

The regular meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on July 8, 2019 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

Mayor Ramsey commented on the sewer emergency behind the U.S. Forest Service offices. Mayor Ramsey complimented town staff on doing a great job shoring up the emergency bypass, and that the Town was going to do everything possible to expedite the paper work associated with the project. Mayor Ramsey said the Town needed to get to construction as quickly as possible. Mayor Ramsey said he expected to get our loan approved on July 10, 2019.

Town Manager Chad Simons stated that he was concerned about the environmental review process, but was hopeful it would be expedited due to the fact that the Town had an existing easement for the sewer line, and that the design called for the new sewer line to go back into the exact same place.

Public Comment

No person spoke during the public comment period.

Approval of the minutes

Motion was made by Watson, seconded by Smith to approve the June 3, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Water and Sewer & Tax releases & Refunds

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by McClure to approve the water and sewer adjustments of \$3,059.79. Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Amendments - Town Finance Officer Chad Simons

Town Finance Officer Chad Simons stated that the Murphy Alcohol Beverage Control Board received \$185,000 from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to purchase right-of-way from their property for the upcoming Highway 64 widening project. Mr. Simons said the Town received a payment from this transaction in the amount of \$129,500. Mr. Simons said the Fire Department has two apparatuses that must be replaced in the near future, as the two are over thirty years old. Mr. Simons said an opportunity like this will only happen once, and it would be a great way to help purchase another truck outright, without financing and paying interest. Mr. Simons asked for a budget amendment to appropriate \$129,000 from General Fund Balance and transfer that into the Capital Reserve Account. Mr. Simons said it would protect the money so the fire department could spec out the truck in the upcoming months.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by McClure to appropriate \$129,000 from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Reserve Fund for the purposes of buying another fire truck in the future. Motion carried unanimously.

Town Manager Chad Simons said the public restrooms were in the final stages of completion, but the final portions of the project will have to be paid for in the 2019-2020 fiscal year budget.

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by Watson to appropriate \$7,500 in General Fund Balance for the conclusion of the Downtown Public Restrooms. Motion carried unanimously.

Contract with the Town of Andrews - Town Attorney Mack Cowan

Mayor Ramsey said both towns have always cooperated with each other for a very long time, and that he wanted to maintain that relationship. Mayor Ramsey said the proposed agreement would protect both towns formally when they share equipment.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Watson to approve the proposed contract with the Town of Andrews in connection with lending and borrowing equipment. Motion carried unanimously.

An Amendment to the Sewage Collection and Disposal Ordinance

Town Manager Chad Simons informed the Council that he asked Town Attorney Mack Cowan to develop this proposed draft amendment, as the sewer charges needed to be included in the budget ordinance.

Motion was made by Dickey, seconded by Stansell to approve the proposed amendment to the Sewage Collection and Disposal Ordinance which will allow the rates to be determined and included in the budget each year. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the amendment is attached.

The Truck Trailer Restriction Ordinance

Gail Stansell asked why the ordinance mentioned specific streets, and not all streets that are determined to be too narrow.

Town Manager Chad Simons said the proposed ordinance stemmed from a complaint from a business owner at the intersection of Willow and North Church Streets.

Karen Watson said it may be better to go ahead and make it more general to streets that are deemed inappropriate for larger tractor trailers. Mayor Ramsey said the Board needed to be careful, as the signage would need to be placed wherever it was applicable. Barbara Hughes agreed. Gail Stansell said the ordinance should be written to streets of a certain width that are not compatible with larger trailers.

Frank Dickey said an ordinance exists already that prohibits the blocking of streets, and that some of these tractor trailers needed to be ticketed. Mr. Dickey did say that the Council needed to go ahead and pass this now, and go back and look at other streets. Mr. Dickey said two or three other streets already had similar ordinances.

Mrs. Stansell said the Council should table the ordinance and go back and rewrite it to make it more general to other narrow streets. Mayor Ramsey said the NCDOT may have a specification the Town could use to look into this further.

An Amendment to General Traffic and Parking Regulations

Mr. Smith said businesses must unload somewhere, but he did not want private individuals to have the liberty to park temporarily in the median of the state roads.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Hughes to amend the Traffic Ordinance, section 70.225(C) of the Code of Murphy to state the following:

No person shall park or leave standing any vehicle, whether attended or unattended, upon the main-traveled portion of any street, highway, road, or alley within the corporate limits of the Town of Murphy, North Carolina, unless the vehicle is disable to such an extent that it is impossible to avoid stopping and temporarily leaving the vehicle upon the main traveled portion of the street, highway, road, or alley or unless the vehicle is a tractor trailer truck or other commercial/vendor truck temporarily stopped while making deliveries to a business adjacent to the street, highway, road or alley."

Motion carried unanimously.

The Wireless Telecommunications Facilities Siting Ordinance

Town Manager Chad Simons said the ordinance puts in a lot of stipulations for wireless telecommunications providers with the aim to protect private property.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Stansell to approve the Wireless Telecommunications Siting Ordinance as presented. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the Ordinance is attached.

Monthly Reports

Mayor Ramsey commented on how busy the water and sewer maintenance team was in one month, counting over 80 different line items in the month of June. Mayor Ramsey also said he was very pleased that the police department issued 35 citations for speeding, one DWI, and various other violations on Highway 64 West.

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

Discussion

Noland Smith asked if the Town's reconnect fees covered the Town's expenses of cutting meters on and off for non-payment. Town Manager Chad Simons said the fees do cover the expenses now, since the Council increased reconnect fees to \$50.00 for inside users and \$75.00 for outside users in new budget ordinance.

Mr. Smith asked what a tremble is. Mr. Simons stated it's how the Town's water meter technician reads a customer's water usage by the hour.

Barry McClure stated that the Town may need to be more active in getting property owners to cut their grass more frequently, and wanted the Town to look into getting a new shield and awning at the police department.

Closed Session

Motion was made by Dickey, seconded by McClure to enter closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11: To Consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Stansell to enter back into open session at approximately 6:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

No action was taken.

Adjourn

Motion was made by Hughes, seconded by Smith to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.