

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

April 27, 2021

The regular meeting of the Montross Town Council was held on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. at Town Hall, 15869 Kings Highway, Montross, VA.

Council Members Present: Terry A. Cosgrove, Joseph P. King, Clinton A. Watson, Jr.,
Carolyn K. Carlson, Bobby D. Greene, Robert L. Barker,
Kathryn S. Wittman

Council Members Absent:

Town Manager: Patricia K. Lewis

Water Works Operator:

REGULAR MEETING

Mayor Cosgrove called the Council meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Cosgrove started with new business first by introducing Montross Middle School's 7th Grader, Dallas Barringer. Ms. Barringer is the Region 8 winner of the Virginia Municipal League's (VML) "If I Were Mayor" essay contest. Mr. Robert Bullington, Director of Communications for VML, presented Ms. Barringer with a plaque and \$150.00. Mayor Cosgrove then presented Ms. Barringer with a congratulatory certificate from the Town.

APPROVAL PRIOR MINUTES

Mayor Cosgrove asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes from the March 23, 2021 regular meeting. Mr. Greene stated that under Approval of Financial Reports, Mr. Wittman should be Mrs. Wittman. Mrs. Lewis stated that she inadvertently listed Mr. King and Mr. Watson as being in attendance. Mr. King, seconded by Mrs. Carlson, made a motion to approve the March 23, 2021 minutes with the noted corrections. The motion unanimously carried.

APPROVAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Mayor Cosgrove asked if there were any additions or corrections to the financial reports for March 31, 2021. Mrs. Carlson, seconded by Mr. King, made a motion to approve the March 31, 2021 financial reports. The motion unanimously carried.

REPORTS

TOWN MANAGER

Mrs. Lewis reported that it is estimated that the town will receive approximately \$354,000.00 from the American Rescue Plan. She indicated she did not have details as to when disbursements would be made or concrete information on how the funds can be spent.

Mrs. Lewis stated that the General Assembly approved legislation that will make marijuana legal on July 1, 2021. Retail sales will be allowed beginning January 1, 2024. Council will need to start thinking about how to handle retail sales.

Mrs. Lewis reported that Brian Saunders, the new water operator, continues to do well.

OLD BUSINESS

Mrs. Lewis reported that the first Fall Festival meeting of the year will be April 28, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Westmoreland Volunteer Fire Department building. She stated that the committee is looking for more volunteers to help.

Mrs. Lewis reported that Northumberland County will not be participating this coming year in the regional cigarette taxing authority efforts. Middlesex County would like to participate. Mrs. Lewis provided a draft cigarette tax agreement that includes Westmoreland County, Lancaster County, Middlesex County, and the Town of Montross. The tax would be 40 cents per pack. Attorney Richard Stuart has reviewed the agreement and has approved it. Mr. Cornwell, County Attorney for Lancaster County, has prepared an ordinance approving the agreement and formation of the Chesapeake Bay Region Cigarette Tax Board, as well as an ordinance adding Cigarette Tax to the code. A public hearing is required for each. Once Mr. Stuart reviews the draft ordinances and approves them, the town will hold the public hearings no later than June to have the ordinances implemented by July 1, 2021. Mayor Cosgrove stated that there is a 5% fee that the Northern Neck Planning District Commission will charge to administer the program, which includes distribution of the stamps, collecting the tax, and managing the funds. Mayor Cosgrove stated that it looks like Westmoreland County is going to implement a meals tax, which the town has avoided that in the past. Mayor Cosgrove stated that we should watch that closely and see what the county decides to do. Mayor Cosgrove stated that Colonial Beach, Warsaw, and most of the other towns in the area have a meals tax. After further discussion about implementing a meals tax, Mayor Cosgrove stated that, at a prior council meeting, a few of the town's citizens had encouraged council to look at those types of taxes to spread that among non-residents who drive through town. Mayor Cosgrove suggested that council can make a decision relating to a meals tax when the time comes.

Mrs. Lewis reported Mr. Riedlinger with Resource International informed her that we need to get approximately 70 easements for the water system improvement. He hopes to have the plans submitted to Rural Development this month. The review and easements acquisition will take approximately three months. The project can then go to bid. Construction will start in September or October if everything goes well. Mrs. Lewis stated that the new well site is proposed to be next to the well near the high school. Mr. Peyton Harvey has agreed to provide the easement needed to put a new well on the property.

Mrs. Lewis asked if there were any questions regarding the Business Development Incentive Program. After some discussion, Mr. King, seconded by Mrs. Wittman, made a motion to approve the documents outlining the program process and applications. Mayor Cosgrove asked for a roll call vote: Mr. Greene, aye; Mr. Barker, aye; Mrs. Wittman, aye; Mrs. Carlson, aye; Mr. Watson, aye; Mr. King, aye. The motion was unanimously carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Cosgrove read Ms. Barringer's winning essay of the "If I Were Mayor" contest. A copy of the winning essay is attached to these minutes.

