Board members present: Mayor Pro Tem Otto

Commissioner Kitty Fouche

Commissioner Bill Gilliland

Commissioner Alice Lentz

Commissioner Tom Widmer

Board members absent: Mayor Tim Helms

Town staff present: Adrienne Isenhower, Zoning Administrator

Adrienne Fleury, Staff Accountant

Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Barry Creasman, Public Works Director

Darlene Carrasquillo, Finance Officer

David Arrant, Chief of Police

Twenty members of the public were present. Mayor Pro Tem Otto called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and led the group in the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence.

**Agenda Approval**

Commissioner Widmer moved to amend the agenda with two items. The first item would be under New Business, Item J and would include a discussion of town hall fundraising overages with possible action. The second item would be amending the minutes from last month’s public forum to correct a factual mistake. Commissioner Widmer would like the minutes to read “Commissioner Widmer stated that the Town of Montreat did not ask to make this change but was asked to consider their decision by the General Assembly.” Mr. Carmichael asked, on behalf of Staff, to postpone the evening’s Closed Session to the April meeting. Commissioner Gilliland moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

**Presentations and Reports**

Jennifer Rice of Martin Starnes and Associates presented the 2018 CAFR. Mrs. Rice stated that a clean unmodified opinion was issued which is the type of opinion that is preferred. The report has been reviewed and approved by the LGC (Local Government Commission). The LGC has responded with a letter of items that the Town needs to address in future financial statements. Mrs. Rice reviewed the five classifications of Fund Balance. The available fund balance in 2018 is $1,656,888 which is a decrease of $156,660 from 2017. This is due to the transfers made into the Capital Projects Fund for the Town Hall and Public Works Building. The unassigned Fund Balance is $1,316,220. The Town of Montreat has a Fund Balance Policy where 35% of general expenditures must be set aside and not spent. This is to allow a minimum level of Fund Balance. The remaining Fund Balance is $751,330. Revenues increased by $30,000 due to ad valorem taxes and expenditures decreased by $243,000 due to fewer expenditures in street paving projects. Revenues exceeded expenditures by $364,740. Mrs. Rice reviewed the top three revenues. Ad valorem taxes, which are property taxes, increased by about 3% over the prior year. Other taxes and licenses increased by about 1% over the prior year. Mrs. Rice reviewed the top three expenditures. General government expenditures decreased by 11% from the prior year due to decreased wages in the current year. Transportation (streets) expenditures decreased by 20% due to two street projects that were completed in 2018 but funded in 2017. Public Safety expenditures decreased by 12% due to the change in inspections and zoning services. Mrs. Rice then reviewed the Water Fund. Audit findings this year were as follows: preparation of full accrual financial statements, significant audit adjustments and bank reconciliations not completed in a timely manner. The first two findings are repeat findings from 2017. After a brief question and answer period with the Commissioners Mrs. Rice wrapped up her presentation.

Commissioner Alice Lentz gave a lengthy presentation about her efforts to investigate the address issue and confusion between Montreat 28757 and Black Mountain 28711. Commissioner Lentz has been working on this issue since last August. She conducted document research and gathered pertinent pieces. Commissioner Lentz also spent a lot of time getting community input through one-on-one conversations and a survey that was distributed by the Town which elicited 101 responses from the public. Commissioner Lentz has identified two tracks for action. First, communication with USPS. Mayor Helms has already sent a letter to Philip Zimmerman, USPS Manager, Operations Programs Support, Mid-Carolinas District, to gain a better understanding of a fundamental data-related USPS issue regarding Montreat. Mr. Carmichael has already initiated follow-up with Mr. Zimmerman. It is believed that a positive response from the USPS district data operations associates could be the key to unlocking a process that could produce a cascade of needed changes over time. A possible second track would be coordinated communication through the Town of Montreat with Google and other service-providers. A resolution is being placed before the Commission tonight and it serves to update the 2009 resolution in acknowledging the importance of our USPS mail delivery through Post Office boxes at the Montreat Post Office and the resolution states the current situation of confusion about Montreat 28757 and Black Mountain 28711 in the context of continuing technological changes in mapping services. Commissioner Lentz stated that she will gladly remain involved in future conversations about the path forward.

**Mayor’s Communications**

Mayor Pro Tem Otto stated that Staff had been hard at work replacing culverts on Assembly Drive and repaving the roadway. This weekend they are going to work on laying down a crosswalk and, weather permitting, the detour will be back open on Monday the 18th. Mayor Pro Tem Otto thanked everyone for their patience during the roadwork. Mayor Pro Tem Otto, Mayor Tim Helms and Alex Carmichael met with leaders from the Town of Black Mountain and the DOT last week. If their plans and weather permits the DOT will have Montreat Road paved from the Montreat Gate down to the middle of Black Mountain by October 19, 2019.

