

Mount Jackson
Town Council Regular Meeting
August 11, 2020

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Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Mount Jackson Town Council was held August 11, 2020 at 7:00 PM in the council chambers at 5901 Main Street. Roll call was taken with the following in attendance; Vice-Mayor Rod Shepherd; Councilmembers Judy Fultz, and Roger Rudy. Councilmembers Whitney Miller, Dennis Andrick, and Bonnie Good attended electronically through Zoom. Mayor Donnie Pifer was absent.

Also, in attendance, Neil Showalter, Town Manager; Mario Rosso, Finance Director; Jeff Sterner, Police Chief; Keith Cowart, Police Sergeant; and Debbie Stover, Town Clerk. Dave Moore and Kevin Estep from Cornerstone Technology were present to video record the meeting. There were no visitors.

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes: None

Hear from Visitors: None

Remarks & Recommendations from the Mayor: Vice-Mayor Shepherd stated the newly repointed Union Church looks great and encouraged everyone to see it. He also noted as presiding officer of tonight's meeting, he will not be making motions or seconds.

Remarks from Councilmembers: None

Presentations: None

Chief of Police Report: None

Town Manager Report:

Mr. Showalter stated the Triplett/SunTribe Solar site plan dated June 22 was approved with conditions on July 17. The French Brothers/Hardees site plan dated July 9 was approved with conditions on July 30.

Mr. Showalter stated Boddie-Noell Enterprises, the Hardees franchise operator for the Mount Jackson site, recently submitted a sign package for review. He and the Town's zoning consultant, Darla Orr, reviewed the application and found areas where the town code specs had been exceeded. Boddie-Noell revisited those points and submitted a revised sign package this afternoon.

Mr. Showalter stated the pool will be operating daily through the end of this week, then weekends only through Labor Day. This pool season seems to be going relatively smoothly, with no incidents reported, and patrons have enjoyed having it available for their recreational use.

Mr. Showalter stated Karl Schaeffer called to report that the Edinburg VDOT field office has cleared all field notes on the sidewalk drawing package. Staff is currently trying to secure several second-request easement agreements needed from eight adjoining landowners, and will then submit the plans and final forms for the Staunton field office review. Mr. Showalter noted while some of the deadlines are out of the Town's control, the target goal is to have the bid opening in late September.

Committee Reports:

1. Finance Committee Chairperson, Rod Shepherd stated staff will report on several financial issues under New Business.

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2. Ordinance Committee Chairperson, Dennis Andrick had no report.

3. Personnel Committee Chairperson, Roger Rudy stated the Town's supervisor of wastewater management will be retiring December 31. Initially, four applications were received and he, Neil, and Rob Mangrum interviewed those four candidates on July 30. Three of those candidates hold certifications required for the position, and two of those candidates are being considered for this position. The fourth candidate has qualifications to replace an additional wastewater employee, who will retire in November. Councilmember Rudy stated a fifth application was received after the initial interviews, who has similar qualifications as the fourth applicant, and will be interviewed at a later date. The Personnel Committee will present one or more recommendations to the Council at the September meeting.

4. Public Safety Committee Chairperson, Judy Fultz reported July Police Department calls were 798, up 200 from June. There were 4 criminal offenses, all 4 closed with 2 leads exhausted, 1 prosecution declined, and 1 no jurisdiction. They conducted 633 extra patrols and property checks. There was no report from the Fire and Rescue Department.

5. Public Services Committee Chairperson, Bonnie Good had no report.

Mr. Moore from Cornerstone Technology stated at this time he would need to restart the live feed due to technical issues.

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to take a 5-minute recess while the technical issues are being resolved.

Councilmember Rudy MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to return from the 5-minute recess.

6. Public Properties & Facilities Committee Chairperson, Whitney Miller stated she is working with Mr. Showalter to find an arborist or horticulturalist to examine the trees along Route 11, some of which have tent worms, and to make improvements to Mayor's Park. Mr. Showalter stated he spoke with Randy Lonas today, and the Town will pursue retaining Ken Lutz, who also suggested mulching around the benches.

Consent Agenda: Approval – Minutes of July 14, 2020 Regular Meeting

Councilmember Fultz MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Rudy to APPROVE the Consent Agenda above.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

Old Business: None

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New Business:

1. Resolution R-04-2020 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Mount Jackson Exonerating Personal Property Taxes for Years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Mr. Rosso stated per Virginia code, collection of personal property taxes over 5 years old cannot be enforced, which was confirmed by the Town’s auditors as well. These delinquent account amounts have already been reserved by the auditors on the financial statement, so once exonerated, will have no financial impact. Mr. Rosso stated staff has done a great job of trying to collect on these accounts, and although DMV stops and multiple reminders have helped, some accounts remain delinquent. The uncollected personal property tax amount is less than 1% a year of total revenues, which is roughly \$2,000.

