

**Town of Montreat
Board of Commissioners
Town Council Meeting
June 17, 2010
Town Services Office**

The Montreat Board of Commissioners held a Special Meeting on June 17, 2010 in the Town Services Office.

Commissioners present: Mayor Letta Jean Taylor
Mayor Pro Tem Eric Nichols (arrived at 4:10 p.m.)
Commissioner Ruth D. Currie
Commissioner Jack McCaskill
Commissioner Mary Standaert
Commissioner O'Neil Tate

Town staff present: Ron Nalley, Town Administrator
Misty R. Gedlinske, Town Clerk
Stefan Stackhouse, Finance Officer

No members of the public were present. Mayor Taylor called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and held a moment of silence.

Agenda Approval

Commissioner Standaert moved to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Commissioner Tate seconded and the motion carried 4/0.

2010-2011 Fiscal Year Budget Discussion

During their review of key projected expenditures for each department, the Board heard detailed discussion of the following items:

General Fund

Governing Body: This department was used as an example of how the following budget information is included for each department:

- Final prior budget year expenditures
- Current year budgeted amounts
- Actual departmental expenditures as of February 28, 2010
- Estimated year-end expenditure amounts
- Departmentally requested expenditure totals for the upcoming fiscal year
- Administrator-recommended expenditure totals for the upcoming fiscal year

Administration: Itemized employee health benefit costs were included in each departmental budget section, as well as cellular phone usage costs.

Public Buildings: Mr. Nalley asked Mr. Stackhouse to confirm that the estimated fees for the phone system and copier fees were consistent with the amounts provided in the lease agreements for these items. Commissioner Currie noted that no funding had been allocated toward a Town Hall replacement or Public Works facility and was concerned about a lack of progress in determining possible construction or relocation sites. Mr. Nalley said that staff is working to determine the most suitable means of contacting the Phillips family concerning the possible purchase of their property just outside the Montreat Gate for construction of a combined Town Hall and Public Works facility.

Planning and Zoning: The Unified Development Ordinance proposed in the Town's Capital Improvements Plan was not included in the draft budget due to a lack of available funding.

Streets: Commissioner Currie mentioned a number of noise complaints related to operation of the Town's gasoline-powered weed trimmer. Mr. Nalley said staff is researching options to purchase a self-propelled lawn mower during the current fiscal year that may be quieter and more efficient for large surface areas with limited amounts of slope. Mayor Pro Tem Nichols also asked staff to investigate stormwater runoff from the Greybeard Trail well construction site.

Powell Bill: Staff may again consider using Powell Bill monies to fund certain larger-scale pavement repair projects if the Town experiences another harsh winter during the next fiscal year.

Sanitation: Mayor Pro Tem Nichols asked about a discrepancy between appropriated and estimated departmental operating expenses. Mr. Nalley thought this may be caused by an inaccurate tipping fee amount, and said he would review this section of the budget more closely to determine the correct amount.

Commissioner Standaert said that she had received several requests for the Board to consider allowing public access to the Town's dumpster facility for a few hours on Sundays, particularly during the summer months. This would particularly accommodate part-time residents and other visitors staying in Montreat only on weekends.

Mr. Nalley said that based on staff's research, the projected costs of providing a staff person to supervise and operate the dumpster facility for three hours was \$150 per day, or \$8,000 annually. He pointed out that scheduling adjustments within the Public Works Department were already needed to account for weekend water system monitoring, and that the dumpster facility hours had recently been limited because illegal dumping during weekend hours was causing damage to the compactors. Commissioner Currie questioned whether the extended facility hours requested were a valid reason to ask Town employees to work on Sundays. After further discussion, the Board agreed by consensus not to alter the current dumpster facility hours due to both financial and personnel-related concerns.

Environment, Conservation and Recreation: Discussion was heard as to whether the Greenways Master Plan should be included in the proposed budget. Eighty percent of the \$100,000 estimated costs of the project would be funded through grant opportunities that have yet to be

identified. If a grant is not received, any monies the Town has allocated toward this project would be returned to Fund Balance. Several Board members supported moving forward with the project, citing the importance of educating the public and seeking community input. The Board agreed by majority to include funding for the Greenways Master Plan in the proposed budget, over opposition from Commissioner Currie.

Mr. Nalley also advised that staff had recently received an attachment to a proposed deed for the Native Plant garden property, which was then sent to the Town Attorney for review. The language of the document was very unfavorable to the Town's interests, and staff does not recommend that the Board approve it in its current form. Depending on the MRA's willingness for further deed negotiations, the Board may wish to consider discussing this matter directly with the MRA Board of Directors or simply allowing the MRA to retain ownership of the site.

Discussion was then heard concerning whether the special budget meeting scheduled for June 22 would be necessary, or if staff should instead copy the Board members with the budget revisions and other information requested at today's meeting. The Board agreed by consensus to leave the June 22 meeting in place for the time being, with the understanding that the meeting could later be cancelled if there were no further issues to discuss.

Water Fund: Mayor Pro Tem Nichols asked Mr. Nalley to follow up with MRA staff to confirm the amount of any community service fees that may be paid to the Town during the upcoming fiscal year, as well as the expected date of those payments. Commissioner Standaert noted that the registration form for an upcoming women's conference included a \$4-per-person community service fee.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public at this time.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Tate moved to adjourn the Special Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Nichols seconded. The motion carried 5/0 and the meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Letta Jean Taylor, Mayor

Misty R. Gedlinske, Town Clerk