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**HIGH SPRINGS
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2023
CITY HALL**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor James called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL CITY COMMISSION:

Mayor Gloria James – Present
Vice Mayor Ross Ambrose – Present
Commissioner Tristan Grunder- Present
Commissioner Katherine Weitz- Present
Commissioner Byran Williams- Present

STAFF PRESENT:

Ashley Stathatos, City Manager
Angela Stone, City Clerk
Jami Echeverri, Assistant City Clerk
Scott Walker, City Attorney
Kevin Mangan, PIO
Antoine Sheppard, Chief of Police
Thomas Henry, Public Works Director
Kevin Pearson, Fire Captain.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation by Jacob Newton

Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

**Motion Vice Mayor Ambrose to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Grunder second.
Motion carried 5-0.**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

Motion Commissioner Williams to approve the Consent Agenda from October 26, 2023, meeting.

Commissioner Weitz Second.

Motion carried 5-0.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

PRESENTATION OF PAINTING BY TINA CORBETT

Miss Tina Corbett gave an explanation of the inspiration and concept of a painting she presented to the High Springs Commission. The painting consisted of a classic tobacco farm that would have been in historic High Springs.

PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE TO ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER BRUCE GILLINGHAM

Mayor James and Captain Pearson presented exiting Assistant City Manager Gillingham with two plaques honoring his tenure and service to the City of High Springs as both Fire Chief and Assistant City Manager.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH REDSPEED, FLORIDA, LLC FOR ABTRAFFIC SAFETY CAMERA PROGRAM IN THE SCHOOL ZONE.

Chief Sheppard gave a presentation and explanation of the proposed project agreement. Commissioner Weitz motioned to approve the professional services agreement with Red Speed Florida LLC.

Commissioner Grunder second

Motion Carried 5-0

RE-ORGANIZATION

MAYOR JAMES ADJOURNS THE 2022/2023 CITY COMMISSION

Vice Mayor Ambrose motioned to adjourn the 2022/2023 City Commission.

Commissioner Williams second

Mayor Gloria James adjourned the 2022/2023 High Springs City Commission at 6:42pm

City Manager Stathatos presented exiting Mayor Gloria James with a plaque to commemorate her service as mayor for 2022/2023

COMMISSION COMMENTS

CITY CLERK ADMINISTERS OATH OF OFFICE TO:

City Clerk Stone swore in Commissioner Elect Andrew Miller

COMMISSIONER ANDREW MILLER ASSUMED HIS COMMISSION SEAT

City Clerk Stone swore in Commissioner Elect Steven Tapanes

COMMISSIONER STEVEN TAPANES ASSUMED HIS COMMISSION SEAT

CITY MANAGER CALLS TO ORDER THE 2023/2024 CITY COMMISSION.

City Manager Stathatos called the 2023/2024 High Springs City Commission to order at 6:47PM on November 16, 2023

ROLL CALL BY CITY CLERK OF THE 2023/2024 CITY COMMISSION.

Roll Call:

Commissioner Andrew Miller – present
Commissioner Katherine Weitz - present
Commissioner Steve Tapanes - present
Commissioner Tristan Grunder – present
Commissioner Byran Williams - present

CITY MANAGER ACCEPTS NOMINATIONS AND ELECTS MAYOR.

Commissioner Grunder Nominated Commissioner Weitz as Mayor
Commissioner Tapanes seconded
All in favor 5-0

MAYOR ASSUMES CHAIR.

Newly Elected Mayor Katherine Weitz assumed her seat as Mayor.

MAYOR ACCEPT NOMINATIONS AND ELECT VICE-MAYOR.

Commissioner Tapanes Nominated Commissioner Grunder as Mayor
Commissioner Williams seconded
All in favor 5-0

NEW ELECTED COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Miller thanked the citizens of High Springs for their support.
Commissioner Tapanes thanked the citizens of High Springs for their support.

**CITIZEN REQUESTS AND COMMENTS – FOR ISSUES NOT ON AGENDA (PLEASE
STATE NAME FOR THE RECORD – LIMIT COMMENTS TO 5 MINUTES)**

Diane Sheep – asked to consider turning the area beside the post office into a park dedicated to teachers. In particular, honoring Tom Deideman and Essie Gasset. She presented the Commission with photographs of the proposed space.
Commissioner Weitz asked if this is something CRA Funds could be utilized for.
City Manager Stathatos stated she was currently working an appropriations grant to acquire a new police station that will utilize a portion of this property.

Sandy Gardener – had her water recently tested by the county and has a black substance in her faucets. She is concerned about the quality of the water and would like the City to address this.

Mayor Weitz requested to hear from someone in the Public Works department. Jason Kytle with the water department presented official findings from water testing the city performed on Ms. Gardner's home. Commissioner Tapanes requested clarification on the cause. Mr. Kytle explained the water flow is too low. Mayor Weitz questioned if the next step would be for City staff to coordinate with the homeowners to address the concern.

Don Alderman and Brad Riddle elaborated to the commission on why Ms. Gardner's pipes could be causing the contamination.

Rick Testa – presented the commission with a drawn diagram. He spoke of conflicts of interest and avoiding them when in a public position.

COMMISSIONER RESPONSE

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON APPOINTING CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR TO THE CRA BOARD.

Vice Mayor Grunder Nominated Commissioner Miller as chair of the CRA board
Commissioner Williams Second.
5-0

Vice Mayor Grunder Nominated Commissioner Tapanes as Vice Chair of the CRA board.
Commissioner Miller Second.
5-0

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON APPOINTING/REAPPOINTING MEMBERS TO VARIOUS CITY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES.

