

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Town Council Meeting
March 8, 2018
Walkup Building**

Board members present: Mayor Tim Helms
Mayor Pro Tem Kent Otto
Commissioner Kitty Fouche
Commissioner Bill Gilliland
Commissioner Alice Lentz
Commissioner Tom Widmer

Board members absent: None

Town staff present: Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator
Angie Murphy, Town Clerk
Dave Arrant, Police Chief
Barry Creasman, Public Works Director

Approximately 12 members of the public were also present. Mayor Helms called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, and held a moment of silence.

Agenda Approval

Commissioner Gilliland moved to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Lentz would like to move the February 8th Town Council Meeting Minutes from the Consent Agenda to be amended as previously discussed. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Helms stated that the February 8th Town Council Meeting Minutes would be considered for adoption as Item "A" under New Business.

Presentations and Reports

Mr. Carmichael stated that he had copies of two documents from the UNC School of Government for the Commissioners review. These documents cover the topics of bidding of specific construction contracts. Mr. Carmichael stated they were for information only at this point in time.

Mayor's Communications

Mayor Helms expressed his gratitude for the honor of being able to attend the Billy Graham memorial service this past Friday in Charlotte. Mayor Helms then read and presented Resolution #18-03-002 Honoring William "Billy" Graham to Gigi Graham, Maury Scobee and Kerri Bruce of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Consent Agenda Review

The proposed Consent Agenda will include the following items:

- February 8, 2018, Town Council Public Forum Minutes
- February 8, 2018, Town Council Meeting Minutes
- Resolution #18-03-002 Honoring William “Billy” Graham

Town Administrator’s Communications

- Mr. Carmichael recognized Senior Water Operator Jarod McIntosh for achieving his C Well Certification. Commissioner Fouche stated that she spent some time with Mr. McIntosh this week and she hopes that everyone gets a chance to meet him because he is a delightful young man.
- Mr. Carmichael stated that the impact of Reverend Graham’s passing was minimal to staff due to the ongoing planning that was done prior to his passing but he was very thankful to work somewhere where inter-agency cooperation works so well.
- Mr. Carmichael stated that Montreat had several windstorms this past week and public works removed four downed trees from the roadways and power lines.
- Mr. Carmichael declared that the Florida Terrace Property is now up for sale and out for bids. The bids are due by April 3rd. The bid opening will be on April 4th at 3:00 p.m. in the Town Services Office. The bids were advertised in the Black Mountain News, on social media, through the website, on the Sunshine List and through direct contact to individuals. Commissioner Widmer asked how this process worked. Mr. Carmichael advised him that the bids are to be received by mail or by person in sealed envelopes which will not be opened until April 4th. No bids have been received as of yet.
- The Public Works Crews have been working very hard to prepare the site for the Public Works Building behind the MRA Maintenance Shed. They have completed the second phase of the project which involves removing power and water lines, demolishing the old well house, the well itself was capped off by an engineer and was approved by Buncombe County and they are removing trees to prepare the site for construction. There is still a large amount of leaf litter compost that needs to be moved. We have been advertising that this compost is available to anyone who would like to come get it.
- Mr. Carmichael has received verbal confirmation from the State of North Carolina Department of Transportation that they will be approving the forgiveness of the Municipal Bridge Program Funds for the Texas Road Bridge Project. We do know there will be some outstanding administrative fees that will be assessed in the amount of \$8,000-9,000.
- Mr. Carmichael recently met with Senator Chuck Edwards at his office in Hendersonville about the Town Hall annexation/de-annexation process. Mr. Carmichael has now met with all delegates about this matter. Mr. Carmichael has confirmation from Senator Van Duyn and Senator Edwards that they will co-sponsor this bill to pass it through the Senate which is good news. Mr. Carmichael also has confirmation from Senator Jon Ager that he will pass the companion bill through the House of Representatives.

- The asbestos abatement at the Creek Side Lot is complete and Mr. Carmichael has received all documents confirming this fact. The Black Mountain Fire Department was on site today to assess the building and to determine what needs to be accomplished before the building can be burned down. It is our hope that all the permitting will be completed within a month and we can proceed with the controlled burn/demolition.
- Mr. Carmichael stated that the Commission held their Annual Board Retreat in February where they set their priorities and goals for the upcoming year. Staff has compiled this information and will report more on this topic next month.

