Thursday, February 20, will be the town board workshop at 6 pm, followed by the business meeting at 7 pm. Both meetings are at the Highlands Community Building adjacent to the ball field. Both sessions can be viewed remotely by going to the town website, which will have a meeting access portal.

At the 6 pm workshop, the board will hear an update from Tom Neal concerning the hospital, followed by an update on the electric grid by Lamar Nix. The staff will also share with the board information from the state concerning subdivision on-site septic requirements.

The first item on the 7 pm business meeting will be a public hearing concerning Parkside Partners B-1 Conditional Zoning Request. The request is to allow residential units to be built on the property at the corner of Maple and Oak Streets. The Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Board have reviewed the plans and have made favorable recommendations.

The board will also hear an update from Hotwire Communications concerning their progress in building the underground portions of the town fiber network. They will also share a plan with the board to provide visitors with free Wi-Fi in the downtown area.

The board will also hear a Town of Highlands Mobile App proposal. Tyler Trantham of MOCV will make the presentation. I want us to move forward with providing a town app without delay.

Kaye McHan of the chamber will make a presentation on replacing the current downtown Christmas wreath decorations. The decorations were purchased 10 years ago, and the central part of the wreaths, red plastic lanterns, is now fading to a faint pink.

The chamber will also make an event request. They are asking to add an additional concert in the park in May. The concert would be set up and staged like all the concerts they sponsor during the summer and fall.

We will also be reviewing the terms of the chamber building lease again. Maybe this is the time to reach a compromise and move forward.

The board will also hear a request from the Highlands and Mountain Top Rotary Clubs to install an international peace pole on town property. Rotary International has been supporting this initiative with several thousand peace poles installed worldwide.

The board reviewed the outdoor recreation use policies at a previous workshop. Lester Norris will present the amendments that were suggested at that workshop.

Lamar Nix will present the progress of building an electrical distribution line on US 64. This line will provide a second feed from Duke to the town. Lamar will seek approval of a low bid to allow work to begin on the line as soon as possible.

Chief Holland will ask the board for a budget amendment to purchase a new police cruiser. An area police department ordered the cruiser from a dealership and decided not to purchase it. Our department was planning to purchase the same vehicle in the upcoming budget year. If the town purchases this one, the dealer will give the town a $13,000 discount. It is a good deal that we should accept.

Hope to see you at the meeting, or join us remotely.