

Mount Jackson
Public Hearing and Town Council Regular Meeting
September 10, 2019

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Public Hearing

Ordinance O-02-2019 Fire Lanes/Fire Apparatus Access Roads. No public comment.

Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Mount Jackson Town Council was held September 10, 2019 at 7:30 PM in the council chambers at 5901 Main Street. Roll call was taken with the following in attendance; Mayor Donnie Pifer; Councilmembers Judy Fultz, Whitney Miller, Dennis Andrick, Rod Shepherd, Roger Rudy, and Bonnie Good. Also, in attendance, Matt Akers, Town Attorney; Debbie Stover, Town Clerk; Jeff Sterner, Police Chief; and Keith Cowart, Police Sergeant. Others in attendance were Mr. and Ms. J. Bucky Miller and daughter, Sharon Baroncelli, Danny Ortt, Karen Costie, Ronnie Zerkel, Wayne & Toni Dinges, Gene Mobley, Karen Taylor and Elizabeth Rood.

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes: Roger Rudy spoke he'd like to add the need for a closed session following the public meeting.

Hear from Visitors: None

Remarks & Recommendations from the Mayor: Mayor Pifer passed around a thank-you card from Roger Rudy. He stated he, Kevin Fauber and Rodney Shepherd met with VDOT in Edinburg this week to discuss the condition of the town streets. The VDOT representative explained slurry treatment was used instead of asphalt due to a price difference of approximately \$4 per square yard for slurry vs. approximately \$12 per square yard for asphalt. VDOT did this project because they are required to maintain state streets in order to receive federal funding, and said this treatment will last another 6-8 years. Whitney Miller asked if VDOT gave any feedback on the quality or lack thereof, and if there was any plan to not use them in the future or to follow up on the quality of their work. Mr. Shepherd stated VDOT explained the slurry will settle into place and look better after a few weeks of traffic. He stated they were very aware of our displeasure, and were open and receptive during discussions. Mayor Pifer said the treatment on Route 11 is latex, and is different from the treatment on the side streets. He doesn't think there's a chance VDOT will not use Slurry Pavers in the future, as they are one of the biggest paving companies in Virginia, and can bid lower in price. Bonnie Good said they never came back to her house to do clean up, however Whitney Miller said they did clean up her sidewalk. Mr. Pifer said he will remind the VDOT representative about Bonnie's issue. Mayor Pifer also thanked Karen Costie and the Hometown Partnership for their work on the Second Sunday Music events, stating this past Sunday's event was excellent with a great crowd.

Remarks from Councilmembers: None

Presentations:

1. Mayor Pifer presented J. Bucky Miller with a hand crafted dedication platter made by Kary Haun, to recognize and thank him for all his years of service and dedication to the town.
2. Karen Taylor with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC), along with Elizabeth Rood with KFH Consulting Group, had a PowerPoint slide presentation on the Shenandoah County Public Transit Feasibility Study. They spoke on the study process and overview, general public and stakeholder outreach, land use analysis, potential transit service options, financial and implementation plan, final thoughts, and next steps. Ms. Taylor stated there was a kick-off meeting in September 2018, with outreach

