

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting with in person attendance**

Board members present: Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer
Commissioner Jane Alexander
Commissioner Mason Blake
Commissioner Kitty Fouche
Commissioner Kent Otto

Board members present via
Zoom: None

Board members absent: Mayor Tim Helms

Town staff present: Alex Carmichael, Town Administrator
Angie Murphy, Town Clerk
David Arrant, Chief of Police
Scott Adams, Zoning Administrator
Barry Creasman, Public Works Director
Darlene Carrasquillo, Finance Officer

Town staff present via Zoom: None

Approximately fifteen members of the public were present at Town Hall and several more were watching via Zoom. Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and led the group in the pledge of allegiance and a moment of silence.

Agenda Approval

Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to adopt the agenda as amended. Commissioner Mason Blake seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Mayor Pro Tem's Communications

Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer thanked the Board of Adjustment members for their volunteer hours and expressed his admiration for the approximately 50 hours of time spent on the Special Use Permit

hearings. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer also thanked Town Clerk Angie Murphy for sending out the 2022 Sanitation Calendars and reminded everyone that extra copies could be picked up in the office of the Town Clerk. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer also mentioned that the new non-emergency police dispatch number was on the bottom of the postcards.

Meeting Minutes Adoption

- December 9th Town Council Public Forum Meeting Minutes
- December 9th Town Council Meeting Minutes

Town Administrator's Communications

Mr. Carmichael informed the Commission that the Town's MS4 (stormwater) permit is expiring and needs to be renewed. Mr. Carmichael advised that there are a series of annual reports which have not been completed in a number of years but Staff members are working diligently to get this permit renewed. Mr. Carmichael announced his resignation with the Town of Montreat. Mr. Carmichael thanked the Community for their support and the experiences. Mr. Carmichael expressed his love for Montreat and stated his last day will be February 20th.

Administrative Reports

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

Public Comment

Mrs. Shannon Ingersoll of 124 Eastminster Terrace stated she was concerned about the bear issue and wondered what, if any, recourse the citizens have with regards to the bears and the hunters. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer advised Mrs. Ingersoll that there will be another public comment period after the bear discussion.

Old Business

There was no Old Business to discuss.

New Business

- A. Refer to Planning & Zoning Commission, ETJ R4: Mr. Carmichael stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission had received several comments about the setbacks and difficulty building in the Upper Greybeard area of the ETJ. The Planning & Zoning Commission requested the Board of Commissioners to look into establishing a new zoning district in the ETJ. Commissioner Kent Otto moved to refer to Planning & Zoning Commission investigation of the establishment of a R4 Zoning District for the ETJ. The motion died due to lack of a second.
- B. Resolution #22-01-0001 Ratifying Memorandum of Understanding Between Buncombe County and the Town of Montreat: Mr. Carmichael advised that last month the Commissioners approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Buncombe County and the Town of Montreat for backup inspection and permitting services by motion but Town Staff recently found out an MOU needs to be passed by ordinance. Mr. Carmichael stated that this resolution will ratify last month's decision. Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to approve Resolution #22-01-0001 as presented. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0.
- C. Metropolitan Sewerage District Board Appointee: Commissioner Kent Otto moved to appoint Matt Ashley to the Metropolitan Sewerage District Board for a term of three years to expire January 31, 2024. Commissioner Kitty Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Jane Alexander advised that Mr. Ashley has been Montreat's representative for a number of years and he has been very diligent about attending meetings.
- D. Board of Adjustment Appointments: Commissioner Mason Blake moved to appoint Robert Sulaski to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Board of Adjustment as a regular member. Commissioner Kent Otto seconded and stated that Mr. Sulaski is one of the most prominent builders in the community and is a man of integrity. The motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to appoint Martha Chastain to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Board of Adjustment as a regular member. Commissioner Kitty Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to appoint Arrington Cox to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Board of Adjustment as a regular member. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Kent Otto moved to appoint Beth Barker to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Board of Adjustment as an ETJ member. Commissioner Mason Blake seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Mason Blake moved to appoint Danny Sharpe to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Board of Adjustment as an alternate 1 member. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to appoint David Neel to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Board of Adjustment as an alternate 2 member. Commissioner Kitty Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer thanked everyone who was appointed for volunteering their time and also thanked AnnKelso Hewitt and Margaret Waterstradt who are cycling off the Board of Adjustment.

