

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Town Council Meeting
March 4, 2010 – 7:00 p.m.
Walkup Building**

The Montreat Board of Commissioners held their regularly scheduled Agenda Meeting on March 4, 2010 in the Walkup Building.

Commissioners present: Mayor Letta Jean Taylor
Mayor Pro Tem Eric Nichols
Commissioner Ruth D. Currie
Commissioner Jack McCaskill
Commissioner Mary Standaert
Commissioner O’Neil Tate

Town staff present: Ron Nalley, Town Administrator
Stephen Freeman, Public Works Director
Misty R. Gedlinske, Town Clerk
William B. McClintock, Chief of Police
Stefan Stackhouse, Finance Officer
David Currie, Building Inspector/Code Administrator

Two members of the public were also present. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and gave the invocation.

Agenda Approval

Mayor Taylor noted that adoption of two capital project ordinances related to the water system improvements and automated meter reading system funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 would be added as items of New Business to next week’s meeting agenda. The Board also agreed by consensus to cancel their April 1, 2010 Agenda Meeting in observance of Maundy Thursday. Mayor Pro Tem Nichols then moved to adopt the meeting agenda as amended. Commissioner McCaskill seconded and the motion carried 5/0.

Public Hearings: Proposed 2010-2015 Capital Improvements Plan and Proposed Revisions to Montreat General Ordinance Chapter D, Article IV “Street Standards”

Mayor Taylor said that the Council would hold Public Hearings on each of these items at next week’s meeting.

Communications From the Mayor

Mayor Taylor reported on the following items:

- A 2010 Census Road Tour event will be held on Saturday, March 13 from 11:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the WNC Farmer’s Market. Census staff will be available to provide copies of sample forms, answer questions and take employment applications for Census job openings.

- Two Clear Water Contractors courses will be held locally on March 13 and 27. These eight-hour sessions will discuss sedimentation, stormwater control, water quality regulations and best management practices and are open to local contractors, developers, equipment operators and land clearing firms.

Review of the Consent Agenda

Mayor Taylor reviewed the items listed on the Consent Agenda, which included the following:

- January 26, 2010 Special Meeting minutes
- February 11, 2010 Town Council Meeting minutes

During discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Nichols requested minor revisions to the February 11, 2010 Town Council Meeting minutes. An updated draft of these minutes will be presented for final adoption at next week's meeting.

Communications From the Town Administrator

Mr. Nalley gave updates on the following items:

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Funding Update: More details concerning the installation of the automated meter reading system and Greybeard Trail water line extension, as well as construction of the new well site on Harmony Lane will be provided in Public Works Department's activity report. Capital project ordinances for both of these projects must be approved at next week's meeting as a requirement for the Town to receive ARRA funding.

2010 Census Update: Census staff members have begun home distribution of the 2010 Census forms. Timely, community-wide participation in the census is strongly encouraged, as the population statistics received determine the amounts of several state and federal funding distributions to the Town over the next ten years. A staffed Questionnaire Assistance Center in Montreat College's L. Nelson Bell Library will be open daily from 2:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. Interested residents are also encouraged to apply for available census jobs to ensure a more accurate count. Seasonal residents who are present in Montreat for six months and one day may count Montreat as their permanent residence for census purposes. Discussion was heard concerning the need to ensure that all eligible Montreat College students, faculty and staff are counted. Town staff will communicate with both local rental property managers and the College concerning this matter.

Administrative Reports

Police Chief: Chief McClintock presented and reviewed his monthly departmental activity report for the month of February. He noted a continued rise in police activity related to inclement weather, as well as the theft of one laptop computer. Montreat Police also assisted in the February 26 Mt. Mitchell Challenge event.

Public Works Department: Mr. Freeman reported on the following items:

- Garbage disposal amounts increased significantly compared to February 2009, with recycling amounts decreasing over the same period.
- Approximately half of the required piping has been installed for the Greybeard Trail water line extension project. Piping is also being installed to connect the Harmony Lane well house to a nearby 8" water main. Installation of the automated meter reading system is nearly complete, with about 40 residential and eight institutional meters yet to be replaced.
- The Town experienced its third major snow event on February 4. Public Works Department crews worked 12-hour shifts throughout the first 24 hours of the storm to plow the roadways and apply sand. During a subsequent snow event on March 2, all roads were plowed by 8:00 p.m. The Town's snow removal costs are currently about \$5,000 over budgeted amounts, which will require a budget amendment at next month's meeting.
- High winds on February 10 caused three large trees to fall on Mississippi Road. Professional tree services crews removed these trees at a cost of \$3,000.
- February's water loss due to unaccounted usage was 18.7%. Some of this loss is attributed to a water main break on Tennessee Road and ruptured plumbing pipes or meter bases at four residences.