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to stakeholder groups and the public to review socioeconomic data and local planning documents to come up with public transit service and organizational options. A recommended transit service plan was completed June 2019. They had robust stakeholder input from September-November 2018 with human service agencies, and public schools, who feel public transit is needed to help with access to jobs, medical appointments, school, training, shopping and other life activities. The primary focus would be for job access and for disabled persons and seniors access to their daily life activities. They met with the supervisor of student careers at Shenandoah County Schools, who said 50% of students with internships need help with transportation. NSVRC did an employer survey and 26 employers responded representing 3305 employees. Nine reported their employees say transportation to work is a problem, typically as a result of carpool arrangements that fall through, and nine reported transportation causes issues in hiring and retaining employees. Ms. Taylor stated they received 1100 responses from a public survey, with 91% stating they drive themselves and do not face transportation barriers, however 65% indicated there is a need to start a public transit program. The survey showed 342 people said they would use it on the Route 11 corridor, Monday-Friday, with fares between \$1 and \$2. The public survey included 270 comments with 195 positive (72%), 54 negative (20%) and 21 neutral (8%). Ms. Rood spoke next on the demographics, and said other things factored in to this study such as examining all the town and county comprehensive plans. Her consulting firm came up with an organization plan and a service plan. The organization plan involves NSVRC serving as the oversight agency to do the grant work with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), and would be the administrative arm for the program. There would be an advisory committee to help make sure the program meets the needs of the community. They are discussing a mobility management program in the future, to bring in information not only about the new public transit system but other programs that are in place in the region. For example, Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging (SAAA) has a program called WellTran, and there are other agencies that serve people with disabilities. She said the street service would be provided by a contractor, and NSVRC would prepare and send out a request for proposals. There are 3 proposed public transit options, 1) Shenandoah North (Woodstock to Strasburg) and Shenandoah South (Woodstock to New Market) Monday-Friday 6AM-6PM, 2) All of Option 1, plus service to LFCC Monday-Friday 7AM-6PM, and 3) All of Option 2, plus Saturday service. Each route would include a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile perimeter outside the Route 11 corridor to pick up those who can't get to Route 11. The committee is discussing adding hours to Option 1 from 5AM-8PM but that will depend on the level of funding. The frequency of service will be 2 hours for Shenandoah North and South routes due their length, and hourly for the LFCC route. The proposed fare is \$1 per boarding and they are estimating 30,000 annual passenger trips for the Shenandoah North and South routes, and 7,500 trips for the LFCC route. In terms of capital they would ask the contractor provide 3-4 vehicles, 14-passanger, lift-equipped, with bike racks. Shelters and seating could be added in the future once the program is established. The proposed budget for the Public Transit Administration and Oversight is \$51,661 per year. The proposed contract fees would be \$336,600 for Option 1, \$499,800 for Option 2, and \$569,688 for Option 3. DRPT offers a state program to help transit systems get started, which is 80% state and 20% locally funded for the first 18 months. The proposed amount of local funding needed for the first 18 months is \$75,066 for Option 1, \$105,747 for Option 2, and \$118,886 for Option 3, however these figures will be lowered because the Chamber of Commerce has secured an increase in funding from business partners from \$5,000 to \$21,000. After the first 18 months it would transition to the Rural General Public Program which is federally funded money with a 50/50 match. At that point the proposed local funding needed would be \$111,562 for Option 1, \$157,585 for Option 2, and \$177,293 for Option 3. They have not factored in fares which would be additional revenue. Ms. Rood said her role is almost complete except for helping Ms. Taylor present this to

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remaining towns. The plan is in place, and they would now need to secure local match commitments because the grant application needs to be submitted to DRPT by February 1, 2020. After approval RFP's would be sent out to bid, the contracted operator would do final route and schedule development, and together with NSVRC would do development of policies, naming and marketing. Ron Zerkel asked if they've talked to George's in Edinburg since they furnish their own transportation. Ms. Rood answered yes and they state transportation is an issue for them. She said if they wanted to participate there certainly could be some targeted runs with more financial responsibility for George's, since they are more than ¾ mile from Route 11 corridor. Mr. Rudy asked if there has been any exploration of current contractors to see if they'd be interested in bringing their services to this area. Ms. Rood explained with public money, you have to put it out to bid, and cannot reach out to any specific contractors. She feels however there are some local contractors who may be interested, such as Virginia Regional Transit for example, who operates in Warren, Front Royal, Culpepper, Staunton, Augusta, and Waynesboro. Whitney Miller asked if Warren County has given any positive or negative feedback of the transit program. Ms. Taylor stated she has worked very closely with Doug Stanley in Warren County, with no specific advice other than the main goal is getting businesses involved. She said the town of Front Royal has a trolley system, and the county has a corridor connector on 522. There was some discussion on the LFCC route option, and Ms. Taylor said Warren County transit service does take students to LFCC's Governor's School. Ms. Miller said our Governor's School is at Triplett Tech, and would not be an issue and she feels Option 1 is most beneficial. Ms. Taylor stated they are not looking at the LFCC leg currently because Dr. Johnson is working with them on having a satellite location at Triplett Tech. Ms. Rood added Shenandoah County is unique in having the Route 11 corridor, which makes the transit program very favorable. Ms. Taylor used Dutch Lane subdivision as an example of accessing many people within the ¾ mile extension that could benefit from the service as well.

Chief of Police Report: None

Town Manager Report: None

Town Attorney Report: None

Danny Orttts from Mount Jackson Fire Department presented August's Fire and Rescue report, and apologized for not having July's report. The total responses for were 78, with 53 EMS responses and 25 fire responses. 85% of the total responses included volunteer crews. 62% of the EMS calls were responded to by a unit capable of advanced life support. The average transport distance was 10.7 miles, total number of members taking calls was 20, and the total number of calls in Mount Jackson was 44% of the total call volume. Their event center hosted 2 events in August with 10 volunteers helping for a total of 71 volunteer hours. Mr. Orttts reported their advanced life support ambulance was destroyed by fire on August 31 while they were in the building for another event going on in the back. They were fortunate members put the fire out quickly and a local towns person pulled the unit out with his truck. The cause is undetermined but most likely electrical. The building was smoke damaged, the insulation melted, the bay door motor was destroyed, and conduit will have to be replaced. At this time they don't know if there was damage to the upstairs storage which contains decorations, dishes, etc. There will be a steak dinner October 19 from 4-7PM and to see a squad member for tickets at \$16 per person. Whitney Miller asked if there will be breakfast the morning of the Apple Harvest Festival, and Mr. Orttts replied yes.

