

Mount Jackson  
Town Council Regular Meeting  
October 8, 2019

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Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Mount Jackson Town Council was held October 8, 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, Neil Showalter, Acting Town Manager; Charlie Moore, Assistant Town Manager; Matt Akers, Town Attorney; Debbie Stover, Town Clerk; Jeff Sterner, Police Chief; and Keith Cowart, Police Sergeant. Others in attendance were Kelly Stauff, Suzanne Ross, John Boor, Karen Costie, Ronnie Zerkel, Joe Paxton, and two other members of the community.

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes: None

Hear from Visitors:

1. Suzanne Ross from 239 Tisinger Street spoke on two issues. Early last summer she was sent a letter about a car she was trying to sell which did not have a license plate on it, and was parked in her driveway. She stated it could only be seen from the south on Broad Street, with a large hedge hiding most of it. She thought that was a little picky considering there are places in town that look like parking lots with junky cars. Second she asked what the horrible mess on Broad Street is, and that cars driving over it is causing dust to be swept towards her property. Mayor Pifer replied the town has been doing some utility work on Broad Street, and the weather hasn't cooperated to repave it yet. Charlie Moore added paving is down to the last coat which should be soon, depending on weather. Chief Jeff Sterner said he'd speak to Officer Young, who handles inoperable vehicles, and he would let Ms. Ross know the specifics in her case. Ms. Ross stated the car is gone now. Mr. Sterner added that Officer Young does this throughout the town, and they remove inoperable vehicles on a regular basis to keep the town looking nice.

2. John Boor gave an update on the remainder of the year activities. For the Harvest Festival they've got over 35 vendors so far, 4 bands, and are having special events. He said the Partnership met Monday and discussed children's activities, and will bring back the Halloween Parade. They will meet at Mt. Calvary parking lot at 11 AM, march through town to town hall where judges will pick winners and award baskets. They are promoting Joe Proctor's Haunted House, and Joe donated two tickets for this. Mr. Boor asked Mayor Pifer to be one of the judges, and would like to recruit a second town staff representative as well. He and Karen Costie spoke to the middle and high schools to get students to help at the Festival. They are doing a 50/50 raffle, and will give proceeds to Luke's Backpack Program. He spoke on the Christmas Parade, is trying to get more marching bands involved this year, and talked to First Bank and some others who are interested in entering floats. The parade will be after the Holiday Homes Tour ends, will line up at Valley Fertilizer at 3 PM, and begin at 3:30 PM going south through town ending across from South End Grocery.

Remarks & Recommendations from the Mayor: Mayor Pifer stated he and Councilmember Rudy attended the Conflict of Interest training on October 1 in Woodstock, which was very informative. The next day they were part of a sewer plant tour that Gale Netz conducted for the Governor's School for gifted children, and he encouraged everyone to take this tour to see how our state-of-the-art plant works. That evening himself and Councilmember Fultz attended the Town & County Dinner at the VFW in Edinburg, and learned some things they will discuss later in the meeting. He stated April 2020 is our turn to host the dinner, so we need to start planning this. Also at the invitation of the Rotary Club, Councilmember Good invited himself and Ms. Pifer to their charter banquet at the Edinburg Mill on September 12, which was a very nice dinner. He

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stated back in September he sent the original architect's drawing of the 2014 proposed bridge replacement to Delegate Todd Gilbert, and to Senator Mark Obenshain, which included a letter requesting their help to restore some of the recently deleted features that made the bridge special to our town. He received a phone call today from Mr. Obenshain's legislative assistant saying there were meeting with VDOT tomorrow to try to convince them to reinstate what was deleted from the original proposal. He also just attended the Mayor's Institute, and he and Councilmembers Shepherd and Good attended the VML Annual Conference in Roanoke.

Remarks from Councilmembers: Councilmember Rudy complimented John Boor on the great work with the restoration on Nelson Theatre and the marquee.

