

Mount Jackson
Town Council Regular Meeting

June 8, 2021

-1-

The regular meeting of the Mount Jackson Town Council was held June 8, 2021 at 7:00 PM in the council chambers at 5901 Main Street. Roll call was taken with Mayor Pifer, and Councilmembers Rod Shepherd, Whitney Miller, Bonnie Good, and Roger Rudy in attendance. Councilmembers Judy Fultz and Dennis Andrick, attended electronically through Zoom.

Also, in attendance, Neil Showalter, Town Manager; Mario Rosso, Finance Director; Jeff Sterner, Police Chief; and Debbie Allen, Town Clerk. Darla Orr, the Town's zoning consultant from The Berkley Group, attended electronically through Zoom. Visitor Jim Hines was present. Dave Moore from Cornerstone Technology was present to video record the meeting.

Agenda Additions/Deletions/Changes: None

Hear from Visitors: None

Remarks & Recommendations from the Mayor: Mayor Pifer stated Chief Sterner and Investigator Caplinger were seen weeding around Town Hall, which goes above and beyond their duties, and is much appreciated.

Remarks from Councilmembers: Mr. Shepherd stated the Shenandoah County Swim League is starting back up, after a year off due to the pandemic. The Mount Jackson Fins swim team has two home meets, June 22 and June 24, starting at 5:30. He encouraged everyone to stop in to see the energy that goes into a swim meet, both by swimmers and active volunteers. Mr. Shepherd stated the Town Council was very instrumental in getting the Fins up and going back in 2000.

Presentations: None

Chief of Police Report: None

Town Manager Report: Mr. Showalter stated he received an email from Saudi Arabia with a signed easement agreement, which was notarized by the US Embassy staff. This was the last easement agreement and the Town can move forward with adding north end sidewalks. The next step will be the Mayor countersigning all the easement agreements, notarized by the Town Clerk, then giving them to the Town Attorney to record. In the meantime, consultant Karl Schaeffer has reached out to VDOT to ask them to update all of their bid authorization papers, and the Town should be able to go to bid later this summer.

Committee Reports:

1. Finance Committee Chairperson, Rod Shepherd stated he will speak under New Business.
2. Ordinance Committee Chairperson, Dennis Andrick had no report.
3. Personnel Committee Chairperson, Roger Rudy had no report.
4. Public Safety Committee Chairperson, Judy Fultz reported May Police Department calls were 1,023, up 217 from April, due to property checks conducted. There were 10 criminal offenses, 2 closed leads exhausted, 5 cleared by arrest, 2 under investigation, and 1 closed victim declined to prosecute. They conducted 781 extra patrols/property checks, 34 foot patrols, and located 4 open doors/windows at 4 different locations. The Mount Jackson Rescue and Fire department had 91 total responses, 71 EMS and 20 Fire. The total Mount Jackson calls were 32. They had 13 volunteers taking calls and 22% of all calls included volunteer members on the apparatus.

Mount Jackson
Town Council Regular Meeting
June 8, 2021
-2-

Ms. Good asked if open windows and doors found is when the police department knows a resident is not at home. Chief Sterner said the nighttime officers do business checks and find them on their own, not only spotlighting the businesses, but pulling on doors. Ms. Good asked if residential homes are checked. Chief Sterner said not recently, but they have in the past. An example would be when a resident goes on vacation and a family member may stop in to feed a pet, and forget to lock the door.

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

6. Public Properties & Facilities Committee Chairperson, Whitney Miller stated Little League is wrapping up the season, but they have a tournament June 15 – June 19, for 9-11 year olds, with only one game per night. Ms. Miller stated the Town provided the light bulbs, and found someone to replace them, but one ballast is out. They have a call into an electrician to get this fixed because the tournament will go into the night. She will be putting a sign on the zip line, stating no jumping, no bouncing, and what the weight limit is, because this activity is causing the line to lower and snap. Ms. Miller stated the pool looks good, and appears to be running smoothly, and the new planters and flowers are out and look very nice as well.

Consent Agenda: Approval – Minutes of May 11, 2021 Special Meeting
Minutes of May 11, 2021 Regular Meeting and Public Hearing

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz 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

New Business:

1. Ordinance O-03-2021 An Ordinance to Amend the Code of the Town of Mount Jackson, 2020, as Amended, by Amending and Reenacting Specific Subsections of Section 66-41 of the Zoning Ordinance Relative to Signs.
 - a. Eligible for Action

Mr. Showalter stated last month the text amendments to the sign ordinance were introduced and a joint public hearing was advertised and held last night. The Planning Commission voted to recommend the text amendments as presented, and Ms. Orr is available tonight if there are any further questions.

Ms. Good stated in regards to A-frames the ordinance states the footage is 4 feet, and does that mean every A-frame will be the same size. Ms. Orr stated in Table 4, 4 feet is the maximum, which is in the current ordinance and no change is proposed. Ms. Good stated it would be clearer to add “maximum”, like most of the other items in the Table. Ms. Orr stated that could be added, but Section 66-41(e) which introduces these Tables, and at the top of Table 4, the title says “maximum sign dimensions for the B-1 zoning district”. Ms. Orr states it should be covered from a legal standpoint as is, but could be changed for clarity. Ms. Good stated she feels it should be added for consistency and clarity, for free standing and A-frame signs.

Mount Jackson
Town Council Regular Meeting
June 8, 2021
-3-

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE Ordinance O-03-2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYE

NAY

ABSTAIN

ABSENT

Councilmember Fultz
Councilmember Miller
Councilmember Andrick
Councilmember Shepherd
Councilmember Rudy
Councilmember Good
6 AYES, motion carried

2. Appointment of Independent Auditors

Mr. Shepherd stated Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates have done a fabulous job for the Town, and the Economic Development Authority over the years, specializing in municipal accounting and auditing.

Councilmember Shepherd MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to APPROVE the Appointment of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates as the Town's Auditors for the Next Three Years as Outlined in the Memo in the Council Packet.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYE

NAY

ABSTAIN

ABSENT

Councilmember Fultz
Councilmember Miller
Councilmember Andrick
Councilmember Shepherd
Councilmember Rudy
Councilmember Good
6 AYES, motion carried

3. Resolution R-05-2021 – Resolution Exonerating Personal Property Taxes for the Year 2015.

Mr. Rosso stated according to Virginia Code Section 58.2-39-40, there is a limitation of five years on collecting local taxes. His report shows the accounts in question, and the collection percentage over the years, which continues to be very high at over 99%. Mr. Showalter stated 2015 set a new record for collectability, and front office staff does an excellent job at chasing down those taxes at every opportunity.

Councilmember Shepherd MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Rudy to APPROVE Resolution R-05-2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYE

NAY

ABSTAIN

ABSENT

Councilmember Fultz
Councilmember Miller
Councilmember Andrick
Councilmember Shepherd
Councilmember Rudy
Councilmember Good
6 AYES, motion carried

Mount Jackson
Town Council Regular Meeting
June 8, 2021

-4-

4. Resolution R-03-2021 – Resolution of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Mount Jackson Amending FY 2021 Annual Budget.

a. Eligible for Action

Mr. Shepherd stated the Town had some minor adjustments and amended the FY 2021 budget. A public hearing was held and eligible for action in May, but staff tabled it at that time to wait on further information regarding the economic relief money.

Councilmember Shepherd MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Andrick to APPROVE Resolution R-03-2021.

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			

5. Ordinance O-02-2021 Adopting Budgets for the General Fund, Utilities Funds, Capital Projects, and Equipment Replacement Funds; Establishing Real and Personal Tax Rates, Establishing Compensation Amounts/Rates, Setting Fees for Water, Sewer, Refuse Services, Auto License Tax, and Other Fees, Charges, Penalties, and Taxes, and Establishing Annual and Specific Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2022.

a. Eligible for Action

Mr. Shepherd stated this is the Town budget for the upcoming year. There was a public hearing at the May council meeting, with extensive memos, and a work session prior to the meeting. The budget is not the same as last year, but is similar.

Councilmember Shepherd MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Fultz to APPROVE Ordinance O-02-2021.

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. Gospel Street Mailboxes – Request Extension of Postmaster Deadline for Citizens to Move Mailboxes.

Mr. Showalter stated included in the Council packet is a copy of the letter most of the residents on Gospel Street received from the Postmaster in Town, which indicated due to safety concerns for postal delivery personnel, they wish to remain in the vehicle when making deliveries. The mailboxes are on the East side, but unfortunately it is a one-way street where it is convenient for the left-hand side vehicles to pick up their mail, but not for right-hand side post office vehicle deliveries. The Postmaster decided to make the change, and invited the residents to either rent a post office box, or move their mailbox across the street, suggesting a 5-

Mount Jackson
Town Council Regular Meeting

June 8, 2021

-5-

gallon bucket of concrete with a post, sitting on the sidewalk. Mr. Showalter stated the residents began calling into the Town Office, and after speaking with a few of those residents and the Mayor, the Town feels it can come up with a solution that will assist the residents. The idea would be to establish several mailbox islands on the right side of the street, but will require some input from residents who feel they can afford to give up that parking space in front of their house. An example of a mailbox island is 5811 Gospel Street, where there are 6-7 boxes together, and an extreme example would be at the mobile home parks. Mr. Showalter stated staff does anticipate 3-5 islands, helping in getting the correct height and mounting them, but this process will take some time. Staff is asking Council to ask the Postmaster to give the residents 60 additional days, from the original 30 days on his letter of May 26, to make this change. Mr. Showalter did call the Postmaster who said he said would grant the 60 additional days.

Councilmember Good MOVED, seconded by Councilmember Rudy to APPROVE requesting an additional 60-day extension from the Postmaster to move the mailboxes.

Ms. Miller stated she feels the extension is necessary and very kind of the Town to inform the Postmaster of its intention. She stated on Broad Street, there is a gray cluster mailbox unit for the apartments, and asked if that option is being considered. Mr. Showalter stated he and Mayor Pifer discussed and are open to that, if it is felt there is adequate space for a household to receive mail. Ms. Miller stated she would not like to see the Town lose sidewalk space, and this is an opportunity to say a 5-gallon concrete bucket is not an option, and give residents alternative options. Ms. Good stated there are mailboxes that open at either end, and would prevent residents from having to walk out into the street to get their mail. Ms. Miller stated in Woodstock the mail carrier gets out and delivers down the sidewalk. Mr. Showalter stated there are approximately 29 residents affected, and staff hopes to have a meeting with the residents and the Postmaster. He and Chief Sterner also discussed the possibility of sending the one-way traffic the other direction and leaving boxes where they were, but the parking alternative is unacceptable. Mayor Pifer asked, regarding the cluster mailboxes, if there is one larger slot for parcels or packages. Ms. Miller stated on Broad Street, all mail slots are the same size, and would hold a standard size package, but anything larger would be placed on the porch. Mr. Showalter stated in shopping for cluster mailboxes, there are many options, but the Town would need input from the residents. Mr. Shepherd stated this area is also the historic district and 5-gallon concrete buckets will not work, and the Town has funding available to install 3-4 cluster mailboxes as an alternative solution.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYE

NAY

ABSTAIN

ABSENT

Councilmember Fultz
Councilmember Miller
Councilmember Andrick
Councilmember Shepherd
Councilmember Rudy
Councilmember Good
6 AYES, motion carried

Motion made by Councilmember Good to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 PM.

Deborah "Debbie" L. Allen, Clerk

Donald "Donnie" I. Pifer, Mayor