Attorney Walker explained the various board positions opened and the applicants for them.

Commissioner Williams motioned to renew plan board applicant Brad Riddle's seat on the Plan Board
Commissioner Tapanes second
Carried 5-0

Commissioner Tapanes questioned if the decision could be delayed. City Attorney Walker advised you could, but it would result in tie votes as it would be a non-vote resulting in an incomplete advisory board.

**Commissioner Miller motioned to appoint Rick. Testa to the open Plan Board position.
Second commissioner Tapanes
Motion carried 5-0**

Parks Advisory Board:

Mr. Jeffery Dobbertein currently on the Parks advisory board requested to be reappointed to his position.

Commissioner Byran Williams motioned to re-appoint Mr. Dobbertein to the Parks' Advisory Board.

Vice Mayor Grunder Second
Motion Carried 5-0

Vice Mayor Grunder motioned to appoint alternate member James Amato to the remaining vacant Parks Advisory Board.

Commissioner Williams second
5-0

Former Mayor Gloria James advised the commission that they would need to appoint someone to the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization prior to the Organization's meeting in December.

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON AUTHORIZING THE FOLLOWING PERSONNEL TO SIGN CHECKS AND INVESTMENT DOCUMENTS IN COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 2-97 OF THE HIGH SPRINGS CODE OF ORDINANCES: MAYOR, VICE MAYOR, CITY MANAGER AND CITY CLERK

Commissioner Williams Motioned to allow Mayor Katherine Weitz, Vice Mayor Tristan Grunder, City Clerk Angela Stone, and City Manager Ashley Stathatos to sign checks.

Commissioner Tapanes Second.
Motion Carried 5-0

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON FY 2022 CITY AUDIT (JAMES MOORE & CO.).

Finance Director Wilson Advised the presenting auditor was unable to make it last minute and requested both audits be tabled until the Nov 28th, 2023, Commission Meeting.
Mayor Weitz tabled the audits until November 28th.

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON FY 2022 CRA AUDIT (JAMES MOORE & CO.). - Tabled

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON FY 2024 RATES

- A. WATER**
- B. SEWER**
- C. SOLID WASTE RATES**

Attorney Walker Read Resolution 2023-14 by title only.

Finance Director Wilson gave a presentation on potential rate increases, the reason for them, and why they are necessary. She gave an overview of how various utility accounts and fees are collected and utilized.

City manager Stathatos explained the reason an increase was not recommended sooner was due to the expectation of the AMI system to be implemented before now.

Commissioner Weitz questioned paying on the meter program when we have no completed project.

Attorney Walker advised it would be a good idea to re-evaluate the contract regarding the AMI meters.

Sandy Gardner – is unhappy with the potential rate increases and the effect they would have on citizens.

Donald Alderman – is concerned with the waste pickup contract and believes the City is owed reimbursement.

Brad Riddle – Commended Staff Wilson on her information. Would be interested in how lost water revenue could compensate for the budget concern. Offered his own services to assist wherever he could with his professional background.

Bob Jones – remembers a different budget conversation and is displeased with it now being backtracked.

Commissioner Tapanes would like a tour of the water treatment plants so he can see everything with his own eyes.

Charles Reshard – concerned about the water quality in High Springs. Would like clarification on the difference and need for both water and sewer fees when water is used in the sewer.

Miller motioned to table discussion until the next meeting date.

Commissioner Williams requested a special meeting to discuss the rates.

Commissioner Tapanes requested to discuss rates at the December meeting.

Commissioner Tapanes seconded the motion to table discussion until next meeting.

Motion carried 5-0

**DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON A TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT
WITH THE CINNAMON HILL'S ESTATE HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION.**

Chief Sheppard explained the proposed contract and the benefits to the city staff as well as the homeowners of the neighborhood.

Vice Mayor Grunder motioned to accept the agreement with Cinnamon Hills

Commissioner Miller second

5-0

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON REQUEST OF DUKE ENERGY FOR FIVE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION SPACES.

City Manager Stathatos gave an explanation of the proposed project and stated staff has not recommended approval but also not recommending non-approval just wanted the commission to have the information and the presentation.

**Commissioner Miller motioned not to approve the site plan for Duke Energy Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
Commissioner Grunder Seconded.
5-0**

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT/UPDATE

Invited the Commission and Staff to Ethics training held by their firm on December 6th 2023 all are invited to attend.

CITY MANAGER REPORT/UPDATE

3mil appropriation grant for a new Police Station.

Captain Kevin Pearson and Chief Vogel will be assisting the fire department in the interim while a Chief is selected.

Would like direction on the Priest as there is a new commission. 1,040,000 grant funds would be used for the renovation of the Priest Theater and no matching funds would be required and she has such in writing.

(Mayor Weitz Would like to see the appraisal and structural data for the Priest Theater)

COMMISSION COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Commissioner Miller thanked everyone for coming out and bearing with them and thanked staff.

Commissioner Tapanes thanked staff Wilson for her presentation and would like to see what can be done to put us on the right path.

Commissioner Williams Congratulations to the new commissioners and that he looks forward to working with them (Commissioner Williams left the chambers at 9:36)

MAYOR'S COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Mayor Weitz Congratulations to the new commissioners and commended her appreciation to public works staff on their quick responses to questions.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Commissioner Grunder motioned to adjourn.

Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9:37pm.