

The regular meeting of the Murphy Town Council was held on October 4, 2021 at 5:00 pm at City Hall.

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 opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Ramsey opened the public hearing to Zoning Ordinance Requiring Gaming Facilities to obtain Special Use Permit.

Mr. Ralph Dockery spoke to the Town Council about his establishment on Highway 64 West. Mr. Dockery said his gaming units are legal, and all he was trying to do was run a respectable business.

Town Manager Chad Simons said Mr. Dockery's business is outside of the city, and would not be subject to the special use permit restrictions should they pass later on in the meeting.

Motion was made McClure, seconded by Hughes, to close the public hearing at 5:04 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Mayor Ramsey opened the public hearing on the CDBG funding for Valley River Apartments

Ms. Karen Kiehna read information concerning how the community development block grant program operates, and the requirements to apply.

Motion was made by Smith, seconded by Stansell, to close the public hearing at 5:11 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

No person spoke during public comment.

Approval of the Minutes

Ms. Stansell stated that the special meeting minutes needed to reflect how she was unable to attend.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Smith, to approve the September 7 regular meeting minutes as presented, and the September 17, 2021 special meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Tax Releases and Water and Sewer Adjustments

None.

Vote on Amendment to Ordinance closing a strip ten (10) feet wide in the area where Fort Butler has a fifty (50) foot right-of-way

Town Manager Chad Simons said a better path forward on this would be for Mr. Kephart to apply for a variance through the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Mr. Simons said this would avoid setting a precedent, and that he reached this conclusion after speaking with zoning administrator Frank Dickey.

Mr. Frank Dickey asked why the matter needed to be on the agenda for a vote. Town Manager Chad Simons stated after last month's discussion he felt like he was obligated to include it on the Agenda. Mr. Barry McClure said he was comfortable with the person seeking a variance and consulting the Planning Board.

Motion was made by Stansell, seconded by McClure to reject the proposed Ordinance closing a strip ten (10) feet wide in the area where Fort Butler Street has a fifty (50) foot right-of-way. Motion carried unanimously.

Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance requiring video game businesses to obtain a special use permit.

Mr. Frank Dickey asked what this would do to businesses that operate friendly gaming machines, like downtown pizza.

Mr. Mack Cowan said existing businesses would be grandfathered in, however, any new business would need to obtain a special use permit.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Watson, to approve the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance requiring video game businesses to obtain a special use permit. Motion carried unanimously. A copy of the amendment is included in the Code of Ordinances, published online at townofmurphync.com and in the minute book.

Resolution of Intent to amend Town Charter to eliminate primary elections

Town Manager Chad Simons explained that the Board three years ago amended the charter to have non-partisan elections, with one of the benefits being that the town would not have to pay for a primary election. Mr. Simons stated that was not how the town was set-up currently. Mr. Simons stated that if more than twelve people ran for Town Council it would require a primary, and that if more than two candidates ran for Mayor that would require a primary. The charter amendment will prevent this from occurring.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Dickey, to approve the Resolution of Intent to amend Town Charter to carry plurality elections. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Reports

Mr. Noland Smith asked about the tap near Snap-on Drive. Mr. Simons said it was a residential tap.

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

Mayor Ramsey opened the second public hearing for CDBG funding application for Valley River Apartments.

Ms. Karen Kiehna, of McGill Associates, read additional comments about the process for the Community Development Block Grant Program funding for Valley River Apartments.

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Watson, to close the public hearing at 5:46 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

The Town Council discussed Halloween weekend. Town Manager Chad Simons stated several residents on Duke Street and Valley River Avenue have voiced complaints about the influx of people on Halloween. Mr. Simons stated that those residents did not think it was fair for their street to be closed by the town without their input, sending everyone their way. Mr. Simons said many do not want to participate, and participating can be expensive when buying candy. Mr. Simons said instead of the entire police department congregating at five points, they could be better located throughout town to keep residents safe – and that may prevent further incentivizing a trick or treat rush on Duke Street. Mr. Simons added that all street closures should be approved by the Town Council.

Adjourn

Motion was made by McClure, seconded by Stansell, to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Clerk: Signed Chad Simons

Mayor: Signed David Rick Ramsey