**Mayor’s Summary of the April 11, 2019 Town Council Meeting**

Greetings Friends,

Spring has come to Montreat and we all welcome its arrival. We thank the 18 people who came to be a part of the evening’s proceedings. Here are the highlights from the discussions:

* **Public Forum** questions/comments included:
  + Resident **Jean Norris**, dressed in gardner’s garb, shared about the upcoming **Native Plant Sale and Arbor Day Celebration** on Saturday, **April 27**. She spoke about the band, the food truck, speakers, exhibitors, plant vendors and other activities. There will be children’s activities, a children’s creek walk, a raffle for locally donated prizes and great camaraderie. She also mentioned that **volunteers are still needed**. If interested, please contact Jane Alexander at [jealexande@aol.com](mailto:jealexande@aol.com). [**Click Here**](https://townofmontreat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Brochure-for-2019-Native-Plant-Sale.pdf) for a brochure about the Sale, which promises to be a great Montreat event.
  + **Tom Frist** thanked the Commission and staff for buying **new microphones** for the Town meetings.
  + Montreat College’s **Debbie Ferguson** informed everyone that College **graduation** will be May 11 at 2:00pm. **88 students** will receive their diplomas.
  + Town Administrator **Alex Carmichael** gave an **update** from last month’s review of **major projects**. In the last month, the Texas Road water line, Assembly Drive culvert and cross walk, water well pump retrofits and South Carolina Terrace and Tennessee Road culverts have all been completed. A busy month! Grading of Texas Road and Calvin Trail along with paving of the two roads and Frist Road are expected to be completed by the next meeting. Thanks to the Public Works team for their great work.
* The Council Meeting began with a **Public Hearing** on **Installment Financing** for the new **Town Hall**. The plan is to **borrow $1 million** for 15 years at 3.1% interest, supplementing the loan with approximately $400.000 of funds from our “savings” account and nearly $80,000 from funds raised for the “Montreatization” of the new building. There were several questions but **no objections** to the proposed action.
* In my comments, I told everyone about the **planning retreat** held earlier in the day where we discussed **goals and objectives** for the next fiscal year, reviewed proposed **capital projects** and reviewed **Commissioner responsibilities**. We appreciated Mike Sonnenberg who attended all five hours of the meeting!
* In **Council actions**, three items were approved regarding **preparing to borrow** funds for the new **Town Hall**. We expect all approvals, including the loan approval, to be completed in June, keeping us on schedule for a **construction start in July**, perhaps sooner. (See Actions below)
* During the Public Comment period:
  + Resident **Tom Frist** asked Alex to confirm the **amount raised** for the Town Hall enhancements. Alex stated that he didn’t have an exact total, but it is more than **$79,000**
  + Resident **Mary Standaert** reiterated her position on the decision by the Council to **lengthen current terms** to synchronize with the move to even year elections, saying she feels a **general election** should be held instead of the Council extending their terms through Board action
  + Resident **Mike Sonnenberg** suggested the Town put more money down on the new Town Hall construction to **decrease** the amount of **borrowed funds** and reduce borrowing costs
  + **Jean Norris** reminded everyone that the **Native Plant Sale** is sponsored by the **Montreat Landcare Committee**, partially sponsored by the Town of Montreat. She urged all Commissioners and me to participate and even volunteer.
  + Resident **Ann Vinson** also plugged the **Native Plant Sale**, sharing about many of the **exhibitors and presentations**, including salamander sessions, how to build a rain garden, tree health and a Montreat environment exhibit. The evening will bring yet another activity, a salamander (Hellbender) night hike

That covers what occurred. Please let me know if you have any questions on what was discussed or any other matters. Write me at [thelms@townofmontreat.org](mailto:thelms@townofmontreat.org) or call me at 828/669-3852.

Thank you for your trust in us,

Mayor Tim Helms on behalf of the Town Council

**The following actions were taken by the Council:**

* Approved a budget amendment to appropriate new spending from the General Fund to Capital Projects Fund for the construction of the Town Hall
* Approved a resolution authorizing the filing of an application for approval of a financing agreement for the Town Hall
* Approved a financing agreement with BB&T in the amount of $1,000,000 for a 15 year term to construct the Town Hall
* Approved disposing of two police vehicles, including the 2001 Jeep and the 2009 Chevrolet Impala
* Approved the ranking of two engineering firms who responded to an RFQ for work on the Greybeard Road wall