- E. Planning & Zoning Commission Appointments: Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to appoint John Hinkle to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a regular member. Commissioner Kent Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Kent Otto moved to appoint Bill Scheu to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a regular member. Commissioner Mason Blake seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Mason Blake moved to appoint Dan Dean to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a regular member. Commissioner Kent Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to appoint Julie Schell to a two year term of an unexpired term ending on January 31, 2024 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a regular member. Commissioner Kitty Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Ms. Schell will assume Mason Blake's former position on the P&Z Commission. Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to appoint Wade Burns to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a regular member. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Kent Otto moved to appoint Liz Johnson to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as a regular member. Commissioner Mason Blake seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Mason Blake moved to appoint Sally Stansill to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Planning & Zoning Commission as an alternate 1 member. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer thanked Commissioner Mason Blake for his previous service on the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer also mentioned that current ETJ representative Allen Crawford's term expires on January 31, 2022. Mr. Crawford owns property in the Upper Greybeard area of the ETJ but recent revisions of the Montreat Zoning Ordinance indicate that the representative must live in the ETJ. Staff members are going to work on getting Mr. Crawford reappointed.
- F. Tree Board Appointments: Commissioner Jane Alexander moved to appoint Brad Hestir to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Tree Board as a regular member. Commissioner Kitty Fouche seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to appoint Maggie Ray to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Tree Board as a regular member. Commissioner Kent Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Commissioner Kent Otto moved to appoint Philip Arnold to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Tree Board as a regular member. Commissioner Mason Blake seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer thanked outgoing Chair Ann Vinson for all of her hard work.
- G. Open Spaces Conservation Committee Appointment: Commissioner Mason Blake moved to appoint Mari Gramling to a three year term ending on January 31, 2025 to the Open Spaces Conservation Committee as a regular member. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer thanked outgoing member Philip Arnold for his

service. Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer stated that 18 appointments were made tonight and he appreciated everyone for their willingness to make Montreat a better place.

- H. Discussion of bear hunting effects within the Town (Discussion Only): Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer stated that this situation is not an issue of bear hunting but rather an issue of public safety. There was a situation earlier in the month where unleashed dogs were racing around Town chasing a bear at the close of bear hunting season. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer observed a situation with loose dogs and read an email from Jacob and Erin Thielman concerning their small children and close proximity to the dogs and a bear. Another resident had a youtube video of the loose dogs and a bear. Commissioner Mason Blake stated that the Town of Montreat has several ordinances, including one regarding unleashed dogs, that address the situation, but are somewhat difficult to enforce. Mayor Pro Tem Tom Widmer stated that at the February Town Council meeting guest speaker, Captain Andrew Melton of the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, will listen, advise and educate about the situation. Mayor Pro Tem Widmer also stated that the president of the bear hunting club on Old Toll Road has offered to meet with the Commission as well. Commissioner Kent Otto expressed his concerns over the bears but reminded everyone that the hunters are important because they help control the bear population.

Public Comment

Mrs. Shirley Mitchell of 201 Harmony Lane expressed her concerns about the stormwater system for the proposed MRA hotel. Testimony during the SUP hearing indicated that the planned stormwater system would not be adequate and runoff will go into the creek. Mrs. Mitchell expressed her concerns that the Town might be sued if the system were to fail.

Mrs. Shannon Ingersoll of 124 Eastminster Terrace stated that she hears the dogs regularly during hunting season. Mrs. Ingersoll agreed with both remarks made by Commissioners Blake and Otto and felt that all suggestions should be completed in unison.

Mark and Joely Rogers of 97 Shenandoah Terrace detailed an experience they had recently with a pack of dogs attacking a bear in their yard and driveway. They felt that there was little attempt on behalf of the hunters to control the dogs. Mr. Rogers took a video of the incident. The Rogers would like to see stronger laws regarding hunting and/or loose dog running free within Town limits.

Mr. Wade Burns of 211 Virginia Road felt that a combination of community education and working with the bear clubs would help a lot with the situation.

Commissioner Communications

There were no Commissioner Communications.

Dates to Remember

- Town Offices Closed, Monday, January 17th for MLK Jr. Day. Sanitation services will resume at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 18th.
- Montreat Tree Board Meeting, Tuesday, January 25th at 9:30 a.m. in the Town Hall and by Zoom Software
- Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meeting, Wednesday, January 26th at 10:00 a.m. in the Town Hall and by Zoom Software
- Montreat Landcare Committee, Wednesday, February 2nd at 9:00 a.m. location to be determined
- Town Council Meeting, Thursday, February 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall and by Zoom Software. Public Forum begins at 6:30 p.m.

Closed Session

Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to enter into Closed Session in accordance with NCGS 143-318.11(6) for discussion of a personnel matter. Commissioner Kent Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Upon returning to Open Session, Commissioner Kent Otto moved to hire Morgan Bocanegra for the position of Patrol Officer at a starting salary of \$38,604. Commissioner Jane Alexander seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Adjournment

Commissioner Kitty Fouche moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kent Otto seconded and the motion carried 5/0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Tim Helms , Mayor

Angie Murphy, Town Clerk

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