Administrative Reports

Administration: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

Finance: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

Planning & Zoning: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

Police: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

Public Works and Water: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

Sanitation: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

Streets: Reports were in written form as requested by Council.

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.

Shannon Ingersoll of 124 Eastminster Terrace asked who removes the debris from the controlled burn of the Creek Side Property. Mayor Helms stated that Town Staff would take care of clearing the property of the debris. Mr. Carmichael stated that a dumpster has already been ordered to be delivered next week to pick up the debris that has already fallen down. This same dumpster will be used for the debris and it will be hauled away to the landfill just like our regular sanitation.

Old Business

- A. **Rules of Procedure:** Commissioner Gilliland moved to amend Rules 4 and 7 as presented to reorganize the Town meeting schedules. Mayor Pro Tem Otto seconded the motion. Mr. Carmichael stated this motion does away with the Agenda Meetings and moves all meetings to

the second Thursday of the month. Mr. Carmichael stated that the Commission will still submit items for the agenda and staff will compile the items into an agenda. There will be a delay in sending out the agenda which will give the Commission ample time to review the documents. The agenda would be adopted, as it is now, at the beginning of the meeting which still gives flexibility to add or remove items on the day of the meeting. The staff will still publicize the meeting a week in advance and will be on hand throughout the day to answer any and all questions that the Commission might have regarding the agenda. Commissioner Lentz reiterated that the Public will still have a week to review the packet prior to the meeting. Commissioner Fouche stated that the Town will be saving money on renting the room and compensatory time for the employees who have to attend the meetings. The motion carried 5/0.

New Business

- A. February 8th Town Council Minutes Correction: Commissioner Lentz moved to approve the minutes with the amendment of the correct Commissioners who were installed on December 14, 2017. Commissioner Gilliland seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- B. Appointment of Katie Widmer to Landcare Committee: Commissioner Widmer moved to appoint Katie Widmer to the Landcare Committee for a term of three years to expire on January 31, 2021. Commissioner Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- C. Appointment of Mark Spence to Board of Adjustment: Commissioner Gilliland moved to appoint Mark Spence to the Board of Adjustment for a term of three years to expire on January 31, 2021. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- D. Appointment of Mason Blake to Planning & Zoning: Commissioner Gilliland moved to appoint Mason Blake to the Planning & Zoning Committee for a term of two years to expire on January 31, 2020. Commissioner Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- E. Appoint Bill Scheu to Open Space Conservation Committee: Commissioner Gilliland moved to appoint Bill Scheu to the Open Space Conservation Committee for a term of two years to expire on January 31, 2020. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- F. Bridge Beautification Committee: Commissioner Gilliland moved to establish a citizens advisory committee for aesthetics and design of pedestrian bridge on Texas Road. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- G. Appoint the following persons to the Bridge Aesthetics Committee: Commissioner Gilliland moved to appoint Jane Alexander, Walter Somerville, Robin Melvin, Mason Blake, Shannon Ingersoll and Randi Collie to the Bridge Aesthetics Committee. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Helms stated that he was going to add an ex-

officio member to the committee until next month when it can be voted on properly. Mr. Robert Wynne did not get his application into the office prior to the packet going out so he will be considered separately next month. The Commission recognized and thanked all the individuals present who had signed up for tonight's committee appointments. Mayor Helms announced that Mason Blake had agreed to chair the Bridge Aesthetics Committee and would soon be announcing the meeting dates. Mr. Carmichael requested that the staff be on hand as well to help with minutes and advice. Mayor Helms agreed and said that Mr. Blake had been advised of this as well. Commissioner Fouche wants to make sure that the Committee has all pertinent information from Barry Creasman and Adrienne Isenhower so they do not waste a lot of time doing things that are impossible structurally and ordinance related.

