

The regular meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on October 2, 2023 at 5:00 pm at City Hall.

Town Manager: Chad Simons
Attorney: Mack Cowan
Police Chief Tim Lominac

Mayor Tim Radford
Council: Barry McClure, Frank Dickey
Charlene Smith, Gail Walker Stansell
Keisha Dockery, Cindy Chastain

Mayor Tim Radford led the town with the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Radford swore in new Town Council Member Cindy Chastain. A copy of Mrs. Chastain's oath of office is attached in the minute book.

Public Comment

Mr. Arthur Hays thanked the Town Council for assisting the Shepherds of the Mountain Men with rehabilitating Fort Butler Park. Mr. Hays encouraged the town and community to be proactive with maintaining the park moving forward.

Approval of Agenda

Motion was made by Smith to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes

Motion was made by Stansell to approve the September 5, 2023 regular meeting minutes and the September 20, 2023 special meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Releases

Motion was made by Smith to release the tax releases as presented. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the releases are attached in the minute book.

Police Department Bid

Town Manager Chad Simons presented one bid for the Council to consider to renovate the new police department at 498 Hill Street. Mr. Simons said the plans and specifications were developed by police department leadership and Mr. Stan Barnett. Mr. Simons said the town partnered with Mr. Barnett – a former unlimited contractor – to develop plans and prepare the town through the bidding/permitting process.

Motion was made by McClure to accept the bid from Shore's Construction, Inc. for \$258, 682.00 to renovate the new police department. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Stansell to approve a budget amendment appropriating \$260,000 in fund balance (10-399-03) and increasing capital outlay (10-510-52) by \$260,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Special Event Permit Application Approval

Town Manager Chad Simons said the Town Attorney reviewed the proposed special event permit application form. Mr. Simons said the event application would establish clear guidelines for any individual or organization wanting to sponsor/organize a new special event. Mr. Simons also said it would prevent new, ad-hoc requests that cause issues with police and public works planning/response.

Mr. Dickey said the Council should verify special event fund raisers for non-profit organizations and other causes, stating the Council needs to know the money goes to its stated purpose. Town Manager Chad Simons said the Council still has to approve all special event applications, and that the Board could make any organization submit financial information to town staff as a requirement to hold the event.

Downtown Development Director Laura Lachance said the application was taken from Marion and Sylva's application process, and will help streamline the planning process for the town and event organizers.

Motion was made by Stansell to approve the Special Event Permit Application as proposed. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the application is attached on the town website.

Amendment to Pawnbrokers, Peddlers and Solicitors Ordinance

Town Manager Chad Simons said the amendment was requested by police department leadership. Mr. Simons said the amendment would make enforcement actions less ambiguous as it pertained to state right of way/intersections.

Motion was made by Smith to approve the amendment to Pawnbrokers, Peddlers, and Solicitors Ordinance as presented. Motion carried unanimously. The amendment is published in the Town of Murphy Code of Ordinances.

Master Meter Approval for Harvest Oaks Homeowners Association

Town Manager Chad Simons informed the Council that Michael Carroll is developing a 21 residential subdivision near King Ford off Highway 64 West, which will be managed by Harvest Oaks Homeowner's Association. Mr. Simons said he recommended the town approve the master meter, which would mean the responsibility for maintaining the water lines within the subdivision will fall back on the homeowner's association.

Motion was made by Dickey to approve the master meter request for Harvest Oaks Homeowner's Association. Motion carried unanimously.

Murphy Housing Authority – Proposed Policy Banning Gas/Electric Driven Ride(s) on Children's Toys

Murphy Housing Director Lea Montgomerie informed the Council of the need to ban such toys for the safety of residents.

Motion was made by Dockery to approve the policy banning gas/electric driven rides on Children's toys on Murphy Housing Authority property as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

RFQ for Sewer Treatment Plant Expansion and Modernization PER

Town Manager Chad Simons expressed concerns about the capacity of the sewer plant over the next 5-10 years due to expected development. Mr. Simons also stated the plant needs significant upgrades to existing infrastructure to maintain adequate wastewater service. Mr. Simons said a preliminary engineering report would evaluate costs associated with capacity and modernization, and look closely at the feasibility of construction options. Mr. Simons asked the Council for permission to publish a Request for Qualifications to proceed with the PER.

Motion was made by McClure to give the Town Manager permission to proceed with publishing a Request for Qualifications for a Preliminary Engineering Report to evaluate sewer plant expansion and modernization. Motion carried unanimously.

ABC Board Appointment

Motion was made by Dockery to appoint Chris Raper to serve out the remainder of John Fowler's term on the Murphy Alcohol Beverage Control Board, which is set to expire July 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

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

Discussion

The Council discussed issues with pets at Sunset Cemetery, expressing a desire to prohibit pets as a result.

Mrs. Stansell asked the Town Manager for an update about the downtown waterline rehabilitation project. Town Manager Chad Simons said Ledford and Parker had installed 245 feet of new water main on Hiwassee Street, and that they would most likely finish on Valley River Avenue by the end of this week. Mr. Simons said the contractor would go back and tie in services after the water lines were installed.

Adjourn

Motion was made by McClure to adjourn the meeting at 5:45 pm. Motion carried unanimously.