Presentations: None

Chief of Police Report: Mr. Sterner confirmed the plan to have the Christmas Parade on December 14.

Town Manager Report: Charlie Moore stated Ms. Fultz gave him something to report on, that around 1999-2000 we began to do planning for Main Street and because Mayor Williams spent a lot of time working with Libby Welsh on the Commonwealth Transportation Board we were extremely fortunate to get some very significant grants both for Main Street and Town Hall. Three quarters of the grants came from Ms. Welsh's efforts, and Mr. Holtzman provided the matching grant, so this building came about through considerable generosity. Ms. Welsh passed away earlier this year and we sent a card to her husband and family who responded that it was an extraordinary tribute to Libby and their family will treasure it for years to come, signed by Jim Welsh. Mr. Moore reported the lease between Hardees and the property owner hasn't been completed yet, so it's in the gray area between ownerships. He stated the town manager recruitment process is proceeding along, and there are applications coming in, with a deadline of November 15. The new water plant completed final adjustments today and they are recharging all the media it uses, like the water softener, and it will go fully operational tomorrow with final approval from the Health Department. The grant for the new water pipe across the farm over to that facility from Well 4 looks like it will be approved, and the contractor is ready to work on that probably starting in November. He referred to a picture of the original bridge plan design, located on the back wall, and the actual design is to start in the fall of 2020. Mr. Moore stated sidewalks on the north are going out to bid and sidewalks on the south will be bid and constructed after the bridge is done. The project behind the old Triplett School should start construction on 3 units with hopes to have them ready in the spring. And finally, they're getting lots of complaints on trash collection and working on some ideas to try and resolve that.

Town Attorney Report: None

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 stated since the retirement of our town manager October 1 there's been work done in the personnel committee to begin the process of filling that void.

Advertisements went out to the local papers, Northern Virginia Daily and Daily News Record, and appeared in the Virginia Municipal League publication and on the International City and County Management Association's on-line postings. As a result within a short period of time we've had at least 10 applications and letters of interest received by the clerk, from both in and out of state, so we are getting good coverage.

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The rest of the personnel committee matters will be discussed in a closed session following this meeting.

4. Public Safety Committee Chairperson, Judy Fultz, reported September Police Department calls were 820, up 134 from August. There were 7 criminal offenses, 1 under investigation, 4 cleared by arrest, 1 cleared by decline to prosecute and 1 lead was exhausted. They found 5 open doors/windows at 5 different locations. They conducted 545 extra patrols and property checks. She deferred the Rescue and Fire report to Kelly Stauff to present. Mr. Stauff reported September had 72 responses, 43 EMS and 29 Fire, 81% of the responses included volunteer crews with 63% having ALS (advanced life support) capabilities. They had 21 people taking calls, total number of calls in Mount Jackson was 55%, and 45% out of the county. They hosted 5 events in September, with 24 volunteers for 374 volunteer hours. Mr. Stauff spoke on the loss of the ambulance, and passed around a picture of it. It caught on fire in the station a few minutes after crew returned from a rescue call and it burned up, and was declared a total loss by the insurance company. They've ordered a replacement, not a monster medic like that one, but one similar to the smaller 4-wheel drive unit they have now, a Dodge 5500 series, which should be here mid-January. The county let them borrow a unit so they've not been without one. There is a steak dinner October 19, with ticket sales ending this Saturday. Also there will be a free will offering community breakfast on October 26 at 7 AM. Councilmember Good asked about insurance coverage on the building itself. Mr. Stauff said the insurance company is asking them to find someone to do the inside cleaning. Servpro from Rockingham County is booked up for months, and ServiceMaster in Winchester said they'd clean if we'd remove all insulation, which would involve a significant undertaking of removing 16 roof panels. The insurance company has already paid for a lot of this in advance, they just need to find someone to do the work. They applied for some grants, and the insurance company responded well and they should be in good shape financially. Mr. Rudy asked if the cause of the fire was ever determined. Mr. Stauff, a mechanic, and a forensic investigator met for hours and narrowed it down to a small area, and that it was electrical in nature. Mr. Rudy asked if there was a thought of installing a sprinkler system in the bay, and Mr. Stauff had not heard anything about that possibility.

