

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Town Council Meeting
July 13, 2017
Walkup Building**

Board members present: Mayor Tim Helms
Mayor Pro Tem Kitty Fouche
Commissioner Bill Gilliland
Commissioner Kent Otto
Commissioner Mary Standaert
Commissioner Ann Vinson

Board members absent: None

Town staff present: Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator
Dave Arrant, Police Captain/Interim Police Chief
Stefan Stackhouse, Finance Officer
Barry Creasman, Senior Water Operator
Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Approximately 47 members of the public were also present. Mayor Helms called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and held a moment of silence.

Agenda Approval

Commissioner Vinson moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Gilliland seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Mayor's Communications

Mayor Helms thanked the Staff and Mountain Retreat Association for another successful 4th of July.

Consent Agenda Review

The proposed Consent Agenda will include the following items:

- May 25, 2017, Special Workshop Minutes
- June 1, 2017, Town Council Public Forum Meeting Minutes
- June 1, 2017, Town Council Agenda Meeting Minutes
- June 8, 2017, Town Council Meeting Minutes
- June 20, 2017, Special Meeting Minutes

Town Administrator's Communications

- Mr. Carmichael advised Council that we currently are in the due diligence phase in the purchase contract of the Creekside Property from Mountain Retreat Association. A

surveyor has been lined up for a regular survey and an elevation survey as well as a hazardous materials inspection.

- The Caring Neighbors of Montreat provided a delicious lunch which was most appreciated by Staff.
- The Oath of Office will be administered to Chief Dave Arrant later this evening. Chief Arrant has been serving as Interim Police Chief for several months and has been doing a wonderful job.
- The Town Clerk Angie Murphy was recently awarded a scholarship from the North Carolina Association of Municipal Clerks to reimburse the Town of Montreat for her School of Government Certification Course that she is currently attending in Chapel Hill.
- David Currie, Building Inspector, has left the Town of Montreat to explore other endeavors. We will be contracting with Dan Cordell of Black Mountain for basic inspections and permits.
- Mr. Carmichael announced that we are currently recruiting for other positions due to several upcoming retirements. We are using an online recruiting service called NeoGov which will allow for nationwide job postings as well as a streamlined approach for interviews and employee testing.
- The State has received and approved our 2016 Water Quality Report.
- Mr. Carmichael stated that we are searching for volunteers for the Board of Adjustments. Two regular seats are available, two alternate seats, and a McDowell County ETJ Member.
- This weekend milling will begin on Mecklenburg Circle and Louisiana Road to prepare for impending paving projects. Milling prepares the road for future paving. There will be no road closures or water interruptions. Final paving will be in one to two weeks.

Commissioner Standaert reiterated her request to add to future Water Quality Reports the fact that the Town of Montreat does not use fluoride in the treatment process. Commissioner Standaert asked if the Town is moving forward with coordination of the Black Mountain sidewalk project and connecting the Montreat portion of the sidewalk. Mr. Carmichael has had preliminary conversations with Town Manager Matt Settlemyer in Black Mountain and has reviewed with Staff how the connection could occur with regards to water lines, speed bumps or crosswalks. Mr. Carmichael advised there would be no project without Council approval and right now we are just in the brainstorming phase.

Administrative Reports

Police Chief: Reports were in written form as requested by Council. No questions were asked of the Interim Police Chief.

Public Works Director: Reports were in written form as requested by Council. No questions were asked of the Public Works Director.

Finance Officer: Reports were in written form as requested by Council. No questions were asked of the Finance Officer.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer: Reports were in written form as requested by Council. No questions were asked of the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer.

Public Comments

Mayor Helms reiterated that this Public Comment period was intended for remarks pertaining to items listed on the meeting agenda, including staff reports and communications.

There were no comments at this time.

Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

New Business

- A. Proposed Recombination of Florida Terrace Parcel: Commissioner Otto stated that there were two motions: one from last week's Agenda Meeting and another amended motion. Commissioner Otto moved to defer consideration of a recombination survey and associated deed documents until further analysis can be completed. Commissioner Vinson seconded the motion. Mayor Pro Tem Fouche was satisfied with the first motion and is not sure we need to defer it. Commissioner Otto stated that we need to do some further analysis with realtors to make sure the Town gets maximum dollars for the Florida Terrace Property with a time limit of 30 days to return the information to Council. Commissioner Standaert expressed her hope that someone will look at how the parcel will be divided. The motion carried 5/0.

