

*****July 9, 2012*****

The Signal Mountain Town Council held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, July 9, 2012, at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall. Those present were:

Mayor Bill Lusk
Vice Mayor Susan Robertson
Councilmember Annette Allen
Councilmember Dick Gee
Councilmember Bill Wallace

Also present were: Town Attorney Phillip Noblett
Town Recorder Mark Johnson
Town Manager Honna Rogers
See attached list for others present

Mayor Lusk led the pledge of allegiance. Stacey Seals, Fire Chaplain, gave the invocation. The roll was called.

Minutes

The minutes for the June 18th regular meeting and June 25th agenda session were presented. With only one minor punctuation correction on the June 18th minutes, both sets of minutes were approved.

Citizen Comments

Mayor Lusk invited comments from the audience.

Noah Long, Woodcliff Circle, noted that present in the audience was Alex Gray, a boy scout who was working on obtaining his citizenship merit badge.

Resolutions

The following resolutions were presented:

1. "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO ADOPT A CAPITAL ASSET DISPOSAL POLICY." Ms. Rogers explained that this policy was developed as a concise guide to disposal of capital items that are no longer of use to the Town. Councilmember Allen moved and Vice Mayor Robertson seconded that the resolution be approved. The motion passed unanimously.
2. "A RESOLUTION APPOINTING BECKY POPE AS A MEMBER OF THE TOWN OF SIGNAL MOUNTAIN'S MOUNTAIN ARTS COMMUNITY CENTER BOARD." Councilmember Gee said that Ms. Pope is at the MACC frequently and that she would be a terrific addition to the Board.

Mayor Lusk moved and Councilmember Wallace seconded that the resolution be approved. The Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Lusk thanked Ms. Pope and other volunteers for their work.

3. "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO PURCHASE ONE (1) 2012 CHEVROLET IMPALA, TENNESSEE STATE BID NUMBER 29680, FROM TT OF G MURFREESBORO, INC., IN THE AMOUNT OF TWENTY ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED THIRTY NINE AND 00/100 (\$21,139.00) DOLLARS TO BE USED BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE TOWN OF SIGNAL MOUNTAIN." Ms. Rogers explained that this vehicle would be used by a new police officer. The officer and the car are both budgeted as annexation expenditures under the Plan of Services for the subdivisions of Fox Run and Windtree. Councilmember Gee moved and Councilmember Allen seconded that the resolution be approved.

Councilmember Wallace asked why the Town chose to purchase the car from a dealer in Murfreesboro instead of a local dealership. Mr. Noblett explained that this purchase is part of an advertised statewide contract in which TT of G was selected as the lowest bidder.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN MANAGER TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR THE TML RISK MANAGEMENT POOL "SAFETY PARTNERS" LOSS CONTROL MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM WHICH SHALL BE AWARDED IN AUGUST OF 2012." Ms. Rogers explained that each year the Town applies for this grant through TML. She noted that the Town could receive up to \$2,500 for various forms of safety equipment. Councilmember Allen moved and Councilmember Gee seconded that the resolution be approved. The motion passed unanimously.
5. "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWN ATTORNEY TO INTERVENE IN THE PETITION OF TENNESSEE AMERICAN WATER COMPANY TO CHANGE AND INCREASE CERTAIN RATES AND CHARGES FOR WATER WITHIN THE TOWN WHICH IS PENDING BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY, DOCKET NO. 12-00049." Mayor Lusk explained that Tennessee American Water Company (TAWC) had raised double-digit water purchase rates twice since 2009, and the Town did not intervene. He said that TAWC is now proposing another increase based on a two-tiered structure; i.e., an 11% increase under 45,000 CCF and 93% over 45,000 CCF. He further explained that the Town is proposing a motion to protest the increase because it is the same increase as that for WRUD in spite of the fact that the Town pumps its own water up the mountain and bears significant associated costs.

Mr. Noblett said that the Town is on a state mailing list, and he is receiving correspondence on the matter.

