

The regular meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on February 3, 2020 at 5:00 pm in the City Hall building with the following present:

Town Manager: Chad Simons

Attorney: Mack Cowan

Mayor: Rick Ramsey

Council: Barry McClure Frank Dickey

Karen Watson Gail Stansell

Barbara Hughes Noland Smith

Cherokee Scout and WKRK was present

Mayor Ramsey led the Town Council with the Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment

No public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Hughes, seconded by Smith to approve the January 6, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Water & Sewer & Tax Releases & Refunds

Motion was made McClure, seconded by Watson to approve the water and sewer adjustments of \$5,426.06 for January. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentation of 2018-2019 Annual Audit

Ms. Holly Turner was sick and could not attend the meeting. Town Manager Chad Simons delivered the annual audit highlights provided by Turner&Company. The auditors delivered a clean opinion. Mr. Simons stated that the 2019-2020 audit contract would be presented in March, or as soon as possible.

Spring Festival Street Closure Request –Murphy Business Association

Wayne Peacock with the Murphy Business Association requested for the Town to close Tennessee Street from the intersection to Depot Street, on May 2 and a rain date for May 3, from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. for the third annual Spring Festival. Mr. Peacock said they would start later if they had to go with the Sunday rain date in order to avoid conflict with church services.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Watson to approve the street closure request as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Sewer at EMS Station Proposal

Mayor Rick Ramsey explained to the Council that partnering with Cherokee County on constructing a larger lift station is a good investment, especially since a developer has looked at investing in the corridor in the recent past. Mayor Ramsey said the corridor would remain undeveloped if sewer access is not addressed, and this project is the perfect opportunity to make

it happen.

Town Manager Chad Simons advised the Council to look at the construction costs in considering a cost share agreement with Cherokee County. Mr. Simons said the Town could possibly look into completing some of the construction work in order to reduce the Town's monetary portion of the share. Mr. Simons said Cherokee County voted to go with option one (1), since it decreases the amount of force main and the total size of the project. Mr. Simons advised that the Council go with option one as well.

Karen Watson asked what the projected time frame is on the EMS station. Mayor Ramsey said this fall.

Noland Smith asked if they could eliminate the lift station. Mr. Simons said that would not be possible for them to do. Mr. Simons said option one would allow them to replace 400-500 feet of terracotta sewer pipe in the Town's gravity system as well.

Mr. Frank Dickey said it makes sense to do the project, since it addresses the inadequate sewer access to properties across the highway. Mr. Dickey said some of those properties are also in the city limits.

Town Manager Chad Simons said he did reach out to the North Carolina Department of Transportation on the potential sewer access to the corridor, and he explained that they did not foresee any problems with the investment. Mr. Simons said the NCDOT would want the Town to treat any development as a third party encroachment for sewer access, which Mr. Simons said was standard.

Mayor Ramsey asked what the price would be if the County simply built a lift station to serve their property. Mr. Simons stated it would be much less, since they would simply pump it back up Peachtree Street and hit gravity there.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by McClure to instruct Town Attorney Mack Cowan to develop an interlocal agreement with Cherokee County to pursue option one (1) for the Cherokee County EMS Station, to advise Cherokee County to move the lift station closer to the intersection if possible, and to split the costs of the project 50/50 with Cherokee County. Motion carried unanimously.

Konehete Park Pedestrian Bridge Update

Town Manager Chad Simons updated the council on the pedestrian bridge project, providing an engineering study on what it would cost to complete the project. Mr. Simons said TVA still has \$75,000 earmarked, and if not pursued, the project and their money goes away this fall.

Mr. Frank Dickey referenced the study on the costs of the abutments. Mr. Dickey said it would be too expensive. Mr. Noland Smith said it was not worth it, saying the existing bridge is present already. Mr. Barry McClure said it would be difficult to commit taxpayer money for the project when other needs are not addressed. Mr. Simons said the TVA paid for the study.

Ms. Gail Stansell asked what will happen to the cut bridge at the park. Mayor Ramsey said they planned to use it somewhere else. Ms. Stansell stated that it needs to be moved.

Budget Amendments

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Watson to appropriate \$7,600 from miscellaneous revenue and increase Recreation by \$7,600 (10-620-51) for the TVA pedestrian bridge study. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Stansell to increase 30-810-04 Professional Services by \$12,200 and \$12,200 in Utility Fund Balance to pay for the loan closing costs for the Hiwassee River Sewer Repair Project. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Stansell , seconded by Hughes to increase 30-810-45 Contracted Services by \$8,000 and Utility Fund Balance by \$8,000 to pay for a sewer tap bore at Konehete Park. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Watson to increase 30-810-16 by \$6,500 and appropriate Utility Fund Balance by \$6,500 for repairs to Ranger Elementary School, Ice Plant and Health Department lift stations. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Hughes, seconded by Stansell to increase 30-810-51 by \$25,000 and appropriate \$25,000 from Utility Fund Balance for bypass pumping at the Forest Service. Motion carried unanimously.

Report on Uncollected Taxes

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Stansell to accept the uncollected tax report submitted by Tax Collector P.J. Siler, which was \$92,603.18, in accordance with GS 105-369(a). Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Smith to approve the monthly reports as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Ramsey asked if the Town could give the Cherokee Scout a copy of the monthly report instead of the weekly report, saying it was more reflective of what the police department is actually doing. Ms. Karen Watson said the report should be given to the Cherokee Scout, even if they continued to publish the weekly report.

The Council agreed to close down the library Thursday evenings through February and March, and reassess those evening hours this spring. Town Manager Chad Simons said the Town was taking measures to eliminate some of the problems staff was dealing with.

Discussion

Mayor Ramsey updated the Council on the upcoming Downtown Associate Community Program meeting on February 12, expressing the need for volunteers.

Adjourn

**Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Watson to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 p.m.
Motion carried unanimously.**