**Meeting Minutes Adoption**

* February 13, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes
* February 14, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes
* February 14, 2019 Public Forum Minutes
* February 14, 2019 Town Council Minutes

**Town Administrator’s Communications**

Mr. Carmichael wanted to do a quick Capital Projects Update. The table below recaps his report.

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| --- | --- |
| Town Hall | Under contract. Phase I preliminary designs, complete. Phase II, construction drawings and final budget, winding down. Phase III, construction expected to begin this summer. |
| Public Works Building | Site prepared. RFQ published on ¾, closes on 3/29, informational meeting on 3/18 |
| Texas Pedestrian Bridge | RFQ for design services closed on 2/11. Contract negotiations underway with Vaughn & Melton. |
| Texas Road Waterline | Expected completion day 3/21 |
| Texas Rd and Calvin Trail Paving | Project awarded in the fall ’18-expected completion in early spring |
| Frist Rd Paving | Project awarded in the fall ’18-expected completion in early spring |
| Wells A & B Chlorine Retrofit | In process. Expected completion date 4/4 |
| Well 6 Pump Conversion | In process. Expected completion date 3/21 |
| Assembly Drive Culvert and Crosswalk | In process. Expected completion date 3/18 |
| Tennessee Road Culvert and Catch Basin | In process. Expected completion date 3/21 |
| South Carolina Terrace Parking Area | Engineer assessed – Expected completion date 4/4 |
| Kentucky Road Culvert | Engineer assessed – Expected completion date 4/25 |
| South Carolina Terrace Culvert | Engineer assessed – Expected completion date 4/11 |
| Wyck Road Culvert | Engineer assessed – Expected completion date 4/18 |
| Lower Greybeard Wall and Creek Stabilization | RFQ re-published on 2/28, closes on 3/20 |
| Suwannee Mudslide | Engineer assessed – RFQ pending |
| Texas Road Extension Culvert and Barrel – 1 | Engineer assessed – RFQ pending |
| Texas Road Wall and Bank Stabilization (Below Pool) | Engineer assessed – RFQ pending |

**Administrative Reports**

* Administration – This report was given in written format.
* Planning & Zoning – This report was given in written format.
* Police – This report was given in written format.
* Public Works and Water – This report was given in written format.
* Sanitation – This report was given in written format.
* Streets – This report was given in written format.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Tom Frist of 98 Frist Road stated that since our budget shows a surplus the Town should consider investing in a new sound system. Mr. Frist announced that since these meetings are now being live-streamed the Town received at least two substantial donations to the Town Hall Fund. He applauded those who came up with the idea of live-streaming.

Mr. Bill Scheu and Mr. Tom Frist wanted to report on the enthusiasm and generosity of the Montreat Community with regards to “Montreatizing” Town Hall. Mr. Scheu stated the goal was $50,000 and as of this morning the committed amount was $78,175 with $67,075 received in donations. Mr. Scheu extended his thanks to Town Clerk Angie Murphy for all her help in this process. Mr. Scheu and Mr. Frist have crafted a thank you note to be sent thanking everyone for the donations. This letter could also address the excess funds received. Mr. Scheu encouraged Council to make a decision regarding the excess funds this evening.

**Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

**New Business**

1. Re-appointment of Hugh Alexander to the Audit Committee: Commissioner Gilliland moved to re-appoint Hugh Alexander to the Audit Committee for a term of two years to expire on January 31, 2021. Commissioner Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
2. Appointment of Martha Chastain as an Alternate Member to the Board of Adjustment: Commissioner Fouche moved to appoint Martha Chastain as an Alternate Member to the Board of Adjustment for a term of three years to expire January 31, 2022. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
3. Appointment of Margaret Waterstradt as an Alternate Member to the Board of Adjustment: Commissioner Bill Gilliland moved to appoint Margaret Waterstradt as an Alternate Member to the Board of Adjustment for a term of three years to expire January 31, 2022. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
4. Re-appointment of Philip Arnold to the Open Spaces Conservation Committee: Commissioner Widmer moved to re-appoint Philip Arnold to the Open Spaces Conservation Committee for a term of three years to expire on January 31, 2022. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
5. Appointment of Robert Sulaski as a Regular Member to the Board of Adjustment: Commissioner Gilliland moved to appoint Robert Sulaski as a Regular Member to the Board of Adjustment for a term of three years to expire on January 31, 2022. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
6. Re-appointment of AnnKelso Hewitt as a Regular Member to the Board of Adjustment: Commissioner Fouche moved to re-appoint AnnKelso Hewitt as a Regular Member to the Board of Adjustment for a term of three years to expire on January 31, 2022. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
7. Resolution 18-03-001 Montreat Addressing Issue: Commissioner Widmer moved to graciously approve Resolution 18-03-001 Regarding Montreat Address Issues and Problems Resulting from Confusion Between Town of Montreat Zip Code (28757) and Town of Black Mountain Zip Code (28711). Commissioner Gilliland seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
8. Call for Public Hearing: Mr. Carmichael stated that as the Town applies to the Local Government Commission (LGC) for debt it is necessary to hold a Public Hearing for any new debt that we may encumber. Before the contract is approved a Public Hearing must be held to fulfill statutory requirements. Commissioner Gilliland moved to call for a Public Hearing G.S. 160A-20 on April 11, 2019 for installment financing contract for the construction of Town Hall. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
9. Schedule 2019 Annual Board Retreat: Mr. Carmichael sent out a survey to determine a date towards the end of March but to no avail. Mr. Carmichael stated that we are looking for 4-5 hour block of time during the first of April. It was determined that two options were given and Mr. Carmichael would check with the Mayor once he returns to Town. The choices were April 9th from 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. and April 11th from 12:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. with the 11th being the preferred choice.
10. Discussion of Town Hall Fundraising Overage with Possible Action: Commissioner Widmer thanked Mr. Bill Scheu and Mr. Tom Frist for all their hard fundraising efforts. Commissioner Widmer advised that we have an overage of $28,000 with donations still rolling in. In the original suggested plan from the architect a pocket park was included which morphed into a rain garden/storm water feature. In the original fundraising documents it was mentioned that any overages should go to the Texas Road Bridge. Commissioner Fouche felt it would be cleaner and easier to keep the funds for the rain garden/storm water feature. Commissioner Lentz would be inclined to allocate the money to the Town Hall park feature. Mayor Pro Tem Otto mentioned that he had spoken to the School of Government and Mr. Carmichael about the options for the overage and how important it is for the donors to know where their money is going. Mayor Pro Tem Otto felt it should be kept within the Town Hall. Mr. Carmichael advised that it will be a lengthy process and a budget amendment will be needed to move forward with adjusting for donor wishes no matter what the use of the money will be.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Brad Hestir of 192 Mississippi Road thought it was great to have so much public input on the rain garden/storm water feature. Mr. Hestir feels it should be divided on a proportionate ratio rather than going to the largest donors first.

Mr. Tom Frist of 98 Frist Road feels that everyone wants this project to succeed and proceed. Mr. Frist has not heard anyone say that they want their money back.

**Commissioner Communications**

Commissioner Lentz thanked everyone for being here this evening. Commissioner Lentz mentioned that on March 28th – March 31st at Blue Ridge Assembly a meeting of the Camino De Santiago will be held. There will be 300 people coming from all over the country and each participant will be given a yellow arrow pin. If you see anyone with the yellow arrow pin in Montreat you will know who they are. Welcome them!

Commissioner Fouche reminded everyone in attendance that it was March 14th (3.14) Pi Day and she encouraged everyone to go home and calculate the area or circumference of something in honor of Pi.

Commissioner Widmer thanked the Town of Montreat for rallying together and becoming stronger.

**Meeting Dates**

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| RFQ 2019-004 (Greybeard Wall) Pre-Submittal Meeting | Monday, March 18, 2019  Town Services Building |
| Planning & Zoning Commission | Thursday, March 21, 2019  Walkup Building  5:00 p.m. |
| Montreat Tree Board | Tuesday, March 26, 2019  Town Service Building  9:30 a.m. |
| Board of Adjustment | Thursday, March 28, 2019  Walkup Building  7:00 p.m. |
| RFQ 2019-004 (Greybeard Wall) Bid Opening | Monday, April 1, 2019  Town Services Building  11:00 a.m. |
| Montreat Landcare | Wednesday, April 3, 2019  Allen Building  Swannanoa Room  9:00 a.m. |
| April Town Council Meeting | Thursday, April 11, 2019  Walkup Building 7:00 p.m.  Public Forum begins at 6:30 p.m. |
| Planning & Zoning Commission | Thursday, April 18, 2019  Walkup Building  7:00 p.m. |
| Good Friday | Friday, April 19, 2019  Town Offices Closed |

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Gilliland moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

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Tim Helms, Mayor Angie Murphy, Town Clerk