Mayor Lusk moved and Councilmember Gee seconded that the resolution be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Long asked if letters from citizens protesting the increase would help. Ms. Rogers said that there would be public hearings in which citizens can attend and speak; however, the Town does not yet have a state contact for written correspondence.

Councilmember Gee asked when the hearings would be scheduled. Mr. Noblett said that they would be in the fall, probably in September. Mr. Noblett also noted an issue with the number of current board members on the Tennessee Regulatory Authority and that the Governor will be appointing additional board members before the hearing can occur.

Mayor Lusk asked for verification that TRA must act within six months of TAWC's filing in order to prevent it. Mr. Noblett and Ms. Rogers said that was correct.

Dun Monroe, Cherokee Lane, asked if TAWC had been able to justify the increase. Mayor Lusk said that TAWC will submit a cost justification, but it has thus far only made the claim that the increase will be used for funding new infrastructure. He said that it appeared TAWC is going to fund this only through rate increases, rather than debt issuance or investment of outstanding capital.

Discussions

Ms. Rogers opened a discussion on the use of Norris Field. She explained that prior to 2007, the field was used for sports; however, in 2007 it was determined that this should no longer be allowed. She said that because of the problem of limited field space, the Recreation Board recently recommended that the field be used for limited practice, particularly for younger children.

Councilmember Wallace said that Norris Field is a good space and the recommendation is a good compromise that would alleviate space demands.

Vice Mayor Robertson asked for a definition of "younger children". Jarred Thompson, Recreation Director, answered generally 4-8 year olds. He noted that the Recreation Department would work to improve Norris Field and that there is adequate field space to accommodate multiple activities at one time. He also noted that in general all the sports fields throughout the town are in use with even more users expected in the future.

Ms. Rogers said that several public meetings had been held regarding practice at Norris Field, and the citizens living in the neighborhood around the field are generally in support

of the recommendation. Mr. Thompson said that scheduling would be diligently organized.

Vice Mayor Robertson asked about the field's size. Mr. Thompson said it contains three acres.

Mr. Monroe said that he lives in that area, but could not recall being contacted about this matter. He stated that he was generally in favor of it, but expressed concern over expanding the parking area. Mr. Thompson said that proper scheduling might prevent the need for additional parking. Mr. Monroe said that when he was a coach, the field was used extensively without the need for additional parking. Ms. Rogers said that the police and public works departments would aid in monitoring the parking issue.

Mayor Lusk moved to open the field for use by elementary school-age children for sports practice.

Mr. Monroe asked if it would be appropriate to post practice times. Ms. Rogers said that she didn't know what those times were yet. She suggested that she be contacted if an issue arises.

Ms. Rogers noted that Mr. Noblett recently reviewed the deed and determined that practice for youngsters on teams is an appropriate use of the field. Mr. Noblett explained that it was originally a children's playground and was converted to a "Liberty Garden" for a short time during World War II.

Mr. Monroe said that affecting the surrounding neighbors' use of the field could be a sensitive issue. Ms. Rogers said that the field is not a private field and should be open to use by *all* Town residents.

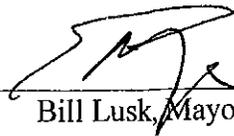
Mr. Monroe asked if there were any records that designated certain areas to be used as playgrounds. Mr. Noblett said that the records didn't specify particular areas; it was all designated as "children's playground".

Councilmember Wallace seconded the motion above, and it passed unanimously.

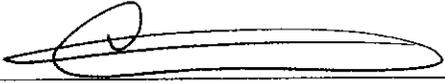
Ms. Rogers announced that the swimming pool recently received a health inspection score of "100%". She said that the recent renovations probably helped to achieve this score. She commended the Recreation Department.

Ms. Rogers announced that Mr. Johnson was terminating his employment with the Town and that this will be the last Council meeting he will attend. She thanked and commended Mr. Johnson for his service.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Bill Lusk, Mayor



Recorder