- H. Website Overhaul Contract: Commissioner Gilliland moved to approve and execute the Max WebGear Contract as presented. Mr. Carmichael has spent a lot of time researching website contractors and benchmarking with other municipalities. This product is one of the better ones that Mr. Carmichael has seen and it is much cheaper than he anticipated. The features listed in the contract came about after several conversations between Mr. Carmichael, Miss Murphy and Mr. Carroll of Max WebGear. Mr. Carmichael is very excited to see the website become a more effective tool for communicating with the public and a more automated process for staff. Mayor Helms stated that this item arose from the Annual Board Retreat as well. Commissioner Widmer seconded the motion. Commissioner Widmer also stated that he hopes if the Communications Advisory Committee is passed this evening it will be allowed to give feedback to the website overhaul. The motion carried 5/0.

- I. Contract Authority Delegation: Mr. Carmichael stated that this motion arose from the Annual Board Retreat as well. The current Rules of Procedure states that the Commission approves all purchase contracts but this has not always been the case. Small dollar contracts which are part of regular maintenance activities of the Town could be approved administratively to ease the burden of Council Meetings. Commissioner Gilliland moved to amend Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure as presented to delegate contract authority for contracts valued under \$5,000 to the Town Administrator. Mayor Pro Tem Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- J. Discussion of Part-Time Bookkeeper with Possible Action: Mr. Carmichael stated that when the finance officer retired last fall we replaced him with a part time CPA, Erin Marie Wheeler. Mrs. Wheeler is overwhelmed with trying to reorganize the finances of the Town and clarify some best practices. The Town has also had to shift some of the responsibilities from David Currie's vacated position into a new contracted out position with Adrienne Isenhower. This has left Miss Murphy with more work than she has the capacity to do in a day's time. This proposal is a temporary recommendation which takes into account the segregation of duties of all things financial. This has always been a finding on our annual audit. Commissioner Gilliland asked Mr. Carmichael if this position would be viewed as temporary or interim. Mr. Carmichael stated that with Mrs. Wheeler's help and the bookkeeper's assistance to help weed through the backlog we would be better able to evaluate the workflow situation. Mr. Carmichael would

consider this position to be temporary in nature. Commissioner Otto stated that he is open to a temporary position to help Mrs. Wheeler get caught up and then evaluate where we are as a Town. Commissioner Gilliland asked how long it would potentially take to get caught up. Mr. Carmichael stated that the CPA has been working hard since October on reconciling bank statements and she is not caught up yet nor does it include the day to day activities. That work has to be accomplished before we move into our next budgeting deadline so optimistically Mr. Carmichael stated that he hoped we would be caught up by June. Commissioner Gilliland asked if this was sloppiness or something worse on the part of the former Finance Officer. Mr. Carmichael does not believe there is anything unethical in the work of the former Finance Officer. Commissioner Fouche stated that she knows that Miss Murphy is taking work home with her and that is not fair to her. Commissioner Fouche also stated that it is costing the Town a lot of money to not have the books in order and hiring a part time bookkeeper is still a cost savings compared to hiring a full time employee. Mr. Carmichael pointed out that there is sufficient cost savings of hiring an interim part time finance officer to fund this part time bookkeeper position without going over budget. Mayor Pro Tem Otto moved to have administration bring in a temporary bookkeeper for a time to be determined. Commissioner Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

- K. Discussion of Communications Advisory Committee with Possible Action: Commissioner Widmer has proposed to establish a draft communications advisory committee to advise the Town Council on communication strategies that will enable us to be more effective in our communication during times of great importance. Commissioner Widmer sees this as an opportunity to raise the brand image of the Town. Commissioner Widmer moves that we establish a Communications Advisory Committee as described in the proposal. Commissioner Lentz seconded the motion. Mayor Helms stated that it is difficult to communicate with everybody and they are putting great efforts into increasing communication efforts this year. The motion carried 5/0.
- L. GovDeals Property Disposal Resolution #18-03-001: Commissioner Fouche moved to approve Resolution #18-03-001 declaring certain items surplus and authorizing disposal by private negotiation and sale. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
- M. First Class Mailing Solutions Postage Meter Lease and Support Contract: Commissioner Fouche moved to approve and execute the First Class Mailing Solutions Postage Meter Contract as presented. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
- N. Administrative Process for Bid and Contract Related to the Construction of the Public Works Building: Mr. Carmichael stated that staff has finished phase two of the process but the next step is the bid and it is a more complicated process. This bid process is for a purchase of a metal “butler” building and construction of a concrete pad, plumbing, electrical and stormwater mitigation efforts. This would potentially fall under the informal bid category but because it is both purchase and construction it touches on different state statutes. Mr.

