

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Public Forum Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.
Town Hall & Zoom**

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

Board members absent: None

Town staff present: Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator
Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

Approximately 13 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 Kitty Fouche moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Public Forum

Bill Scheu of 146 Eastminster Terrace spoke in the capacity of Chairman of the Planning & Zoning Commission. A local realtor had a prospective sale of a home in the ETJ and he wanted to advise the prospective purchaser that there were no tie-on requirements to the sewer system. The Planning & Zoning Commission did eliminate these requirements from the Montreat Zoning Ordinance with the recent ordinance changes but apparently there are three other references to this subject in the General Code of Ordinances. Mr. Scheu respectfully asked the Council to request that Planning & Zoning review the sanitary sewer provisions in Chapter E Section 6 Article 1 and Chapter M Section 6 and 7 of the General Code of Ordinances so there is no further confusion.

Priscilla Hayner of 319 Assembly Drive stated her concerns about the intended hotel/lodge that the MRA will soon be submitting a permit to build. Ms. Hayner stated that tomorrow a number of citizens will be meeting with the MRA in order to have a frank, open productive exchange to arrive at a place that does not involve a legal battle. Ms. Hayner understands that the Council has no official role in the decision process but is interested in their opinions, ideas, and suggestions about how she and others might approach the next steps to avoid further contention in Montreat. Mayor Tim Helms feels the newly erected sign across from Town Hall is contentious but feels that the red ribbons tied around trees are fine. Mayor Helms advised that if it is taken to court it will affect

every taxpayer in Montreat. Mayor Helms also wished them luck in working things out between themselves and the MRA. Commissioner Kitty Fouche mentioned that the signs were noticed by her grandchildren and that she's ready for the fight to be over. Fights like these lead to divided groups and lost friendships. Commissioner Kent Otto reflected on the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and how important conversations are in the community.

Wade Burns of 232 North Carolina Terrace mentioned that there are a couple of other items that overlap in the general ordinances and suggested that all of the overlapping items that have to do with ETJ be included in the overall referral to Planning & Zoning.

Harry T. Jones of 314 North Carolina Terrace thanked the Council for their service and also reflected on the spirit of service that is shown by Staff. Mr. Jones asked how the 2008 Comprehensive Plan was being utilized and implemented. Mr. Jones also asked how the Board of Commissioners could lead the managed growth of this Community and how could the additional infrastructure expenses caused by new developments be charged to users of those developments and not be a burden of the Town. Mr. Jones also asked how the Board of Commissioners will facilitate a bridge building process. Mayor Tim Helms advised that the 2008 Comprehensive Plan had been used sparingly thus far but money had been included in this year's budget for a Comprehensive Plan Update. Mayor Helms stated that managing growth will continue to be a struggle because a lot of the entities are non-profits and do not pay taxes. Mayor Helms also advised that it's not the Town Council's responsibility to bring unity to the Town. The Town's goal is to take care of business- such as the hiring of staff, maintaining infrastructure like roads, the water system and stormwater. Mayor Helms also stated that the MRA gives a voluntary gift based on the number of bed nights they have in their hotels and lodges. This money offsets police and fire services as well as the cost of maintaining roads.

Adjournment

Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Tim Helms, Mayor

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

