Board members present: Mayor Tim Helms

Mayor Pro Tem Otto

Commissioner Kitty Fouche

Commissioner Jane Alexander

Commissioner Tom Widmer

Commissioner Alice Lentz

Board members present via

Zoom: None

Board members absent: None

Town staff present: Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

David Arrant, Chief of Police

Darlene Carrasquillo, Finance Officer

Barry Creasman, Public Works Director

A few members of the public were present via Zoom. Mayor Helms called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m., and led the group in the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence.

**Agenda Approval**

Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to adopt the agenda as amended adding approval of a fence contract as item D. Mayor Pro Tem Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Alice Lentz moved to pull the May 28th Special Meeting Minutes to make some corrections. Commissioner Tom Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

**Mayor’s Communications**

Mayor Helms stated that the Council is still holding virtual meetings based on recommendations by Governor Cooper and Buncombe County Rules and Recommendations. Mayor Helms stated that there have been no cases of COVID-19 in the Montreat community. Mayor Helms urged everyone to stay safe and use necessary precautions. Mayor Helms reminded everyone that Montreat College students are returning to campus for the start of the semester.

**Meeting Minutes Adoption**

* May 29, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes
* June 11, 2020 Town Council Minutes
* June 30, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

**Town Administrator’s Communications**

Mr. Carmichael mentioned that there have been several requests from property owners in Montreat about dedicating private roads to the Town. These roads include Whitewater Cove, Salem Drive and infrastructure on Chapman Road. At this time none of the requests are ready to be brought before Council. Currently Staff is investigating the history of the roads and assisting residents in getting the documents together for the Town.

**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.
* Finance – This report was given in written format.
* Sanitation – This report was given in written format.
* Streets – This report was given in written format.

Commissioner Fouche mentioned that the numbers in the Administrative Reports are not very relevant to her and she would like to see a comparison report. Commissioner Tom Widmer requested Darlene Carrasquillo to review the high points of the Finance Report and fiscal 2020 year end. Ms. Carrasquillo stated that the Finance Report was a snapshot of the month in question and not a cumulative report. Mayor Pro Tem Otto asked Mr. Creasman about the status of Upper Texas Road with regards to recent rains. Mr. Creasman stated there had been additional failures on the road and repairs are waiting on funds to come in from the State. Mr. Carmichael advised Council that the funds from Hurricane Alberto would be arriving soon based on a recent conversation that he had with State authorities. Mayor Pro Tem Otto also asked for an update on the guardrail construction on Greybeard Trail. Mr. Creasman advised that a materials list had been presented to Henson Building Materials this week.

**Public Comment**

Town Clerk Angie Murphy read the following emailed comments aloud for the Commission.

Mr. Bill Roberts of 155 Woodland Road asked for an update of the address situation. He also expressed his thoughts related to COVID-19 cases not being counted in Montreat specifically and stated that with Montreat College opening up it is a public safety issue.

Mrs. Mary Standaert of 118 Shenandoah Terrace thanked Mr. Carmichael and Commissioner Widmer for responding to questions regarding public comment.

Mrs. Martha Campbell of 149 Maryland Place urged the Council to pass a resolution to official engage Montreat’s participation in the county-wide Community Reparations Committee. Mrs. Campbell stated that while Montreat may not be able to make a financial contribution it does not prevent the Town from being involved with decisions, being able to educate and possibly involving individuals from the Montreat community.

**Old Business**

A. System for Tracking Public Comments: Mr. Carmichael stated that at the June Town Council Meeting the Commission discussed a method to make sure public comments were being followed up with by either Staff or Commissioners. Staff was asked to look at a system of tracking. Mr. Carmichael is proposing a simple spreadsheet to track resolution of specific comments as posted by the public. This spreadsheet will be reported back to the Commission the following month. Commissioner Widmer felt this would be a good tracking tool. Commissioner Fouche also expressed her admiration of the form and felt it is time to show the public that the Council is listening. Commissioner Fouche felt that there needs to be a standard time to cut off communication prior to the Town Council Meeting. It was decided that all communication would be cut off at noon the day of the meeting. Commissioner Fouche would like to consider this form on a trial basis for a few months to see how it works. It was the consensus of the Board to carry forward with the form.