5. Public Services Committee Chairperson, Bonnie Good stated her committee and a few others are going to have a workshop meeting on trash pick-up, the possibility of new electronic water meters, and the replacement of some piping down through the middle of town, on Wednesday, October 16 at 6:30 PM in the council chambers.

6. Public Properties & Facilities Committee Chairperson, Whitney Miller stated she received an email today from Cunningham Recreation confirming we did qualify for a grant for playground equipment. They detailed two options; Phase 1 with the large piece of equipment, which qualifies for the grant, and Phase 2 with the other pieces of equipment, that don't qualify for the grant. She stated if they decide to move forward, the additional pieces to add later would include another large piece of fitness equipment and a bee learning center play area within the walking trail. The grant is offered only through the end of the year and her thoughts are the large piece would replace the last of the old equipment beside the shelter. She will send the link to Councilmembers to see the visual picture of the equipment, which ties into our existing equipment of stained glass and the same colors. Ms. Good asked if there is remaining money in the budget for this. Ms. Miller replied she's not certain of her current budget but 2 years ago this would have been in the budget. Neil Showalter added the town has spent some money since then, such as the zip line, but he could get an updated budget amount.

Consent Agenda: Approval – Minutes of September 10, 2019 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting, and Minutes of October 1, 2019 Special Meeting.

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Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to APPROVE the Consent Agenda consisting of the Approval-Minutes of September 10, 2019 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting, and Minutes of October 1, 2019 Special 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: None

New Business:

1. Veteran Tribute Banner Program – Mayor Pifer stated at the Town & County Dinner Hal Sharpe gave a presentation on the military banners honoring veterans that hang in Edinburg. They are 24x48, double sided, full color, with the town name on top. They are trying to get each town to join in this program to get full county coverage. The banners are usually purchased by loved ones in the \$100 price range and the brackets, if ours don’t work, are a small monetary amount. He personally likes the banners and is going to see how much interest he can generate. VFW Post 2447 is the sponsoring agency in Edinburg. Ronnie Zerkel said there is an agency in Mount Jackson, Vietnam Veterans, whom he’s the president of, and may be interested in helping with sponsorship. Mr. Pifer said coverage is WWI, WWII, not just Vietnam, and Mr. Zerkel said their goal is to help all veterans, not just Vietnam. Ms. Good asked if this would be restricted to people from this community only, and Mayor Pifer didn’t think so, but would ask. He also mentioned the possibility of hanging them on telephone poles due to there not being enough street poles. Mr. Pifer stated are put up in May and November mostly, stored in a poster tubes, and should last for many years. Mr. Rudy asked if they would be displayed right angle, or at an angle as our flags are, and it was decided they’d need to be at a right angle to see all the information clearly. There was some discussion on the order process, that the flags are reasonably priced, and would not be sold for a profit.

2. Hometown Partnership Remainder of Year Expenses – Rod Shepherd stated the Hometown Partnership has come to the town asking to help fund some of the costs of the Harvest Festival and Christmas Parade. He is in favor of this, and said that money would come out of motel tax, used for tourism-type activities, and we have strong revenue on that currently.

Councilmember Shepherd MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE a grant of \$2,630 to the Hometown Partnership.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

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“ Good  
6 AYES, motion carried

MOTION by Councilmember Andrick, seconded by Councilmember Good, to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:13 PM to begin the closed session. Meeting adjourned by Mayor Pifer.

MOTION by Councilmember Rudy, seconded by Councilmember Fultz 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 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.

Vote:

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

7 AYES, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT, motion carried

Motion made by Councilmember Andrick, seconded by Councilmember Good to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 PM.

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Debbie A. Stover, Clerk

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Donald I. “Donnie” Pifer, Mayor