

**TOWN OF HIGHLANDS  
GRINDER PUMP POLICY  
HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY BUILDING  
NOVEMBER 17, 2010  
4 PM**

Present: Mayor David Wilkes, Mayor Pro Tempore Amy Patterson, Commissioners Gary Drake, Dennis DeWolf, John Dotson and Larry Rogers

Staff Present: Town Manager Jim Fatland, Public Services Director Lamar Nix and Town Attorney Bill Coward

Others Present: Jessica Martin, McGill Associates

**Call to Order**

Mayor David Wilkes called the meeting to order at 4PM

Mayor Wilkes called upon Lamar Nix, P.E., to introduce the proposed grinder pump policy discussion. Nix discussed the problem and presented an overview. He reported that if the Town obtains the permits for the installation of grinder pumps on low pressure sewer systems, the State of North Carolina mandates that the Town own and maintain. Nix stated that Nexi Place would be a situation that would have required Town ownership if the State had allowed us to proceed under the Mirror Lake Sewer Improvement Project. He stated that the dilemma develops when a property owner who installed their own pump requests service from the Town for maintenance. Nix said a policy is needed to address both situations.

Nix called upon Jessica Martin to go through the proposed policy and maintenance agreement for grinder pumps. During the discussion, Martin stated that the Town Attorney had suggested that the grinder pump policy be part of an ordinance. She also reported that some agencies adopt policies. Town Attorney Bill Coward said he would prefer an ordinance be adopted in our Utilities Section of Town Ordinances.

Nix also talked about those residential owners who enter into a maintenance agreement, Town employees would respond to courtesy calls to check on grinder pumps to ensure they are in good order prior to homeowners arriving. Commissioner Drake thought a fee should be imposed similar to what plumbers would charge. Other Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Patterson wanted a clarification on mandatory and voluntary. Nix stated that those grinder pumps on low pressure sewer systems installed by Town with permit from State would be mandatory and all others (new and currently installed) by homeowners would be voluntary.

Nix also shared with the Board that he was reluctant to have the Town absorb all the costs associated with grinder pumps until we had a history of maintaining. He thought the maintenance agreements where the homeowners reimburse the Town for actual costs incurred would generate that financial information.

By consensus, the Town Board requested that the grinder pump ordinance and maintenance agreement be placed on next Town Board for continued discussion.

Seeing no further questions, the Mayor adjourned the work session at 5:12 PM.

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David Wilkes,  
Mayor

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Jim Fatland,  
Town Clerk