

The regular meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on September 8, 2020 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

Mayor Ramsey led the Council with the pledge of allegiance.

Public Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by Dickey to approve the August 3, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Water and Sewer & Tax Releases & Refunds

Motion was made by Hughes, seconded by McClure to approve the water and sewer adjustments of \$355.52. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by McClure to approve the tax release of interest for Anne Rose Insurance in the amount of \$253.98. Motion carried unanimously.

Opposition to Suboxone Clinic on Hill Street – Margaret Ackiss

Ms. Margaret Ackiss stated she was a resident of Murphy and has been her entire life. Ms. Ackiss expressed concerns about crime on her street, which is why she is concerned about the potential crime that may result with the suboxone clinic opening so close to her street, and being in close proximity to the elementary school and Konehete Park. Ms. Ackiss stated she did not mind people seeking treatment, but noted her neighborhood has problems with transient drug users. Ms. Ackiss said she had her property burned, people trespassing in her front yard and pool house, and frequent domestic calls at nearby residences. Ms. Ackiss said she does not want to live like that and wants to feel safe. Ms. Ackiss said she has neighbors who have disabilities and are elderly, and she was here for them.

Mayor Ramsey said they have looked into the legalities of the situation when considering their options, and also explained they have done a little research into the matter. Mayor Ramsey said suboxone will not be kept at the clinic, and that the clinic could help people get treatment.

Mayor Ramsey also said they could prohibit all medical facilities from town, but added that it would cause more harm than good, and he also added that only time will tell how this clinic turns out. Mayor Ramsey said it would require a state law for the town to prohibit methadone clinics, but stated there is another side to this – this clinic can help people. Ms. Ackiss said she wanted the town to step up and ensure no additional crime resulted from the opening, and that she deserved to feel safe in her own neighborhood. Mayor Ramsey said her concern was duly noted.

Christmas Parade Discussion

Murphy Business Association's Wayne Peacock wanted guidance from the Town Council on having the Christmas Parade, stating planning could not wait despite the unknowns of what December will look like. Mr. Peacock said vendors will not be participating, so no street closures are required. Mr. Peacock said a tree lighting will still take place.

Mayor Ramsey asked if a stationary parade could take place. Mr. Peacock said he did not know if they had enough space to do that. Mayor Ramsey said they could do that parade regardless of what happens with the pandemic.

Karen Watson asked what kind of time frame they needed to do the minimum. Mr. Peacock said the biggest thing on time was for people making floats. Mr. Peacock said the town would need to sponsor the parade due to state requirements for road closures.

Mr. Frank Dickey said a stationary parade was a great idea, and suggested for the Council to approve the plan tonight to allow for adequate planning. Ms. Karen Watson said it would make it easier and safer for people constructing the floats.

Ms. Stansell said no candy needed to be handed out at the event, no matter what.

Motion was made by Dickey, seconded by Watson to approve the Town sponsoring a stationary Christmas Parade. Motion carried unanimously.

Approving Letter opposing Dept. of Interior Decision on Catawba Trust

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Stansell to approve the letter opposing Dept. of Interior Decision on Catawba Trust. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the letter is attached in the minute book.

Amendment to Sidewalk Dining Ordinance to allow for glass containers

Mr. Barry McClure said both restaurants requested for the amendment to be changed to allow for glass containers for sidewalk dining. Mr. McClure said the council could change it if it became a problem.

Mr. Frank Dickey said he was voting against it because it would allow glass containers around areas that might be unsafe.

Mack Cowan did clarify that the amendment as proposed to allow for glass containers would eliminate the requirement for alcohol to be served in green plastic cups.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Hughes to amend the sidewalk dining ordinance to allow for glass containers and eliminate the requirement for alcohol to be served in green plastic cups. Motion carried. Vote: 5 to 1. Opposed – Mr. Frank Dickey.

Resolution to sell Tangelwood Property

Mayor Ramsey said the property does not serve the town, but it has potential for a developer wishing to build higher end homes. Mayor Ramsey said the property has value, but it is steep and only several acres of the twenty acre tract are useful.

Mr. Frank Dickey and Mr. Noland Smith asked about annexing the property. Town Manager Chad Simons said sewer requirements would pose a huge problem if the property was annexed into the city limits. Mr. Simons it would be very expensive to get sewer to the property, and without affordable housing, the probability of getting a subsidy or grant is unlikely.

Motion was made by Watson, seconded by Hughes to approve the Resolution to sell Tangelwood Property.

Surplus of property - backhoes

Town Manager Chad Simons said the town owns two backhoes that are not safe for the town to operate any longer.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Stansell to approve the surplus of the town's backhoes. Motion carried unanimously.

Wastewater Sludge Resolution

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Dickey to approve the wastewater sludge resolution as presented. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the Resolution is attached in the minute book.

Monthly Reports

Mayor Ramsey highlighted the training of the police department and safety meetings for Public Works, and reminded people about the new library hours for appointment only.

Mayor Ramsey thanked the new restaurants coming to Murphy, and said it was amazing that they are able to open and operate in such a difficult time. Mayor Ramsey also thanked Sam Jochich for the work he has done for the town, capturing beautiful images of the town with his drone.

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

Discussion

Mr. Frank Dickey said the police department can and do make arrests, but often times the people arrested are out in a matter of hours and back on the streets. Mr. Dickey said it can be awfully frustrating for any police department, because a lot of work goes into booking and making an arrest.

Adjourn

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

Clerk: Signed Chad Simons

Mayor: Signed David Rick Ramsey

