



Town of Mars Hill

MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN

John L. Chandler
Mayor
Nicholas A. Honeycutt
Vice-Mayor
Robert W. Zink
Treasurer
Stuart L. Jolley
Clerk
Larry H. Davis
Secretary

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING Mars Hill Town Hall – Conference Room January 4, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

The Town of Mars Hill Mayor and Board of Aldermen met in regular session on Monday, January 4, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mars Hill Town Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor John Chandler; Aldermen Larry Davis, Nicholas Honeycutt, Stuart Jolley, and Robert W. (Bob) Zink.

STAFF PRESENT: Nathan R. Bennett, Town Manager and Jamie Stokes, Town Attorney (by phone)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor John Chandler. Mayor Chandler welcomed those in attendance. Mayor Chandler expressed his appreciation for the flowers and the expressions of condolences for W.G. Griffin, an employee of the public works department, who passed away unexpectedly on December 26.

Approval of the Agenda

Mayor Chandler asked the Board to review the proposed agenda for approval. Upon review of the agenda, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Nicholas Honeycutt made a motion the agenda be approved as presented.** Alderman Stuart Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the agenda was approved unanimously. (Attachment A)

Approval of Minutes

Mayor Chandler then asked the Board to review the minutes of the regular meeting held on December 7, 2020. There being no modifications to the minutes, **Alderman Jolley made a motion that the minutes for December 7, 2020 be approved as presented by management.** Alderman Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Town Manager Report – Nathan Bennett, Town Manager

Mayor Chandler then recognized Mr. Bennett to provide the Town Manager Report.

COVID-19 Response

Mr. Bennett provided the Board an update on the continuing Town response to the coronavirus and COVID-19 situation. The Town continues to be under the state and locally designated state of emergency in response to COVID-19. He also advised all Town facilities are open and operating normally, except that Town Hall is closed to the public indefinitely to limit potential exposures. Administrative staff are working staggered shifts in the office and also working remotely to limit potential exposure. Mr. Bennett advised that the Madison County Health Department will be receiving vaccines and will work with our public safety staff to administer to staff as appropriate. As is the case across the state, COVID-19 cases continue to increase in Madison County. Officials at all levels of government and the healthcare community continue to advise to the community to wear face masks, wait six feet apart from others, and wash hands often with soap and water or sanitizer and to consider receiving the vaccine when it is made available.

Wastewater Treatment Plant/I-26 Interchange Sewer System Improvements Project

Mr. Bennett advised that the contractor is scheduled to return to the Carl Eller Road pump station location near the Exxon gas station in mid-January to complete the rehabilitation of that station pursuant to the US EDA and GoldenLEAF grants for the project. Mr. Bennett advised that an amendment to the engineering contract with McGill Associates for design, engineering, and construction administration related to this project is necessary. The engineering necessary to rehabilitate the Carl Eller pump station was not in the original scope of work and so this amendment includes the additional associated costs for the work. The amendment increases the McGill contract by \$43,500, for a revised engineering services contract amount of \$164,200. These costs will be paid from the existing grants and from the local match funds required from the Town. Upon reviewing the amendment and completing discussion of the matter, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Larry Davis made a motion to approve Contract Amendment Number 1 from McGill Associates for additional engineering services as presented.** Alderman Jolley seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

Downtown Wi-Fi Project

Mr. Bennett updated the Board on the Downtown Wi-Fi project that has been funded by a grant to the Town from the Appalachian Regional Commission. This \$42,000 total project will provide free wi-fi internet access to the core downtown area of Town to assist with business, resident, and visitor experience. Mr. Bennett advised that the Town will be assisted with project technical assistance from the Land of Sky Regional Council, who also assisted with securing the grant funding for the project. Mr. Bennett presented the Agreement for Technical Assistance between Land of Sky and the Town for \$3,000 to be paid from grant funds. Upon reviewing the agreement and completing discussion of the matter, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Robert (Bob) Zink made a motion to approve Memorandum of Agreement between Land of Sky Regional Council and the Town of Mars Hill for the provision of Technical Assistance from the Downtown Wi-Fi Project as presented.** Alderman Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