Mayor Cosgrove reported that Whitney Hooks' term on the Planning Commission expires May 31, 2021 and that Mrs. Hooks has agreed to continue to serve on the commission. Mrs. Carlson, seconded by Mr. King, made a motion to re-appoint Mrs. Hooks to the Planning Commission. The motion was unanimously carried.

Mayor Cosgrove reported that Leonard Carlson's term on the Board of Zoning Appeals expires June 30, 2021 and that Mr. Carlson has agreed to serve another term. Mr. King, seconded by Mr. Watson, made a motion to recommend re-appointment to the judge. The motion was unanimously carried.

Mrs. Lewis stated that earlier this month she received an email from Commander Thomas Panther with the local U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla. Mr. Panther is from Callao, VA. He informed me that National Safe Boating Week has been designated for May 22-28, 2021. As part of numerous efforts to promote safe boating, Flotilla 3-10 is encouraging the Town and other localities to issue a proclamation in recognition of National Safe Boating Week and encourage boating safety principles to the many boating, canoeing, kayaking and paddle boarding residents of and visitors to the area. After Mayor Cosgrove read the proclamation, Mr. Greene, seconded by Mrs. Wittman, made a motion to approve the proclamation. The motion unanimously carried.

Mayor Cosgrove stated that he met with Norm Risavi, Westmoreland County Administrator, and was under the impression that they were going to go into closed session to talk about a property disposal or lease for property owned by the county. The county opted to have that presentation made at the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors. Mayor Cosgrove, Jerry Davis, and Mrs. Lewis attended the meeting and asked about the parking area near the old sheriff's office for a town park. The Board of Supervisors were 100% in favor of doing something to move that property for the town's use. The Board will have a public hearing. The town moved ahead with a grant application because the due date was about the same day as the Board of Supervisors meeting. Mayor Cosgrove stated that the town will have a public hearing once we hear the Board's proposal. Mayor Cosgrove provided council with a proposed drawing of the project area. Mr. King stated that when this topic came up before, the town received a commitment from two businesses that would like to help for some sort of historic signage. He stated he will revisit those businesses when we are ready. A copy of the drawing is attached to these minutes.

COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. King made special tribute to Coach Arthur Jones. He stated that everyone in the room was either directly or indirectly touched by Coach Jones. He stated that Coach Jones was an incredible figure to this community.

Mr. King said it is a sad time because the Dairy Freeze has closed. He stated that the State Police put out a posting about Stanley Schoppe and the Dairy Freeze closing. He stated that the State Police commended Stanley for the years of service he provided by giving them a place to quietly eat lunch or dinner. Mr. King said Mr. Schoppe is a tremendous asset to this community. Mr. Greene added to that by commending Mr. Schoppe for his generosity to the churches throughout the community by providing chicken and charging half price.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Mayor Cosgrove asked Mrs. Lewis to review the proposed budget for fiscal year 2021-2022. Mrs. Lewis indicated that a line item for the cigarette tax was added. \$30,000.00 was also added to the Revitalization line item which can be used for the proposed park. She also indicated that interest rates for the Certificate of Deposits have dropped. She stated that back in November 2020 council adopted a water rate resolution that was required by the United States Department of Agriculture. The town has to charge a rate of at least \$30.00 per month for in-town residents and \$45.00 per month for out-of-town. Luckily, the loan has a one-year deferral so we can raise the rates incrementally. For this next fiscal year, Mrs. Lewis recommended a \$4.00 increase for in-town residents, which would raise the water rate to \$25.00. Mrs. Lewis recommended a \$5.00 increase for out-of-town raising the rate to \$36.50. A few more line items were discussed and questions were answered by Mrs. Lewis. The public hearing on the budget will be held at the May meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. King, seconded by Mrs. Wittman, made a motion to adjourn to closed session for discussion relating to personnel matters for employee evaluations pursuant to Code of Virginia Section 202-3711(A)(1); and for consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body pursuant to 2.2-3711(A)(7). The motion was unanimously carried.

REGULAR SESSION

Council returned to regular session at 8:55 p.m. Mr. Watson, seconded by Mr. King, made a motion certifying that only matters relating to personnel matters for employee evaluations pursuant to Code of Virginia Section 202-3711(A)(1); and for consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body pursuant to 2.2-3711(A)(7) were discussed.