During discussion, Commissioner Currie noted that readings from the new automated water meters would be manually checked at installation and during the March water billing process to ensure accuracy. Mayor Taylor thanked the Public Works Department for their snow removal efforts throughout the winter months. In response to Mayor Pro Tem Nichols' inquiries, staff explained how tree removal costs are estimated and included in the Town's annual budget.

Finance Officer: Mr. Stackhouse presented and reviewed the final January 2010 and preliminary February 2010 Financial Statements, as well as a quarterly investment earnings report for the period ending March 1, 2010. He also advised that a Request for Proposals for auditing services was published today with a response deadline of April 2. Once all responses are received, the Audit Committee will meet to review each proposal and prepare a written recommendation for presentation to the Board at their May meeting.

During discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Nichols asked that the majority of the Town's investment funds be transferred out of its North Carolina Capital Management Trust (NCCMT) accounts. Mr. Stackhouse outlined his plans to transfer a large portion of these funds into money market accounts at other financial institutions. Mr. Nalley explained that staff would need to research how certain NCCMT accounts were established to determine what, if any Board action may be required to authorize their closure or modification. Mr. Stackhouse also explained how property tax revenues receipts and ARRA funding were accounted for in the Town's budget, and indicated that certain additional bookkeeping measures would be taken to create a separate line item for Open Space Conservation Fund contributions.

Building Inspector/Code Administrator: Mr. Currie presented and reviewed the zoning activity and building inspections report for the month of February. He reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission was continuing their work on amendments to the Montreat General Ordinances to establish a minimum housing code for the Town and incorporate statutory condemnation proceedings language. Mr. Currie also advised that staff was working with TowersXX, LLC on landscaping options and aesthetic surface treatments to mitigate the visual impact of the proposed concrete retaining wall at the telecommunications tower site at the South Carolina Home. He also explained how continued maintenance of any landscaping installed at the site would be regulated and enforced.

Mr. Nalley added that Verizon Wireless was under the impression that their Montreat customers were not experiencing any signal disruption problems and did not currently intend to lease antenna space on Montreat's tower. He encouraged anyone with Verizon service who did experience problems with poor or interrupted cellular signal to contact the company and encourage them to consider adding an antenna to the tower.

Commissioner Reports

Mayor Pro Tem Nichols had no report at this time.

Commissioner Currie had no report at this time.

Commissioner McCaskill had no report at this time.

Commissioner Standaert had no report at this time.

Commissioner Tate said the minutes of the recent Montreat Landcare Committee meeting had been completed and forwarded to the Council members. He also encouraged the Board's attendance at the Swannanoa Valley Flood Damage Reduction Task Force flood risk management presentation on April 8 at 6:00 p.m. at the Swannanoa Valley Museum.

Public Comment

Mountain Retreat Association Vice President for the Center for Youth & Young Adult Ministry Bob Tuttle thanked the Board and staff for their efforts.

Old Business

Proposed 2010-2015 Capital Improvements Plan: The Board will hold a Public Hearing at next week's meeting to discuss the proposed 2010-2015 Capital Improvements Plan, and will also discuss this matter at their upcoming Board Retreat. The Plan may be considered for adoption following the Public Hearing, or action may be postponed until the April 8 Town Council Meeting.

Proposed Revisions to Montreat General Ordinance Chapter D, Article IV “Street Standards”: Mr. Currie presented recently updated ordinance language reflecting a modification to state that alternate paving methods were required, rather than recommended for roads intended to have a 14’ pavement width. During discussion, Commissioner McCaskill noted a minor inconsistency with the section and paragraph numbering of the proposed amendment text. Mayor Pro Tem Nichols also asked that a specific definition for “Green Street” be included in an appropriate location within this text. The Board also asked staff to consider whether more detailed language was needed on page 20 of the draft to more clearly specify the Low Impact Development standards and practices being referenced. A final version of the proposed ordinance amendment language will be completed and submitted for consideration at next week’s Public Hearing on this matter.

