



## **Town of Marshville Town Council Budget Retreat**

**Monday, May 15, 2021 - 10 am to 3 pm**

**Marshville Town Hall, 118 East Union St., Marshville, NC  
28103**

### **Budget Retreat Minutes -- Zoom**

**In Attendance:** Mayor Larry Smith, Mayor Pro-tem Virginia Morgan, Council Members Margaret Bivens (late), Paulette Blakeney, Ernestine Staton, and Council Member Gary Huntley.

**Staff in Attendance:** Town Manager Franklin Deese and Town Clerk Ann Sutton.

**Call to Order, Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Larry Smith called the meeting to order. Council Member Huntley gave the Invocation. All gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Town Manager Comments and Introductions:** Town Manager Deese thanked all for being at the meeting. Mr. Rick Rocchetti will be our facilitator today to guide us through the session.

Rick Rocchetti introduced himself. He came to us through the NC League of Municipalities. All introduced themselves to Mr. Rocchetti. Mr. Rocchetti asked that as the Council introduced themselves, they say one thing about Marshville that they are proud of. CM Staton is proud of the small town feel. Mayor Pro-tem Morgan is proud of the small-town feel, also. Mayor Smith loves the town's charm and character. CM Bivens loves the small-town feel. CM Blakeney loves the people and the country. CM Huntley loves the low crime rate. Town Clerk agrees with all. Town Manager Deese says that Marshville is a rough diamond ready to be polished.

Speaker from NC Rural Water lost connection on Zoom. Town Manager Deese explained why he wanted Troy Cassidy of NC Rural Water to talk with the Council. Rural Water has many services that can be provided to the town. Mr. Cassidy was finally able to come back to the meeting via telephone. Mayor Smith asked if grants were available through Rural Water or does Rural Water help facilitate helping the town find grants? Rural Water will help facilitate grants through USDA but does not have grants of their own. Mr. Cassidy said that Rural Water does smoke testing. (I was unable to hear well by phone. More information on NC Rural Water can be found online.)

Town Manager Deese said that USDA does offer low interest loans for government buildings. USDA does, at times, give a loan to a community and then forgives the second half of the loan. Town of Marshville would not qualify for that since we are in a tier-three county.

Mr. Rocchetti asked the Council what they heard as Mr. Cassidy spoke. Council Member heard that Rural Water did not give grants, but would work through USDA to help towns get grants.

They also do rate studies. Council Member Huntley heard that Rural Water was a liaison and advocate for small towns. Mayor Smith heard that Rural Water could help with rate studies and statistical analysis.

Speaker Marcia Perritt from the Development Finance Initiative with the School of Government joined us. DFI does many things. For the Town of Marshville, Ms. Perritt felt the need was for pro-active projects. They do pre-development work such as market research, looking at different parcels, bringing in architects to see how sites can work and traffic flows would go. Then, DFI would combine the information to find a way to bring those projects to market. DFI helps towns find where the opportunities are. They get detailed information to developers and try to bring those projects to the production stage. Ms. Perritt showed different examples of places that DFI has worked. Affordable housing and workforce housing was briefly discussed by Ms. Perritt. DFI discussed downtown revitalization. These are all projects that DFI has been involved in. DFI could help with housing development, downtown revitalization strategies, and redevelopment studies. Branding was not a project that DFI is involved in. Ms. Perritt said that if the town wanted a parcel study done, she could have a proposal done quickly. Mayor Smith asked how long a parcel study would take to complete. Ms. Perritt said maybe four to five months. The report would be actionable, strategical information. She said their goal is to get projects done. Town Manager Deese thanked Ms. Perritt for the information she had to offer.

Mr. Rocchettie made a few comments. First, he requested the Council to be thinking about a year or two down the road. Second, Council Member Staton felt like the Town Manager continues to bring a vision to the Council. Third, the Planning Board is working on a façade ordinance. We also have a downtown committee that is working on getting ideas that will help our downtown area. Hopefully, that will gain traction.

Lunch Break: 11:53 am

After Lunch, Mr. Rocchettie had all write a short essay on how they see Marshville in five years. Afterward, all articles were read by each member. Mr. Rocchettie discussed what he heard. A list of topics was written for all to see:

- Safe and Vibrant Community
- Economic Development/Revitalization
- Parks & Recreation/Cultural Things
- Water/Sewer/Transportation
- Organizational Excellence

The Council formed groups to discuss what we are currently doing in all the listed areas. They were also asked to come up with three or four things that the town needs in these areas going forward. This information was brought back to the whole group for discussion.

- Safe and Vibrant Community
  - Lights, Street Crossings, Banners, Beautifacation
- Economic Development/Revitalization
  - DFI Study and Façade Ordinance Completion
- Parks & Recreation/Cultural Things
  - Land, Activities for All
- Water/Sewer/Transportation
  - Prioritization of Street Repairs and Street Inventory

Organizational Excellence  
Show Public Appreciation to Employees  
Training

Town Manager Deese brought information to Council for study for the next meeting.

The Budget Retreat was over at 3:30 pm.

Approved this 7<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021.

  
Larry Smith, Mayor

ATTEST

  
Ann Sutton, Town Clerk