- B. Oath of Office – David Arrant, Chief of Police: The Town Clerk administered the Oath of Office to David Arrant and officially swore him in as Chief of Police. Former Mayor Letta Jean Taylor held the Bible in which Chief Arrant was sworn upon. Retired Chief William "Mac" McClintock pinned the eagles on Chief Arrant's lapels while Retired Chief Jack Staggs pinned the shield upon his uniform. Chief Arrant had several friends and family members in attendance. Chief Arrant thanked Dr. Ruth Currie, who was in attendance, who had been on the hiring committee when he interviewed with Montreat to be a Patrol Officer. Chief Arrant also thanked both former chiefs for this mentorship.

- C. Recommendations from Planning and Zoning for Florida Terrace Property (Report Only): Mr. Emory Underwood gave the following report to Council. On April 6, 2017, the Montreat Board of Commissioners directed the Planning and Zoning Commission to review a potential rezoning of eastern Florida Terrace properties from (I/R) Institutional/Residential to (R-1) Low-Density Residential for conformity with the Comprehensive Plan and other developmental regulations

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as necessary. The Planning and Zoning Commission met on May 18th and again on June 1st to consider this review. The Commission discussed the public comments, and the additional information provided by staff, the status of the Sylvan Heights property, the time period for public engagement, the need for affordable housing, setting negative precedent, and the proposal's alignment with the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission expressed its desire that if the Town did rezone Florida Terrace that it would exclude Sylvan Heights. Though members of the Commission questioned the wisdom of rezoning Florida Terrace ultimately they found that the Comprehensive Plan was broad, if at times contradictory, in its goals. The Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to recommend that all three of the following options meet the requirements of the Comprehensive Plan:

1. The proposed zoning of Florida Terrace,
2. The proposed rezoning omitting the Sylvan Heights property,
3. And maintaining the existing zoning map without change.

Commissioner Gilliland asked about the next steps in this process. Mr. Carmichael recommended to call for a Public Hearing in August and schedule the Public Hearing for September with action to follow.

- D. Appointment of Bill Roberts to Planning & Zoning Commission: Commissioner Standaert moved to appoint Mr. Bill Roberts to the Planning & Zoning Commission for a term of two years to expire on January 31, 2019. Commissioner Vinson seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
- E. Personnel Policy Changes: The Montreat Personnel Policy outlines the process by which the Town Council and administration conducts recruitment and selection to fill staff positions. Included in the Personnel Policy is a policy mandating equal employment opportunity compliance with federal law. The Personnel Policy also contains a Hire and Promotion from Within Policy. At times, the language of the latter policy may be interpreted to conflict with the Equal Opportunity Policy. Staff recommends minor edits to the Personnel Policy to allow greater clarity and flexibility in meeting both policy objectives for recruitment and selection. At issue is whether the Town of Montreat *must* conduct an external recruitment when a qualified applicant will be eligible for promotion in order to satisfy the Hire and Promotion From Within Policy, or whether the Town *must* conduct an external recruitment in order to satisfy the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. Mayor Pro Fouche moved to approve Resolution #17-007-001 amending Article IV Section 6 of the Town of Montreat Personnel Policy. Commissioner Vinson seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
- F. Amendment to Salary Step Plan and Job Description: Mr. Carmichael advised Council that there was an amended motion before them with response to comments from the Agenda Meeting of last week. Finance Officer Stefan Stackhouse has announced his retirement effective September 30th, 2017. The Finance Officer position is currently responsible for a combination of management-level and technician level duties. The position is currently set at grade 13 on the salary step plan. This pay grade is becoming increasingly uncompetitive in the

