Board members present: Mayor Tim Helms

Mayor Pro Tem Otto

 Commissioner Kitty Fouche

 Commissioner Alice Lentz

 Commissioner Tom Widmer

 Commissioner Jane Alexander

Board members absent: None

Town staff present: Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator

Adrienne Isenhower, Zoning Administrator

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Sixteen members of the public were present. Mayor Helms called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and led the group in a moment of silence.

**Agenda Approval**

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

**Public Forum**

Ms. Midgette of 168 Oak Lane, who heads Montreat’s Firewise program, thanked the Commission for their support 18 months ago when they voted towards Montreat being a Firewise community. Ms. Midgette stated that the NC Forest Service will begin their risk assessment on February 27th, 2020. During the assessment, the Forest Service will evaluate public and private property to determine levels of fire risk. The next step will be a program on the day of the Native Plant Sale. The final step will be to accumulate 620 hours of volunteer service on one year. This can include counting the hours that residents pay college students to work in their yards. Please email Ms. Midgette with all of your volunteer hours.

Mrs. Lila Ray of 436 Kentucky Road thanked the Commission for the recent paving of Kentucky Road. She expressed her sympathy over a recent water leak that resulted in the pavement being cut and subsequently repaired.

Mrs. Clare Frist of 98 Frist Road asked if the Commission was going to address the Texas Road house and settlement. Mayor Helms advised that the Commission could not discuss the details of the actual mediation process but information about the timeframe and events were public record.

Mr. Tom Frist of 98 Frist Road shared his concerns about where the funds originated from to pay the settlement on the Texas Road situation. Mr. Frist also stated that he was glad the case was mediated and not taken to court. Mr. Frist was also bothered that the Town could spend $95,000 but remain silent on the matter. Mayor Helms stated that the Town had done nothing wrong but the members of the mediation were bound to secrecy.

Mrs. Shannon Ingersoll of 124 Eastminster Terrace asked for a chronology of events and the steps that were taken. Town Administrator Alex Carmichael read a list of mediation talking points that can be found on the website.

Mr. Wade Burns of 232 North Carolina Terrace mentioned that when he put his caboose up in the ETJ he cleared some brush out of the conservation easement and got reprimanded by a state agency. Mr. Burns felt that it would be good for the Town to make an inquiry to the state agency as to how the conservation easement agreement is so tight that you cannot work around it by removing fire hazards.

Mrs. Mary Standaert of 118 Shenandoah Terrace asked if the evening’s meeting was being live streamed and posted. Mr. Carmichael advised that if technology worked correctly the meeting would be posted to Facebook.

Mrs. Shannon Ingersoll of 124 Eastminster Terrace asked if $95,000 was the total amount paid out for the mediation settlement. Mayor Helms advised that there were also attorney fees. Mr. Carmichael stated that a public records request had been submitted for attorney fees and the attorneys were currently reviewing the information.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Alexander moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

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Tim Helms, Mayor Angie Murphy, Town Clerk