General Update

Mr. Bennett advised the Board that the Johnson Price Sprinkle (JPS), the Town's independent auditing firm, has completed the comprehensive financial audit for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 as required by the State of North Carolina and the report has been timely submitted to the N.C. Local Government Commission. Mr. Bennett advised the Board that the JPS will make a formal presentation of the audit at the February meeting of the Board. However, he advised that the audit was good and that there were no serious issues to note. Mr. Bennett then updated the Board on the pending retirement of Chief of Police Michael Garrison. Chief Garrison will retire from Town service effective January 31, 2021. Mr. Bennett advised that he has posted the position vacancy announcement with the Asheville Citizen-Times, Madison News-Record & Sentinel, ZipRecruiter, the N.C. League of Municipalities, N.C. Association of Chiefs of Police, and the Town website. He advised that he has received just over 10 applications and applications will be received through January 8, 2021. Upon review of the applications, interviews will be scheduled, and the selection and on-boarding process will begin. Mr. Bennett also advised the Board that he has received additional complaints of excessive speeding on North Main Street from residents on that street. He advised that he has contacted NCDOT with a request to take any actions available to address speeding. Mr. Bennett advised the Board that he has asked the police department to conduct enhanced speed enforcement in the corridor to encourage slower speeds and to also inform other law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction, such as the N.C. Highway Patrol, to do the same. He also advised that two radar speed limit signs have been ordered to deploy in this area to further inform drivers of their speed and this system will also collect vehicle data such as number of vehicles and speed to be used in analyzing traffic behavior. Mr. Bennett provided general updates on other miscellaneous activities. Alderman Zink commended Town employees for their hard work, particularly during the Christmas holidays, in snow removal and other activities. Alderman Honeycutt advised that in years past the Board had received in-person reports directly from department heads once or twice a year and he thought that was useful information and asked if that could be done in the future. Mr. Bennett agreed that it would be very good for the Board to hear directly from the departments and that he would make arrangements for department head reports at future meetings.

Old Business

Mayor Chandler then moved to address old business. There was no old business.

New Business

Mayor Chandler then moved to address new business. Mr. Bennett advised the Board that there were two items of new business, those being two proclamations for consideration by the Board.

PROCLAMATION HONORING IN MEMORIAM – W.G. Griffin – Public Works Department

Mr. Bennett presented a proclamation to recognize and thank W.G. Griffin, an employee of the public works department, for his years of service and commitment to the Town of Mars Hill and offer condolences to his family. Mr. Griffin passed away unexpectedly on December 26, 2020. The proclamation also sets March 24, 2021 as "W.G. Griffin Day" in the Town of Mars Hill in his memory and other purposes. Mr. Bennett read the proclamation for the consideration by the Board. Upon reviewing the proclamation and completing discussion of the matter, Mayor Chandler called for a

motion. **Alderman Jolley made a motion to approve the “PROCLAMATION HONORING IN MEMORIAM W.G. GRIFFIN,” as presented (Attachment B).** Alderman Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

PROCLAMATION HONORING – Michael L. Garrison, Chief of Police

Mr. Bennett presented a proclamation to recognize and thank Michael L. Garrison, Chief of Police, for his exceptional service and commitment to public safety upon the occasion of his retirement from the Town of Mars Hill at the end of January. The proclamation also sets January 31, 2021 as “Chief Michael Garrison Day” in the Town of Mars Hill in his honor and other purposes. Mr. Bennett read the proclamation for the consideration by the Board. Upon reviewing the proclamation and completing discussion of the matter, Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Jolley made a motion to approve the “PROCLAMATION HONORING MICHAEL L. GARRISON, CHIEF OF POLICE,” as presented (Attachment C).** Alderman Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

The Mayor then moved to public comments. The Mayor recognized Paula Dempsey for comments. Ms. Dempsey stated she was interested in the process the Town would utilize in selecting a new chief of police. She advised that the Town Manager answered her questions on the subject during his earlier report. She was interested if there would be an opportunity for the public to be involved in the process in some way and was advised that questions submitted by the community would be accepted for inclusion in the interview question array as appropriate.

There were no additional public comments.

Closed Session (Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11)

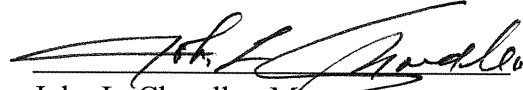
Mr. Bennett advised that there was one issue to discuss in closed session. Mayor Chandler called for a motion. **Alderman Honeycutt made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(3) to discuss a legal matter with the town attorney.** Alderman Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously.

Upon completion of discussion subject to the closed session, **Alderman Zink made a motion to return to open session.** Alderman Honeycutt seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote by the Mayor, the motion was approved unanimously. There was no action taken related to the closed session.

Adjourn

There being no further business before the Board, Mayor Chandler called for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Jolley made a motion to adjourn. Alderman Davis seconded the motion. Upon a call for a vote on the motion by the Mayor, the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.

Approved and authenticated this the 1st day of February, 2021.


