

The regular meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on January 4, 2021 at 5:00 pm at the Murphy Fire Dept.

Town Manager: Chad Simons
Attorney: Mack Cowan

Mayor: Rick Ramsey
Council: Barry McClure Frank Dickey
Karen Watson Gail Stansell
Barbara Hughes Noland Smith

WKRR was present

Mayor Ramsey led the Council with the pledge of allegiance.

Public Hearing on Proposed Zoning Amendment to Medical Facilities subject to Conditional Use

Mayor Ramsey opened the public hearing at 5:01 pm.

Margaret Ackiss – Ms. Margaret Ackiss stated that she has seen rising crime in her neighborhood. Ms. Ackiss stated that it was a terrible idea to allow a suboxone clinic to be so close to a residential neighborhood, a public park, and a school. Ms. Ackiss said people will be out walking on their street very late at night, and she attributes that to the clinic. Ms. Ackiss wants the community to help each other and prevent this from happening again.

Motion was made by Hughes, seconded by Smith to close the public hearing at 5:05 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

None

Approval of the Minutes

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by Hughes to approve the December 7, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Water and Sewer & Tax Releases & Refunds

Motion was made by Watson, seconded by Stansell to approve the tax releases for Wal Mart in the amount of \$4,182.50, Mr. Douglas White in the amount of \$76.00, and Mr. Clifford Jones for \$364.69. Motion carried unanimously.

Amendment to Zoning Ordinance to make Medical Facilities subject to conditional use

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Stansell, to approve the proposed Zoning amendment to make medical facilities subject to conditional use. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the amendment is attached in the minute book and posted online at townofmurphync.com.

SABA MOU Renewal Piney Knob Hiking/Bike Trails

Town Manager Chad Simons introduced the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Murphy and the Southern Appalachian Bicycle Association to conduct ongoing maintenance and repairs to the bike/hiking trails located on the Town's old watershed property.

Barry McClure commented that SABA and their volunteers do a phenomenal job maintaining the trails.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Hughes, to approve the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Murphy and the Southern Appalachian Bicycle Association, effective December 20, 2020 through December 20, 2025. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the MOU is attached in the minute book.

Working Capital Approval for Murphy ABC Board

Town Manager Chad Simons updated the Council about the request from Murphy ABC Board to set aside \$55,600 as working capital to address the projected cost of repairing the concrete floor in the store front, which has been gradually sinking throughout the years. Mr. Simons said they will pursue other bids for the project.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by McClure to approve the request from Murphy ABC Board to set aside \$55,600 in working capital to address the floor issues in the store. Motion carried unanimously.

Equestrian Use Request – Roger Swanson

Mr. Jerry Collins agreed to speak on behalf of Mr. Swanson. Mr. Collins is requesting for the town to open old Fain Road up to horseback riding, which was the traditional use of the trail for years. Mr. Collins stated he did not want to use the single track trails, but simply the old road. Mr. Collins said it did not require the approval of the state to allow equestrian use on the old road, as the deed explicitly granted the town permission to use it for horse trails.

Mr. Mack Cowan said the problem emerges because part of Old Fain Road is now hiking/biking trails, and it was his understanding that SABA did not feel as though it would be safe to share those trails with horses. Mr. Cowan also said they had reservations about maintaining those trails if horses were on them. Mr. Cowan said that was his understanding of the problem.

Ms. Karen Watson asked how much of the trail would be shared. Mr. Collins said most of the road would be shared.

Mr. Barry McClure said the ascending and descending parts of the trail is what SABA has not used. Mr. McClure said he thought SABA and Mr. Swanson should sit down and work out a compromise, because parts of the old road are wide at the top.

Ms. Gail Stansell asked if they had a maintenance plan for the trail. Mr. Collins said Mr. Swanson and the horse riders would agree to maintain the trail. Mr. Swanson said they have been riding up there for fifty years, and they never had a maintenance plan then or now.

Mr. Dickey said we were back where we were two years ago. Mr. Dickey referenced a letter written by Clean Water Management in June of 2019. The letter stated the town must submit a trail plan prior to construction, among other requirements.

The Council discussed the matter at length. The Town Council reached a consensus to get Mr. Collins and Mr. Swanson to engage with SABA, and reach a compromise and come back to the Council and present the compromise agreement.

Amendment to Preliminary Engineering Agreement for Hiwassee River Sewer Repair

Town Manager Chad Simons presented the amendment to the aforementioned agreement. Mr. Simons said the Town did not spend all of the Appalachian Regional Commission grant monies for the Forest Service project, and that Cherokee County agreed to go ahead with the Jackson Street Sewer EMS Station project. Mr. Simons said the ability to use the ARC grant monies for this project instead of water/sewer revenue presents a great opportunity for the Town and Cherokee County to work together on the project.

Motion was made by Dickey, seconded by Watson, to approve the amendment to the Jackson Street Sewer EMS Station project as presented, and to use remaining monies from the project fund from ARC to support the Cherokee County Sewer EMS Station project. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Mayor Ramsey reviewed each monthly report with the Council and public.

Discussion

None

Adjourn

Motion was made by Hughes, seconded by Stansell to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:45 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Clerk: Signed Chad Simons

Mayor: Signed David Rick Ramsey