

This week will have been replete with meetings. The pace of community meetings and gatherings will pick up even more as we head toward fall.

On Wednesday, the Mirror Lake Improvement Association had a meeting concerning the Mirror Lake Dredging Project. It was held at the Highlands Community Building. A panel discussion of stakeholders took place, followed by a Q&A session. Representatives for the association, River Sand, the town, and McGill Engineering were a part of the discussion.

On Thursday night, the Highlands Town Board of Commissioners will meet, starting with a workshop session at 6 pm, followed by the monthly business meeting. Both meetings will be at the Highlands Community Building next to the ball field.

First on the agenda for the workshop will be the Playhouse Building. Folks who have any ideas about saving the building, or how it could be used, or how the property could be repurposed, can share their thoughts with the board members. The format will be a discussion and listening session. No final decision will be made at the workshop session, and the playhouse will not be on the agenda at 7 pm business meeting.

If there is time left during the workshop, I will present my concerns about communication lines that fall in storms and other events and remain down on public right-of-ways for extended periods after the storms. Some communication lines have remained down in the right-of-way on Hick Road just outside of Highlands for now, eleven months after Hurricane Helene. I believe these lines should have been reattached to the utility poles from whence they fell in a timely manner. I do not want such a situation to happen within the town limits.

At the business meeting, the board will review several items. First, I will lead a discussion and review of how the board should respond to a resignation of a board member. This discussion will have no impact on the current vacancy, where there was a period exceeding ninety days that allowed the remaining term to be decided by voters on the November ballot. But, if there is a vacancy in the future where there is a year or a year and a half before the next municipal election, how does the board fill that empty seat? Several options and items may need to be considered.

The alcohol policy for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks event will also be on the agenda. At the last meeting, the board had a spirited discussion on whether to change the policy and allow alcohol in the park on the fourth. After reflection and further discussion with staff and the police, I believe we should allow alcohol on the fourth just like we do during concerts in the park on summer Saturday nights.

In a related matter, Mountain Top Rotary will be asking the board to extend the period during which they can sell wine and beer during the art show that they sponsor in the park. The club wants to add one hour to the period on Saturday afternoon.

The board will also review the audit of the Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Visit Highlands at this meeting. There have been questions among board members and residents about how TDA funds are allocated and spent, especially in recent years. The audit should shed new light and provide additional on this issue.

The board will also receive a request from the chamber concerning a Heritage Day Event in the park. This event is in conjunction with the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Highlands.

Finally, I will be holding my monthly Community Coffee with the Mayor on Friday at 11 am at the Hudson Library. I will continue the conversation about the playhouse and address the issues the board discussed at their meeting. Also, this coffee will be a good by event for Carlyn Morenus, the director of the library. Carlyn will be retiring on Friday. I will ask her to reflect on her service for over 7 years as the director. Her leadership will be missed. We all wish her the best in retirement.