**New Business**

1. Server Replacement: Mr. Carmichael advised this project was budgeted in excess of $14,000 but it has come in under budget. Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to approve the Statement of Work-Server Replacement from Electronic Office in the amount of $12,260.06. Commissioner Kitty Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
2. Technical Assistance Service Contract – Land of Sky: Mr. Carmichael stated this renewal contract is for Zoning Administrator Adrienne Isenhower. Mr. Carmichael stated this contract is for three full days at Montreat at the same flat rate which is fully budgeted. Commissioner Alice Lentz moved to approve the Technical Assistance Service Contract between the Land of Sky Council of Government and the Town of Montreat in the amount of $54,810. Commissioner Tom Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

C. Discussion with possible action on establishing a frequent fiscal monitoring report: Mayor Helms stated that the Board really wants to watch Montreat dollars this year and they want a monitoring system that the Board can participate in and understand. Commissioner Widmer stated that Commissioners would feel more comfortable if they could see how they were doing on a more consistent basis. Mr. Carmichael expressed his thoughts in that there are timing issues due to cash versus accrual basis calculations and differences between local government finance and the local public sector. Commissioner Widmer suggested reviewing the sources of revenue and expenses for the General Fund only. Commissioner Widmer asked Ms. Carrasquillo and Mr. Carmichael how they would propose monitoring the finances given these different difficult circumstances. Ms. Carrasquillo stated that the current computer system does not have the analytics required to provide monitoring information.

D. Approval of Fence Contract with Asheville Fence Guardrail: Mayor Pro Tem Otto moved to approve Asheville Fence Guardrail Contract in the amount of $6022.36. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

E. Minute Corrections: Commissioner Alice Lentz wanted to make clear that the Landcare deduction in the 2020-2021 budget was a $1000 deduction from the $2000 budgeted amount of last fiscal year. Commissioner Lentz moved to approve the May 28th Special Meeting Minutes as amended. Commissioner Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

**Public Comment**

No public comment at this time.

**Commissioner Communications**

Commissioner Kitty Fouche mentioned that she has been keeping up with the COVID-19 dashboard and for the longest time the Montreat zip code did not show up on the report. She questioned whether or not if someone in the community gets the virus if it will show up under the Montreat zip code. Mr. Carmichael stated that he couldn’t speak to the inner workings of the public health department but he assumed that it would be tracked to the Montreat zip code.

Commissioner Alice Lentz stated that the Landcare Committee is busy doing a plethora of activities. The Committee met by Zoom on August 5th and an 8 page report was distributed of different projects and initiatives. The Hemlock Restoration Initiative reached out to Landcare Chair Martha Campbell and Environmental Commissioner Lentz with a request to add content to their website on the hemlocks. They also invited the Town and Landcare to think about installing an additional sign on Town property highlighting the Hemlock Restoration Initiative.

Commissioner Tom Widmer stated that the Zoom meeting tonight was not what was originally planned for this building but rather a live streaming of the meetings. There is a piece of equipment that is missing but it will be arriving soon. The streaming camera will allow for the audio to be fed directly into the camera. Commissioner Widmer appreciated the discussion regarding when public comments will be due.

Mayor Pro Tem Otto advised that students are starting to arrive back on campus at Montreat College. Mayor Pro Tem Otto advised that the College has gone to great lengths to bring back the students safely for the College and the Community.

Mayor Helms advised that himself, Mr. Carmichael, Commissioner Tom Widmer and Montreat College President Paul Maurer have met by phone several times to discuss the tremendous precautions that the College have taken to bring the students back safely.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

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Tim Helms, Mayor Angie Murphy, Town Clerk