

**Town of Montreat
Bridge Committee
Organizational Meeting
April 19, 2016
Town Services Building**

Board members present: Dan Dean
Lee Lancaster
Alice Lentz
Jan McRae
Commissioner Kent Otto

Board members absent: Bob Cunningham
Tyler Smith

Town staff present: Ron Nalley, Town Administrator
Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Thirteen members of the public were present. Mrs. Lentz, acting as convening chair, called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m., and led the group in a moment of silence.

Agenda Approval

After reviewing the agenda, Mr. Dan Dean moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Ms. Lancaster seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Old Business

There were no matters under Old Business scheduled for discussion.

New Business

A. Procedural Matters

- Mr. Dean moved to elect Mrs. Lentz as Chair of the Montreat Bridge Committee. Ms. McRae seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mrs. Lentz moved to elect Mr. Dean as Vice-Chair. Ms. Lancaster moved to elect herself as Vice-Chair and after a vote of committee members present Mr. Dean was elected unanimously 5/0.
- Chairwoman Lentz asked if anyone had any questions or concerns about the Rules and Procedures. Vice-Chair Dean would like the word "Board" changed to "Committee." Vice-Chair Dean would also like to see a second for every motion. Ms. McRae moved to adopt the Rules and Procedures as amended. Vice-Chair Dean seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

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- Chairwoman Lentz felt that the time of the meetings needed to be adjusted to a later time to accommodate two of the other Committee Members. After a brief discussion of changing the time to 5:00 p.m. on May 3rd, May 17th and May 31st, Ms. Lancaster moved to adopt the meeting dates and times as amended. Vice-Chair Dean seconded and the schedule was approved 5/0. Chairwoman Lentz stated that she feels it's important to keep the three meetings in place to give ample time for public comment and to be able to report back to the Board of Commissioners by the June deadline.
- Town Clerk Angie Murphy administered the Oath of Office for Commissioner Kent Otto, Chairwoman Lentz, Vice-Chair Dean, Ms. Lancaster and Ms. McRae.

Mr. Nalley advised the group that they are an official committee of the Town of Montreat. He reminded the group that everything they do as a committee is public record and advised them to utilize their bridge committee emails for any correspondence. Mr. Nalley also advised the group of the Open Meetings Laws and the importance of abiding by it. Chairwoman Lentz thanked Mr. Nalley for his guidance.

- B. Purpose of Committee: Commissioner Kent Otto thanked the members of the Committee for giving their time to serving the Town of Montreat. Commissioner Otto referenced his motion from the March 10th, 2016 Town Council Meeting in which he requested Mayor Helms to appoint a committee to investigate the need for a bridge, the type of bridge, whether vehicular or walking, and report back to Council by June. He charged the group to be open-minded in their deliberations and to do what is best for the Town as a whole.
- C. Brainstorming Session: Chairwoman Lentz expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate with a collection of community citizens to fulfill the duties placed before them by Mayor Helms and Commissioner Otto. Chairwoman Lentz and Vice Chair Dean expect the Montreat Bridge Committee will undertake its work with optimism and creativity and that they will stay focused on a positive future. The Bridge Committee will welcome as many comments from community colleagues as they are able to accommodate. Chairwoman Lentz's aspiration for the Montreat Bridge Committee is that they fulfill their goal by June such that the Committee's work is viewed as a true effort to learn the will of the people by being open and transparent and that some consensus might be reached to propel the Montreat community forward. Vice Chair Dean echoes the same thoughts but also emphasizes the importance of listening to everyone and go into all decisions with an open mind and no pre-conceived notions in place. He would like to see one meeting devoted specifically to listening to the public. Ms. Lancaster mentioned that she would like to hear from Police Chief Staggs as well as representatives from the College and the Conference Center. Ms. McRae hopes to come to a peaceful solution that reflects the spirit of Montreat. Commissioner Otto wants the Committee to dig a little bit deeper to "bridge" some of the divisions currently held in the community. Chairwoman Lentz read a prepared statement from Mr. Cunningham which stated that they start

with a blank slate and optimism to seek consensus of the community and make the best choice for the Town as a whole.

- D. Goals and Objectives: Chairwoman Lentz led a brief discussion in how the Montreat Bridge Committee will meet their goal. It was decided that the May 3rd meeting would be devoted to hearing from the public and the May 17th meeting would be more technical in nature with representatives from Town Staff, KCI, Montreat College and Montreat Conference Center in attendance. Chairwoman Lentz also suggested using an online survey to gather community input.

Public Comments

Shannon Ingersoll of 124 Eastminster Terrace, asked if the technical experts would provide new information or a reiteration of previous information. Mr. Nalley advised that it would likely be background information on the project.

John Hinkle of 121 Mecklenburg Circle, thanked everyone on the committee for their willingness to serve and was encouraged by the number of people from the public who had shown up for the meeting.

Rusty Frank of 205 Harmony Lane, described the safety issues with the current bridge and questioned whether Texas Road Bridge could be turned into a walking bridge due to the stage of deterioration.

Emory Underwood of 120 John Knox Road, suggested building a vehicular bridge a little further upstream which could have the potential of changing the height and width. Mr. Underwood also mentioned that perhaps it could be a one-way thoroughfare rather than two lanes.

Grace Nichols of 527 Suwannee Drive, suggested input from Montreat Conference Center and Montreat College as well as hearing from Police Chief Staggs with regards to safety.

Anne Straughan of 122 Eastminster Terrace, asked if the public could email committee members with comments and concerns and was told by Chairwoman Lentz that all forms of comments would be welcomed.

Bill Seaman of 425 Appalachian Way, posed the question of what would have been decided if it had been the Lookout Bridge that needed repair since the Lookout Bridge is the main thoroughfare. Mr. Seaman likes the idea of both the public and technical comment period and he suggested that the committee read the Bridge documents found on the Town's website in their entirety to make sure they are well versed on all the work that has been completed thus far.

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Gordon Neville of 226 Alabama Terrace, expressed appreciation toward the openness that he now senses in the community.

Anne Straughan of 122 Eastminster Terrace, mentioned that she had spoke with a member of the community who wasn't aware of the meeting because they don't utilize email. Mr. Nalley advised that scheduled meetings, events and notices are also posted in the Post Office and in the Town Service Building and if that there was still an issue, staff would find a way to contact them.

Adjournment

Ms.. Lancaster moved to adjourn the Montreat Bridge Committee meeting. Vice Chair Dean seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 3:59 p.m.

Alice Lentz, Montreat Board Chair

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk