe is concerned about the intersection of Plantation Road and Speedway and the edge along Plantation Road. She would like to investigate options to smooth out the drop off between the edge of the road and the grass. Discussion followed about the best way to fix the problem and how to pay for it. Council Member Dawe recommended contracting with a private company over the county.

Discussion moved on to possibly paving the parking lot at the Community Center. Council Member Dawe recalled the reason it was not paved was because it was too expensive. Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson remembered that to avoid putting in a retention pond, the lot would have to be paved with pervious concrete and both those options were quite expensive. Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson asked Clerk Wilson to investigate options for paving and drainage and recommended moving the discussion to the next meeting.

### **Item 6—COVID-19**

Council Member Evans remarked that she thought the Town's policies to keep people off the playground equipment were working. It was also good to have information posted on the Town's website. She asked when the electronic sign would be working. Clerk Wilson informed Council that Georgia Power wanted to add a second commercial meter to Community Center which would result in a minimum \$30-40 monthly charge to operate a \$5 per month

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sign. Morgan (building inspector) put a stop to Georgia Power. The plan is to verify there is an existing wire from the sign into the building.

Clerk Wilson inform Council the Town's new pest control company (Wolf Creek Pest Control) is licensed to disinfect indoor and outdoor spaces. Council Member Kurtz asked Clerk Wilson to get a price on cleaning the playground equipment and a list of what chemicals would be used. Depending on cost, Council Member Kurtz suggested a regular cleaning to disinfect the interior spaces.

Discussion followed about future COVID-19 safety requirements. If people in the future will be required to wear a mask inside a government facility, should the Town supply them? Clerk Wilson informed Council that the Town's new mailbox was ordered. It will allow people to drop things off without having to come inside the building.

Council Member Kurtz asked if there was anything else the Town could be doing to help people. Last month a possible book swap in the Town Park was discussed. Council agreed that, with the information we now know about COVID-19, a book swap is not a good idea. Clerk Wilson mentioned several communities are giving gift cards. Council Member Dawe asked if any members of the community were experiencing hardships. Discussion followed about appropriate ways the Council could support the community. Clerk Wilson asked if the Council would like to put positive messages on the new electronic sign. Clerk Wilson will send out potential messages for Council to approve.

**Item 7—Oconee County Mitigation Plan**—Item moved to next month

## **MAYOR'S UPDATE**

### **Item 8—New Shed**

Clerk Wilson asked Council if they knew anyone who could help move boxes into the new shed. Mayor Pro-Tem Carlson said his son might be interested. She informed Council Toby had a key to the shed and the spare key was in the Clerk's desk.

### **Item 9—New Pest Control Company**

Clerk Wilson informed Council the new pest control company was Wolf Creek Pest Control. Last week the company put termite traps around the building. Council Member Dawe requested a copy of Wolf Creek's insurance certificate. The new company costs \$740 for the first year with quarterly inspections. Next year the price drops to \$600.

### **Item 10—Gift in memory of Mayor Bradberry's Uncle**

Council discussed an appropriate gift in memory of Toby's uncle that passed away. Ideas included flowers and a donation to the family's charity of choice.

### **Item 11—Additional Security for Council Surface Pro Tablets**

Council Member Presley will investigate prices and options for additional tablet security.

### **Item 12—Census**

Council Member Dawe asked if everyone had received their census information. She asked if census information could be put on the website. Council Member Kurtz seconded that idea.

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Council Member Evans made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Presley seconded the motion and it passed without objection. The meeting ended at approximately 9:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laura Wilson  
Clerk, North High Shoals

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