Woodland Road Improvements Discussion: Mr. Nalley presented three proposal options from McGill Associates, each with estimated cost information for the Woodland Road paving and drainage improvements project. Each option included installation of an underground stormwater control system to channel runoff through collection inlets into an underground piping system for gradual release. As an alternative to installing a 16’-wide roadway using traditional asphalt paving, the Board could also consider the following paving options:

- Installing a 14’-wide paved roadway using traditional asphalt with a 2’-wide shoulder area surfaced with Gravelpave
- Installing a 16’-wide roadway surfaced entirely with Gravelpave

If the Board chooses an option using traditional asphalt, the new paving would stop prior to the Marshall property and the existing asphalt would be resurfaced. If Gravelpave is used over the entire road surface, the existing asphalt would be removed.

During discussion, Commissioner Standaert supported installation of a 14’-wide asphalt roadway with one foot of Gravelpave installed on each side to act as a hard shoulder surface that would allow emergency services equipment or other large vehicles to pass each other safely. If increased traffic speed becomes a problem in the future, she suggested that the speed limit in this area be reduced to 15 miles per hour. Commissioner Tate agreed. Commissioner Currie was concerned with preserving a number of trees at the intersection with Virginia Road and prefers that the 14’ road width be calculated as an average rather than a consistent width. Mr. Nalley explained that although the majority of the paved area would fit within the current roadway boundaries, a certain number of trees would still need to be removed. He also said staff strongly recommended a consistent 14’-wide pavement width throughout for safety reasons. After further brief discussion, the Board directed staff to add a motion to next week’s meeting agenda to consider final approval of this project to include the installation of an underground stormwater control system and paving of the entire roadway using 14’ of traditional asphalt and installation of a 12”-wide Gravelpave shoulder area on each side of the roadway.

New Business

Disaster Assistance Agreement: North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety – Division of Emergency Management: The Town is eligible to receive between \$6,000 and \$7,000 in reimbursements from the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management for costs related to the December 18, 2009 winter storm event. Mr. Nalley explained that due to application response deadlines imposed by this agency, the Board is asked to approve both the Disaster Assistance Agreement and Resolution Designating Applicant's Agent at this meeting. Mr. Nalley will serve as the Town's primary agent, with Mr. Freeman acting as a secondary agent authorized to act on the Town's behalf in pursuit of this funding. Mayor Pro Tem Nichols moved to approve the Disaster Assistance Agreement between the North Carolina Department of Crime Control and Public Safety – Division of Emergency Management and the Town of Montreat. Commissioner McCaskill seconded and the motion carried 5/0. Mayor Pro Tem Nichols then moved to adopt Resolution #10-03-0001 – Designation of Applicant's Agent. Commissioner McCaskill seconded and the motion carried 5/0. A copy of this Resolution is attached to these minutes and incorporated herein by reference.

Proposed Revisions to Montreat General Ordinance Chapter E, Article II "Water Conservation Ordinance: The Board adopted a Water Shortage Response Plan on April 10, 2008 which had been based on a model ordinance provided by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR). Mr. Nalley explained that NCDENR had requested additional revisions shortly after the Plan's adoption date and had only recently confirmed with Town staff that the resubmitted Plan met all necessary statutory criteria. The Board will be asked at next week's to call for a Public Hearing on April 8 to discuss the proposed revisions and consider formal adoption of the updated Plan.

Contract for Focus Group Meeting Facilitation and Pedestrian Planning- Equinox Environmental Consultation and Design, Inc.: Mr. Nalley presented two proposals from Equinox Environmental Consultation and Design, Inc. for development of a Town-wide Trails and Walkability Plan and a Transportation Improvement Plan for the Assembly Drive area.

The scope of the Trails and Walkability Plan would include:

- Developing a base map for the project area.
- Conducting three focus group meetings with the Town Council, Montreat Landcare Committee and Mountain Retreat Association Wilderness and Open Space Committee.
- Preparing a summary report of the focus group input and discussion.
- Developing a Trails and Walkability Plan based on input received the focus group meetings to include both sidewalks and greenways to improve pedestrian circulation. This plan will be prepared in both print and digital formats for use in applying for grant funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation.
- The total cost of this proposal is \$5,000.

The scope of the Assembly Drive Transportation Improvement Plan would include:

- Developing a base map for the project area.
- Evaluating the connections to and use of the Gate Trail.
- Evaluating the potential for pedestrian and bicycle pathways along Assembly Drive and Flat Creek with a focus on preserving the character of both the natural and man-made environments and providing better circulation for all alternative modes of transportation in the area.
- Providing a Feasibility Study to identify the most suitable location and approach to providing alternative transportation improvements.
- Provide recommendations to utilize unused and unbuildable road right-of-way areas, create connections to residential neighborhoods and safely accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic and multi-use options along Assembly Drive.
- Two public process options using a direct mailing survey and either a newsletter or community-wide public input meeting.
- Developing an Alternative Transportation Plan for the Assembly Drive corridor in both print and digital formats, including a summary report of any public input meeting(s).
- The total cost of the project will range between \$10,575 and \$12,715 depending on the public process options selected. Funding for the project is already budgeted in the projected engineering costs for the Assembly Drive and Truck Route resurfacing project.