Carmichael had hoped to have the bid ready tonight but he was unable to do so. Mr. Carmichael outlined the various options available. Mayor Helms asked if all Mr. Carmichael was asking for was to write and advertise the bid. Mr. Carmichael stated that was the recommendation of staff. Commissioner Widmer moved to direct staff to select a contract method, prepare and advertise a bid for the building of a Public Works facility as soon as possible. Commissioner Gilliland 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.

Mr. Bill Scheu of 146 Eastminster Terrace stated that he and his wife, Peggy, wanted to thank staff and the Council for all of their hard work. He feels that the sense of the community is better.

Mayor Helms thanked Chief Arrant and his staff for all of their hard work during the passing of Reverend Graham and the many subsequent events that they participated in.

Commissioner Communications

Commissioner Fouche stated that the Tree Board got a grant to do a tree inventory program in the right-of-ways. They will be getting an intern through this grant to help with a lot of the work. Volunteers will be trained in early April to measure, inspect and report on the trees from the Gate to the Lake. This grant also paid for Barry Creasman to complete his training as a Certified Arborist and soon Mike Harrison will complete his training. Arbor Day Celebration/Native Plant Sale will occur on April 28th. They will have short demos and instructions along with the plant sale. The Landcare Committee had their annual Landcare Luncheon a few weeks ago and Ms. Jane Holt, John Mack Walker and Wade Boggs were inducted into the Landcare Hall of Fame. There is a project called Children and the Outdoors in Montreat to encourage children to get outside and enjoy nature. There will be a "hotspot" at the Montreat Nature Center where kids can take part in this Eco-Explorer program. The Landcare Committee is looking for alternatives to salt when it comes to de-icing the roads during snow events which is great because the salt is dangerous to the streams and animals. There's a new disease in the white and red oaks. The disease rots the centers but the outside of the tree looks healthy. There's a tree in the parking lot of Anderson Auditorium which had the disease and had to be cut down. The committee rolled out their new brochures which Commissioner Fouche passed out to the Commission.

Mayor Pro Tem Kent Otto observed the Montreat officers from afar at the Billy Graham Motorcade Processional and was proud of the professionalism that was represented by Montreat that day. Mr. Otto also witnessed a rather large water leak on Virginia Road which was fixed in a little over four hours by Barry Creasman and Jarod McIntosh. He was thankful for them for coming

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Town Council Meeting Minutes
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out on a Sunday to work hard to keep Montreators in water service. In response to the Public Forum, Mayor Pro Tem Otto encouraged Montreat citizens to invite people up into Montreat to see what the College and the MRA has to offer along with the trails and recreation.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

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

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| <u>Tree Board:</u> | Tuesday, March 27, 2018, 9:30 a.m. Town Services Building |
| <u>Good Friday:</u> | Friday, March 30, 2018 Town Services Offices Closed |
| <u>Florida Terrace Bid Opening:</u> | Wednesday, April 4 th , 3:00 p.m. Town Services Building |
| <u>Montreat Town Council Meeting:</u> | Thursday, April 12 th , 7:00 p.m. Public Forum begins at 6:30 p.m. Walkup Building |
| <u>Native Plant Sale and Arbor Day Celebration:</u> | Saturday, April 28 th Moore Center Field Time TBD |

Closed Session

Commissioner Gilliland moved to enter into Closed Session in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(6) to discuss a personnel matter and to approve Closed Session Minutes from September, 2017. Mayor Pro Tem Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Upon returning to open session, Commissioner Gilliland moved to give the Town Administrator and Police Chief the authority to offer and hire Joshua Kiser for the position of Patrol Officer at the recommended salary of \$37, 104. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Mayor Pro Tem Otto moved that the minutes of September 14th be approved and remain unsealed and he moved that the minutes of September 7th be approved and remain sealed. Commissioner Gilliland seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Mayor Pro Tem Otto moved that we raise the Town Administrator's salary by 4%. Commissioner Gilliland seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Commissioner Fouche moved to adjourn the Town Council Meeting. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Tim Helms, Mayor

Angela Murphy, Town Clerk