local government market. Staff recommends reviewing the position classification and salary through a benchmark survey and analysis of best practices in the distribution of management-level and technician-level responsibilities. Such an analysis would look for structures that include duties such as budget preparation, internal programmatic audits, and external audit preparation for improved outcomes. At the Agenda Meeting it was discussed to incorporate other models such as a part time bookkeeper or any other model that might best suit the current needs of the Town. This verbiage is included in the new motion language that was distributed this evening. Mayor Pro Tem Fouche moved to instruct staff to research models for the Finance Officer job description and salary, and to restructure the position classification to meet the current needs of the Town; this will include authorization to adjust the position's pay grade appropriately either downward or upward to a maximum of grade 15. Staff is to research structures ranging from a part-time bookkeeper model to a full time finance and management services model, or any other model that might best suit the current needs of the Town. Commission Vinson seconded. Commissioner Standaert had concerns that the public had not had the opportunity to view this motion language and would prefer to table this discussion till August. Commissioner Standaert moved to table the motion until the August meeting. Motion died due to lack of a second. The original motion carried 4/1 with Commissioner Standaert voting in opposition due to the timing rather than the content.

- G. FYE Budget Amendment #7: Mr. Stackhouse stated that due to the payout of accrued vacation leave for retiring personnel the Town overspent the salaries budget in the Police Department. Though the pre-audit of the salaries budget verified the cost of the payout, it did take into account the cost of payroll by prior to the end of the year. The requested budget amendment transfers \$8,200 in appropriation from the Streets/Capital Outlay to Police/Salaries. Commissioner Gilliland moved to approve Budget Amendment 7 for FYE 17 as proposed. Commissioner Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Public Comments-Other Topics

Mayor Helms reiterated that the Public Comment period were for remarks pertaining to public business items not listed on the meeting agenda, including any reports or communications from other community entities.

There were no comments at this time.

Commissioner Communications

Commissioner Standaert referenced an article from the Week of June 8-14 edition of the Black Mountain news entitled "Board revives probe request of Montreat's 2015 election". This article stated in short that the Buncombe County Board of Elections has asked state election officials to look into voter registration that preceded Montreat's contentious 2015 election. Commissioner Standaert also read from an email she sent to the Buncombe County Board of Election on July 5,

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2017. This email questioned why a letter concerning voting irregularities in Montreat had not been sent to the NC State Board of Elections until September 20, 2016. Commissioner Standaert then read the letter that was sent to the State Board of Elections. These items are all public record and can be found on file with the Town Clerk.

Commissioner Gilliland stated that the Town is at a perfect place to take a hard look at the entire organization and efficiencies with the upcoming retirements and job changes.

Commissioner Otto stated that the Cottagers Meeting on Saturday was a great opportunity to hear the pulse of Montreat. Commissioner Otto also recently visited with Montreat Track Coach Britton Olinger who was involved in the tragic car accident earlier in the year. Coach Olinger is close to being back home in Black Mountain after many months in hospitals and rehabilitation centers.

Commissioner Vinson also mentioned that the Cottagers Meeting was a great opportunity to find out what all had occurred in Montreat in the past year. The Landcare Fair comprised of eight entities had exhibits on display and Eric Muecke from the North Carolina Forest Service spoke to the Firewise Project. Commissioner Vinson brought a variety of handouts covering Firewise planting. Commissioner Vinson was happy to report that the Tree Board received a grant from the Urban Forestry Council. This grant which is just under \$5,000 will help with a tree inventory, a tree plan and will assist in sending Barry Creasman to arborist school.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Mayor Helms reviewed the following list of upcoming meeting dates and deadlines:

<u>Open Space Conservation Committee:</u>	July 14, 2017, 10:00 a.m. Town Services Building
<u>Audit Committee:</u>	July 20, 2017, 3:30 p.m. Town Services Building
<u>Montreat Tree Board:</u>	July 25, 2017, 9:30 a.m. Town Services Building
<u>Montreat Landcare:</u>	August 2, 2017, 9:00 a.m. Outdoor Education Classroom Montreat College
<u>August Agenda Meeting:</u>	August 3, 2017, 7:00 p.m. Walkup Building

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August Town Council Meeting:

August 10, 2017, 7:00 p.m.
Public Forum 6:30 p.m.
Walkup Building

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Vinson moved to adjourn the Town Council Meeting. Commissioner Standaert seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Tim Helms, Mayor

Angela Murphy, Town Clerk