Mr. Nalley explained that approval of this proposal would provide a plan to facilitate pedestrian traffic between Montreat and the Town of Black Mountain, a goal identified in the Comprehensive Plan and assigned to the Montreat Landcare Committee for implementation. Mayor Taylor noted that the Town received a high level of public response to the public process methods used for the Comprehensive Plan. She suggested using similarly-formatted newsletters and direct mailings for the Transportation Improvement Plan as a cost-saving measure. Commissioner Currie agreed, but felt it important to maximize the visual impact of any graphics included in the mailed materials to ensure public understanding and involvement. Mr. Nalley explained that Equinox would prepare visual representations of the impact of the proposed greenway and trail for certain sections of Assembly Drive. Mayor Taylor felt it was important to present all available trail and greenway options to the public for their review and input.

Discussion was then heard concerning options for improving the existing Gate Trail and Elizabeth's Path, as well as current accessibility limitations for groups, parents of small children, handicapped individuals or use during evening hours. Commissioner McCaskill suggested resurfacing Assembly Drive during the upcoming fiscal year and delaying any alternative transportation design plans until after the Texas Road bridge replacement project is completed. He was also concerned that trail and greenway improvements in this area would increase both trail use by outside parties and vehicular parking near the Montreat Gate. Mr. Nalley advised that if any bicycle or pedestrian pathways were installed along Assembly Drive, this would need to be done simultaneously with pavement resurfacing for cost and engineering purposes. The Board will discuss this matter further at their upcoming Board Retreat and March 11 Town Council Meeting.

Inspections Vehicle Purchase: Last year, the Board discussed implementing a Green Fleet Policy to reduce fleet size by purchasing lower-emission, higher fuel efficiency vehicles that can be used inter-departmentally. This policy establishes a Green Fleet Team to make vehicle purchasing decisions based on established guidelines. Staff used this policy as the basis for their vehicle replacement choice for the Planning and Inspections Department, but because the policy has not yet been formally adopted, the Board is asked to review staff's recommendation and give final purchase authority. Mr. Currie stated he had researched several hybrid and standard gasoline-powered vehicle options based on a number of factors including base price, fuel efficiency, standard features and environmental performance. He presented a matrix comparing each vehicle considered and noted that the purchase price of the hybrid vehicles considered was significantly higher than the amount budgeted for vehicle replacement. Based on his findings, he recommended purchasing either a 2010 Jeep Compass or 2010 Jeep Liberty depending on final bid amounts. During discussion, Commissioner McCaskill supported multi-departmental use of the new vehicle and encouraged further research into a non-hybrid Ford Escape. Staff will present additional information for the Board to consider at next week's meeting.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public at this time.

Meeting Dates

Mayor Taylor announced following upcoming meeting dates:

<u>2010 Board Retreat:</u>	March 6, 2010, 9:00 a.m. North Carolina Arboretum Asheville, NC
<u>March Town Council Meeting:</u>	March 11, 2010, 7:00 p.m., Walkup Building
<u>March Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting:</u>	March 18, 2010, 7:00 p.m., Kirk Allen Building
<u>Agenda Item Deadline:</u>	March 26, 2010, 4:30 p.m., Town Services Office
<u>Town Services Office Closed:</u>	April 2, 2010 Good Friday Holiday
<u>April Montreat Landcare Committee Meeting:</u>	April 6, 2010, 9:30 a.m., Andy Andrews Gallery

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Agenda Meeting
March 4, 2010

Agenda Packets Available: April 6, 2010
Town Services Office

Swannanoa Valley Flood Damage Reduction
Task Force Presentation: April 8, 2010, 6:00 p.m.,
Swannanoa Valley Museum
223 W. State Street, Black Mountain, NC

April Town Council Meeting: April 8, 2010, 7:00 p.m.,
Walkup Building

April Planning and Zoning Commission
Meeting: April 15, 2010, 7:00 p.m.,
Kirk Allen Building

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Tate moved to adjourn the Agenda Meeting. Commissioner McCaskill seconded. The motion carried 5/0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Letta Jean Taylor, Mayor

Misty R. Gedlinske, Town Clerk