Mayor Cosgrove asked for a roll call vote: Mr. Greene, aye; Mr. Barker, aye; Mrs. Wittman, aye; Mrs. Carlson, aye; Mr. Watson, aye; Mr. King, aye. The motion was unanimously carried.

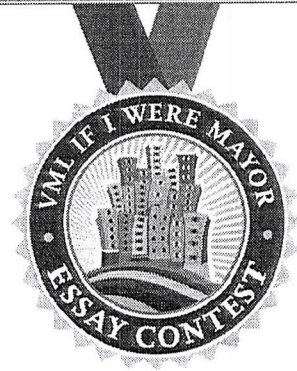
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Patricia K. Lewis
Town Manager

Terry A. Cosgrove
Mayor

Region 8 Winner Dallas Barringer

Montross Middle School
Montross, VA



If I Were Mayor

By Dallas Barringer

Hello, my name is Dallas Barringer. I am a 7th grader at Montross Middle School in Montross, Virginia. I want to tell you what I would do as mayor. The major issue facing people right now is COVID-19. Lots of people are getting sick and passing away. Other people are losing their jobs. As mayor I would like to get people to wear a mask and social distance. Overall, I want to make our city better.

2020 has been hard for many people; loved ones have passed on, schools shut down, the list could go on. Although this year has had its ups and downs, there were some positive experiences. When people were socially distancing there were fewer people getting COVID-19, which was great for everyone. Another thing I thought worked well was when people wore masks. There also has been less pollution because fewer people have been getting out. Even though there were lots of issues, there were lots of benefits, too.

There were lots of responses that worked, but there were also ideas that didn't. Some people might have worn masks, but many people didn't. When people don't wear a mask, it causes a chain reaction, making COVID go from one person to another. Then everyone will end up getting it. The other big downfall is opening buildings too soon; it might be fun, but is it safe? The answer is NO!

Places that should not open yet are arcades, schools, fast food places, and other locations where people are in large groups. People take off their masks and eat or play outside and touch the same toys on the playground. People may wear masks, but they do not help a hundred percent, unless they are wearing n95 masks and they are tight to the face. Everyone should wear masks and social distance.

If I were mayor, I would ask for people to wear masks if they did not have a medical problem. I would ask people to social distance and ask that there be no more than ten extra people during social gatherings. I would make these rules to protect the people in my city. I would hope that the cases of COVID-19 would decrease. As mayor, I would listen to what the people want and need and take votes for what they hope to make happen.

I will do what needs to be done. Which is why I should be mayor.



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SOUND GOVERNMENT

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Town Manager
PATRICIA K. LEWIS



Est. 1852

Town of Montross

Mayor
TERRY A. COSGROVE

Vice Mayor
JOSEPH P. KING

Council
CLINTON A. WATSON, JR.
CAROLYN K. CARLSON
BOBBY D. GREENE
ROBERT L. BARKER
KATHRYN S. WITTMAN

NATIONAL SAFE BOATING WEEK PROCLAMATION

During National Safe Boating Week, the U.S. Coast Guard and its federal, state, and local safe boating partners encourage all boaters to explore and enjoy America's beautiful waters responsibly.

Safe boating begins with preparation. The Coast Guard estimates that human error accounts for most boating accidents and that life jackets could prevent nearly 86 percent of boating fatalities. Through basic boating safety procedures – carrying lifesaving emergency distress and communications equipment, wearing life jackets, attending safe boating courses, participating in free boat safety checks, and staying sober when navigating – we can help ensure boaters on America's coastal, inland, and offshore waters stay safe throughout the season.

National Safe Boating Week is observed to bring attention to important life-saving tips for recreational boaters so that they can have a safer, more fun experience out on the water throughout the year.

WHEREAS, in 2020, 21 people died and 51 were significantly injured on Virginia waters; and

WHEREAS, each year in boating-related accidents in the U.S., almost 80% of fatalities are caused by drowning; and

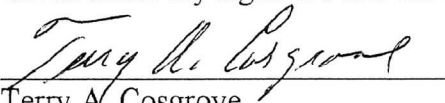
WHEREAS, the vast majority of these accidents are caused by human error or poor judgment and not by the boat, equipment or environmental factors; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of boaters who lose their lives by drowning each year would be alive today had they worn their life jackets.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Terry A. Cosgrove, Mayor of the Town of Montross, along with the Montross Town Council, do hereby support the goals of the Safe Boating Campaign and proclaim May 22-28, 2021 as National Safe Boating Week and the start of the year-round effort to promote safe boating.

In Witness Whereof, I urge all those who boat to practice safe boating habits and wear a life jacket at all times while boating.

Given under my signature and the seal of at the Town of Montross, VA, this 27th day of April, 2021.


Terry A. Cosgrove
Mayor

County Seat of Historic Westmoreland County