Councilmember Rudy MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to APPROVE R-04-2020.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

2. Charge-Off of Inactive Utility Accounts from 2014 through June 30, 2020.

Mr. Rosso stated these are inactive water/sewer/trash accounts where the customers have moved out and their deposit could not cover the remaining balance. These delinquent accounts, which include penalty fees, represent .15%, however, for utility charges alone, only represent .07%.

Councilmember Andrick MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Good to APPROVE charging off these inactive utility accounts from 2014 through June 30, 2020.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

3. Resumption of Utility Cutoffs and Repayment Plan Policy.

Mr. Showalter stated following the onset of the COVID-19 emergency, the Town administration adopted the State Corporation Commission’s recommendation and established a moratorium on disconnecting services for non-payment. The state is expected to end the moratorium August 31, and Town staff would like to reinstate the previous disconnection policy, and adopt a Utility Billing Payment Plan, as of September 1.

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This payment plan is primarily needed in those cases where the bill exceeds the deposit. Vice-Mayor Shepherd asked approximately how many accounts this affects. Mr. Showalter referred to a list of 22 accounts, some being businesses, but stated his belief is 5-10 of those will bring their bills current. Mr. Rosso stated only 13 accounts are more than 60 days in arrears, which out of approximately 800 accounts, is a very low percentage.

Councilmember Andrick stated his understanding from earlier in the meeting, is Virginia Code indicates you cannot collect on arrears. Mr. Showalter pointed out the Town is not regulated by the state, and only followed the SCC's recommendation in terms of disconnection of services.

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE the resumption of utility cutoffs and repayment plan policy.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

4. Approve Purchase of Media Cart to Facilitate Future Live Streaming of Meetings.

Mr. Showalter stated the Town has been live streaming meetings for several months due to COVID-19. In anticipation of continuing to live stream meetings once the pandemic ends, and to improve the current process, staff asked Cornerstone to provide a quote to upgrade our camera ability, add several microphones, and improve screen quality. The quote from Cornerstone Technology is approximately \$7,800. Mr. Showalter noted the county administrator has stated CARES act funds can be used to cover this expense at 100%. Staff recommends allocating an additional 10% to cover other improvements, primarily lighting. Councilmember Rudy stated this could be considered positive, in relation to the pandemic, because these upgrades will improve communication with the public.

Councilmember Andrick MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to APPROVE the purchase of media cart, and an additional 10% for primarily lighting, to facilitate future live streaming of meetings.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

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5. Approve Boundary Adjustment of 0.071 Acres Between MAP #80-A-148D and #80-A-148C.

Mr. Showalter stated the owner of the Hottle property submitted an adjustment to their northern boundary, through Newman Surveying, which was agreed upon with the adjacent property owner. The Town code allows Council to approve boundary adjustments if, a) such strip or parcel is added to and integrated with the adjacent land not to be again separated or resubdivided from the consolidated tract except in accordance with applicable ordinance provisions, and b) the residual lot or tract meets such minimum requirements or is similarly added to another lot. Mr. Showalter stated staff has found no reason to oppose this request. Vice-Mayor Shepherd asked if the Town would incur any expense for this boundary adjustment, and Mr. Showalter responded no.

Councilmember Fultz MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE the boundary adjustment of 0.071 acres between MAP #80-A-148D and #80-A-148C.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

6. Appointment of Randy Bailey as Trustee of the Union Church Representing St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Mount Jackson, Replacing James R. Poplar – No Term Limit.

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE the appointment of Randy Bailey as trustee of the Union Church representing St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

7. Reappointment of Robert Luse as the Town of Mount Jackson Representative to the Shenandoah County Tourism Council for the Term Expiring June 30, 2023.

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE the reappointment of Robert Luse as the Town of Mount Jackson representative to the Shenandoah County Tourism Council for the term expiring June 30, 2023.

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ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

8. Adoption of Revised Special Event Permit Application.

Sergeant Cowart stated the recent national and local events, such as July 11 in front of Town Hall, has prompted the review of the Town code as it pertains to events on the Town's public property. Chapter 46, Article IV, Sections 46-71 through 46-74 covers the requirements for special event permits. The Town's previous permit focused mainly on events at the ballfield and park area. The updated permit was approved by Town Attorney Jay Neal, who recommended some changes that have been incorporated into the new permit. The new permit added additional signatures, from the Town Manager, Chief of Police, and President of Mount Jackson Rescue and Fire, or their designees, to increase awareness and preparation. Vice-Mayor Shepherd asked, under the Rules, Regulations, and Procedures section, #10, if it is referring to the old town-owned fire department property, or the new property location. Sergeant Cowart stated it covers their current property location, plus any other red zones.

Councilmember Rudy MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE adopting the revised special event permit application.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Councilmember Fultz			
Councilmember Miller			
Councilmember Andrick			
Councilmember Shepherd			
Councilmember Rudy			
Councilmember Good			
6 AYES, motion carried			

The meeting was adjourned by Vice-Mayor Shepherd at 7:43 PM.

Debbie A. Stover, Clerk

Rod Shepherd, Vice-Mayor