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 8 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 Alice Lentz moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

**Public Forum**

Martha Campbell of 149 Maryland Place thanked Mayor Helms for requiring people to wear masks in Town Hall. Mrs. Campbell asked that the Council officially make Montreat a leader in being part of the solution to reduce the pandemic by strongly recommending that all staff be fully vaccinated or provide weekly testing results. Mrs. Campbell stopped short of asking for a mask mandate as some government and private employers are doing.

Letta Jean Taylor of 386 Oklahoma Road asked Council to reconsider the ordinance changes about removing the requirement that homes in the ETJ have to tie into the Town water and sewer systems.

Eric Nichols of 527 Suwannee Drive stated his disagreement with the Mayor’s comments from the July 8th Mayor’s Summary where the Mayor stated that the 2008 Comprehensive Plan was used “sparingly”. Mr. Nichols stated that past Councils had used the Plan significantly from 2008-2014. Mr. Nichols would like the statement retracted and corrected as well as tonight’s remarks being included in the summary of this meeting. Mayor Helms responded to Mr. Nichols by saying that he made a misstatement in answering a question about the Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Helms stated that a lot has been done by previous and current Councils but there is much more to be done to complete the work in the plan. Mayor Helms stated that monies had been set aside in this year’s budget to update the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Helms apologized to Mr. Nichols and stated that his comments would be clarified in the next Mayor’s Summary.

Dr. Mary Standaert of 118 Shenandoah Terrace stated that the June Public Forum and Town Council meetings were partially live streamed and not recorded and there were similar problems in July. Dr. Standaert requested that the audio from the Town Clerk be posted to the Town’s Facebook page, Website and sent out on the Sunshine List. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer stated that the zoom video recordings and the Mayor’s Summary were implemented to increase transparency and did not feel like it was worth the time to send out the audio. Mayor Helms stated that he would like it included in the Montreat Minute that audio recordings were available in the Town Clerk’s office but they would not be sent out on the Sunshine List.

Tom Frist of 98 Frist Road expressed the Montreat communities’ appreciation for Letta Jean Taylor, Mary Standaert, Martha Campbell and Eric Nichols who were all in attendance this evening. Mr. Frist thanked previous and current Council members for all their much appreciated hard work.

Bill Roberts of 155 Woodland Road reminded Council that Montreat College was back open and students were arriving today. After enduring two years of parties and loud noise next to his home on Woodland Mr. Roberts stated he was going to have a good attitude about it this year. Mr. Roberts did request that the Montreat Police Department understand and enforce the ordinances this year. Mr. Roberts hoped for ongoing communication with Town Staff regarding issues.

Ms. Sara Baughman of 310 Gaither Circle (Montreat College) stated that students are arriving back on campus this week with classes set to start next week. This is the seventh consecutive year of record enrollment with just under 700 for traditional undergraduate. The College is about to complete a $2.5 million dollar renovation to Howerton Hall as well as upgrades to several residential hall lobbies. Ms. Baughman stated that students will have to provide vaccination records or negative test results and the College will be providing a COVID-19 dashboard on their website.

Richard DuBose of 160 Woodland Road mentioned that Buncombe County will reinstate their mask mandate on August 17th for masks to be worn inside all public buildings.

**Adjournment**

Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Alice Lentz seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

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Tim Helms, Mayor Angie Murphy, Town Clerk