Committee Reports:

1. Finance Committee Chairperson, Rod Shepherd had nothing to report.
2. Ordinance Committee Chairperson, Dennis Andrick had nothing to report.
3. Personnel Committee Chairperson, Roger Rudy had nothing to report.

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4. Public Safety Committee Chairperson, Judy Fultz, reported August Police Department calls were 686, down 242 from July. There were 3 criminal offenses, 2 under investigation and 1 cleared by arrest. They found 1 open door/window. They conducted 425 property checks and extra patrols. Roger Rudy had a question on the criminal offense report about the investigation of a 12 year old case, asking if that meant it involved a 12 year old person. Police Chief Sterner stated no, it was a case reported 12 years after the offense, and they are attempting to locate the suspect who could be in Texas.
5. Public Services Committee Chairperson, Bonnie Good had nothing to report.
6. Public Properties & Facilities Committee Chairperson, Whitney Miller spoke she is hoping to have some playground equipment pricing next month. She already has one amount but there's a grant available this year on a piece of equipment she is interested in getting, and is waiting on that amount.

Consent Agenda: Approval – Minutes of August 13, 2019 Regular Meeting.

Councilmember Rudy MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Good to APPROVE the Consent Agenda consisting of the Approval-Minutes of August 13, 2019 Regular Meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
“ Miller			
“ Andrick			
“ Shepherd			
“ Rudy			
“ Good			

6 AYES, motion carried

Old Business: Ordinance O-02-2019 Fire Lanes/Fire Apparatus Access Roads – Eligible for Action.

Councilmember Shepherd MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to APPROVE Ordinance O-02-2019.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
“ Miller			
“ Andrick			
“ Shepherd			
“ Rudy			
“ Good			

6 AYES, motion carried

New Business: Resolution R-03-2019 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Grant Program – South Main Street Sidewalk project – extending the sidewalk from Triplett Tech to the new bridge crossing the Shenandoah River.

Bonnie Good stated she and Whitney had a discussion about the possibility of retaining the old bridge and extending the sidewalk there to use as a town feature and pedestrian walkway. Mayor Pifer said they did discuss this with VDOT who gave them some information on obtaining ownership of that bridge, which would include bridge inspection. Rod Shepherd stated that issue is on the table and being discussed by several agencies, but that this specific resolution is only to apply for a grant to build a sidewalk from

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Triplett Tech to the riverbank, and doesn't specify to which bridge. Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Rudy both endorsed the idea of keeping the old bridge as well, for pedestrian walkway. Mr. Andrick asked if we'd have to purchase the old bridge and Mayor Pifer responded that varies, but could possibly be purchased for as little as \$1 if the owner doesn't want to incur the cost to deconstruct and remove it. However once we'd purchase it, we'd assume all maintenance and inspection costs. Mr. Shepherd stated the interest was expressed to VDOT to enhance the new bridge design to add a sidewalk. He feels this is necessary because of not knowing what would happen with the old bridge in the future.

Councilmember Andrick MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Shepherd to APPROVE Resolution R-03-2019.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
“ Miller			
“ Andrick			
“ Shepherd			
“ Rudy			
“ Good			

6 AYES, motion carried

MOTION by Councilmember Rudy, seconded by Councilmember Andrick that the Council for the Town of Mount Jackson convene a closed session under Virginia Freedom of Information Act under state code section 2.2-3711(A)(1) to discuss personnel involving specific officers, appointees, or employees of the Town of Mount Jackson for the purpose of discussing such individual's assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salary, discipline or resignation.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
“ Miller			
“ Andrick			
“ Shepherd			
“ Rudy			
“ Good			

6 AYES, motion carried

Mayor Pifer adjourned the meeting at 8:25 PM to begin the closed session.

Motion made by Councilmember Rudy seconded by Councilmember Andrick to return to the regular meeting at 9:19 PM. Approved unanimously. Mayor Pifer stated the Council of the Town of Mount Jackson hereby certifies, by roll call vote, that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia Law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Council of the Town of Mount Jackson.

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Vote:

Councilmember Fultz	So Certify
Councilmember Miller	So Certify
Councilmember Andrick	So Certify
Councilmember Shepherd	So Certify
Councilmember Rudy	So Certify
Councilmember Good	So Certify
Mayor Pifer	So Certify

AYES-7, NAYS-0, ABSENT-0

Motion made by Councilmember Shepherd to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM.

Clerk

Mayor