John L. Chandler, Mayor

ATTEST:



Nathan R. Bennett,
Town Manager





Town of Mars Hill

MAYOR AND BOARD OF ALDERMEN

John L. Chandler
Mayor
Nicholas A. Honeycutt
Vice-Mayor
Robert W. Zink
Treasurer
Stuart L. Jolley
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AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING

*Mars Hill Town Hall Conference Room
January 4, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.*

1. Call to Order – *Mayor John L. Chandler*
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes: December 7, 2020
4. Town Manager Report – *Nathan Bennett, Town Manager*
 - a. COVID-19 Response Update
 - b. Wastewater Treatment Plant/I-26 Interchange Sewer System Improvements Project
 - i. Engineering Contract Amendment – McGill Associates
 - c. Downtown Wi-Fi Project
 - i. Technical Assistance Agreement – Land of Sky COG
 - d. General Update
5. Old Business
6. New Business
7. Public Comment
8. Closed Session (*Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 – if needed*)
9. Adjourn

Mars Hill Town Hall

280 North Main Street • P.O. Box 368
Mars Hill, North Carolina 28754
Phone: (828) 689-2301 • Fax: (828) 689-3333



Town of Mars Hill

PROCLAMATION HONORING IN MEMORIAM W.G. GRIFFIN

WHEREAS, Mr. W.G. Griffin, was employed by the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina on March 24, 2011 as an employee in the Department of Public Works; and

WHEREAS, W.G. Griffin was a hard worker with a kind heart, devoted to the providing the highest level of service to the citizens of the Town of Mars Hill; and

WHEREAS, W.G. Griffin was a dependable and trustworthy co-worker, colleague, and friend to all of those who had the privilege to know him; and

WHEREAS, W.G. Griffin passed away on December 26, 2020; and

WHEREAS, because he was a valued and important member of the Town of Mars Hill family, W.G. Griffin is deserving of special recognition.

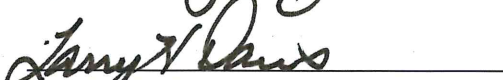
NOW, THEREFORE, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina, **IT IS ORDERED**:

- Section 1.** That on behalf of the citizens of the Town of Mars Hill, this Board posthumously recognizes and thanks Mr. W.G. Griffin for his years of exceptional service and commitment to the citizens of the Town of Mars Hill.
- Section 2.** That on behalf of the citizens of the Town of Mars Hill, this Board offers a heart-felt thank you to his family for sharing him with us and offer our most sincere condolences on the loss of our dear friend, Mr. W.G. Griffin.
- Section 3.** That March 24, 2021 is hereby proclaimed "W.G. GRIFFIN DAY" in the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina and on that day the flag at Town facilities shall be flown at half-staff in his memory.
- Section 4.** This Proclamation shall be effective immediately.

ADOPTED this 4th day of January 2021, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina.


JOHN L. CHANDLER, Mayor


STUART L. JOLLEY, Clerk


LARRA H. DAVIS, Secretary




NICHOLAS A. HONEYCUTT, Vice-Mayor


ROBERT W. ZINK, Treasurer



Town of Mars Hill

PROCLAMATION

HONORING

MICHAEL L. GARRISON CHIEF OF POLICE

WHEREAS, Mr. Michael L. Garrison, was appointed Chief of Police for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina on November 23, 2015; and

WHEREAS, Chief Garrison has dedicated himself to the highest standards of professionalism and excellence as Chief of the Mars Hill Police Department; and

WHEREAS, Chief Garrison has dedicated over 20 years to his law enforcement career with service to the Town and other area law enforcement agencies; and

WHEREAS, Chief Garrison has been a model and inspiration to his officers, colleagues, and all of those who have had the privilege to know him; and

WHEREAS, because of the many important contributions that Chief Michael Garrison has made to the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina, he is deserving of special recognition.

NOW, THEREFORE, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina, **IT IS ORDERED:**

- Section 1.** That on behalf of the citizens of the Town of Mars Hill, this Board recognizes and thanks Chief Michael Garrison for the exceptional service, distinguished career, and commitment to public safety in protection and service to the citizens of the Town of Mars Hill and offers best wishes on the occasion of his retirement.
- Section 2.** That this Board, pursuant to N.C. General Statute 20-187.2, provides to Chief Michael Garrison the badge worn in service to the Town of Mars Hill.
- Section 3.** That January 31, 2021 is hereby proclaimed "CHIEF MICHAEL GARRISON DAY" in the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina.
- Section 4.** This Proclamation shall be effective immediately.

ADOPTED this 4th day of January 2021, by the Mayor and Board of Aldermen for the Town of Mars Hill, North Carolina.


JOHN L. CHANDLER, Mayor


STUART L. JOLLEY, Clerk


LARRY H. DAVIS, Secretary




NICHOLAS A. HONEYCUTT, Vice-Mayor


ROBERT W. ZINK, Treasurer