



## **Town of Marshville**

### **Special Meeting &**

### **Regular Work Session**

**Monday June 21, 2021 - 7:00 PM**

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

### **Special Meeting**

**Present:** Mayor Larry Smith; Mayor Pro tem Virginia Morgan; Council Members Paulette Blakeney, Ernestine Staton, Margaret Bivens, and Gary Huntley

**Absent:**

**Staff Present:** Franklin Deese, Town Manager; Ann Sutton, Town Clerk; Carina Soriano (via Zoom), Planning & Zoning Administrator

### **Call to Order/Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance:**

Mayor Smith called the meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Council Member Huntley gave the opening prayer. Then, everyone stood and gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Discussion/Action on 703 E. Union St. Rezoning from AG to SFR-3:**

Ms. Soriano explained that 703 E. Union St. is currently zoned Agricultural, and the applicant is proposing that the property be rezoned to SFR-3. Back at the April 12th Planning Board Meeting, the Board voted 5 to 1 to approve the rezoning and to recommend the rezoning to Council to SFR-3. Ms. Soriano skipped the site description as that was discussed at a previous meeting. Ms. Soriano explained that the 2035 Comprehensive Land Use Plan for Marshville calls for medium density residential development in this area and showed a list of eligible uses for this property. Some of the issues presented with this property are the adequacy of E. Union St. to handle additional development of the property and the listed special uses with additional standards. Ms. Soriano then opened the floor for questions.

Mayor Smith asked for the total acreage of this parcel.

Ms. Soriano explained that the total acreage is 4.67 acres.

Mayor Smith pointed out that this is parcel is backing up pretty close to property the town is looking to buy and doesn't know if SFR-3 would make sense because of the housing density requirements, but would be open to SFR-1 or SFR-2.

Manager Deese added that the 2035 Plan calls for medium density in that area, and SFR-3 would be the highest density.

Council Member Staton stated that she is not in favor of going to the highest density in that area.

Council Member Bivens made a motion to deny the rezoning of 703 E. Union St. from AG to SFR-3. Council Member Staton seconded. All ayes. The rezoning application is denied.

Ms. Soriano exited the meeting.

### **Closed Session:**

Mayor Smith requested a motion to go into closed session for the negotiation for a contract for the purchase of real property. Council Member Staton made a motion, Council Member Bivens seconded. All ayes. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting moved into a closed session at 7:13 pm.

### **Meeting moved out of closed session:**

Mayor Pro tem Morgan made a motion to move out of closed session, Council Member Bivens seconded. All ayes. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting moved out of the closed session at 7:56 pm.

### **Discussion/Action on 2021-2022 Budget:**

Manager Deese explained that one page didn't print, page after General Fund Revenues, but the budget is the same as the last discussion, with the tax rate dropped down to .49 cents.

Mayor Smith stated that there were no comments at the hearing and said that if Council had no more questions, he would entertain a motion to adopt the 2021-2022 Budget. Council Member Staton made a motion, Council Member Huntley. All ayes. Motion to adopt the 2021-2022 Budget passes unanimously.

Manager Deese then requested the Mayor request a motion to adopt the Budget Ordinance.

Mayor Smith requested Council Member Staton to amend her motion to include the adoption of the Budget Ordinance. Council Member Staton agreed, and Council Member Huntley agreed to amend his seconded motion.

Mayor Smith requested a motion to close the special meeting. Council Member Bivens made a motion, Mayor Pro tem Morgan seconded. Motion passes unanimously. The special meeting closed at 8:02 pm.

### **Regular Work Session**

#### **Call to Order:**

Mayor Smith called the work session to order at 8:03 pm.

#### **Public Comments:**

Mayor Smith asked if there were any public comments submitted. Ms. Sutton stated there were no comments submitted.

#### **Adoption of Work Session Agenda:**

Mayor Smith entertained a motion to adopt the work session agenda as presented. Council Member

Staton made a motion, Council Member Huntley seconded. All ayes. Motion to adopt the agenda passes unanimously.

### **Discussion/Action on the Reopening of Town Hall:**

Manager Deese clarified that this discussion is whether or not to open up meetings to the public and not Town Hall to the public as Town Hall is already open to the public for day-to-day operations.

Council Member Staton stated that she has gotten questions from the public and that this is an issue that needs to be discussed but expressed concern of there being enough room for 6-foot spacing. Council Member Staton further voiced concern of the number of people showing up for meetings before COVID-19 and didn't see how the social distancing requirements would work.

Mayor Smith stated that he would like to see the meetings open back up to the public, whether this is with enforcing spacing and mask requirements or imposing limits on how many will be allowed in.

Council Member Staton asked about what would happen with citizens who come to speak and don't get in with the allotted number of citizens allowed in?

Mayor Smith asked what other municipalities in Union County are doing about reopening meetings to the public?

Town Clerk Sutton stated that she would call around and find out. Ms. Sutton also expressed concern that many of the individuals who have been asking about reopening have not been participating in the meetings through Zoom these past 12 months.

Mayor Smith agreed and stated that there is no political issue about reopening. It is strictly a transparency issue, and wants to make sure the meetings are as transparent to the public as possible.

Council Member Huntley stated that we should stay safe as much as possible, but we also have a responsibility to protect the public. He went on to say that he would rather see someone upset because they weren't able to attend the meeting in person than see someone lying in a casket because of COVID, and his personal opinion is to stay like we are for the time being.

Council Bivens stated that there is not enough room in the meeting room.

Mayor Pro tem Morgan said to at least call around and get a consensus with what other towns are doing first.

Council Member Staton said that it needs to be with places that don't have a lot of space in their town hall like Marshville does.

Mayor Smith asked if that was the consensus to let Ms. Sutton collect information from other towns to see what they are doing?

The Council agreed to that.

### **Manager's Comments:**

Manager Deese stated he had with him a letter of intent for the sale of the Cell Tower lease to another company and will sign it tomorrow and passed around copies to the Council members and asked them to call him with any questions or concerns. Manager Deese explained that this is a

letter of intent only and the Council will still need to vote to finalize the contract. This company will lease the space on the water tower for 25 years and will pay the town \$650,000.

**Council Member Comments:**

Mayor Pro tem Morgan stated that she was at the COG meeting, and they recognized many individuals retiring from public service.

Council Member Staton stated that Juneteenth was a success and that she is looking forward to next year and hopes it becomes an annual event. Ms. Staton also stated that she thinks the way Mr. Deese has the town hall set up for day-to-day operations is fine the way it is and that there is no reason for people who are coming to pay their utility bills to go past the teller window. Ms. Staton also reminded everyone of the Pre-4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration at the park on Saturday.

Council Member Huntley stated that he enjoyed Juneteenth and hopes that it doesn't rain Saturday.

Council Member Blakeney stated that she too enjoyed Juneteenth and hopes everyone stays safe.

Council Member Bivens enjoyed Juneteenth and commended the Parks and Rec Director for doing an amazing job in helping set up the event.

**Mayor Comments:**

Mayor Smith stated that the election for the Mayor and two open Council seats is fast approaching. Juneteenth was wonderful and gave kudos to all those involved. Mayor Smith noted that the feedback for the Stegall Lake purchase has been largely positive and thanked everyone for their hard work.

**Adjournment:**

Mayor Smith entertained a motion to adjourn. Council Member Bivens made a motion, Council Member Huntley seconded. All ayes. Motion passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Approved this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021 by:

  
Larry Smith, Mayor

ATTEST:   
Ann Sutton, Town Clerk