I. Call to Order – The Meeting was called to order in the Council Chambers at City Hall at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Thompson.

II. Public Comment – The Mayor stated the guidelines for public comment and said speakers were to be called in order of sign-up.

• Mark Lackey stated his wife owns a business located at 307 North Green (Patterns). Lackey stated that he felt their block of North Green does not get the same attention as other downtown streets. Lackey cited the recent 15” snow event as an example, where he felt their block did not get snow removed in a timely manner. Lackey mentioned a break-in that happened at his wife’s business about six-years ago and stated his wish for Public Safety to take fingerprints at all crime scenes.

No other speakers were signed up or appeared.

III. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag – Mayor Pro-tem Fleming led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

IV. Invocation – The invocation was given by the Rev. Jason Koon of Bridge42 Church.

V. Introduction of Council – The Mayor introduced the Council and staff.

VI. Retiree Resolutions

• The Mayor read a resolution honoring Cheryl B. Benton who retired from the City of Morganton on January 1, 2019 with 35 years and 9 month’s service. Cheryl retired from the Wastewater Department as Lab Supervisor. Cheryl was unable to attend the meeting and will be given her resolution at a later time.
Upon motion by Councilman Simmons, seconded by Councilwoman Cato, and carried unanimously, the Council adopted Resolution #19-01 honoring retiree Cheryl B. Benton.

• The Mayor read a resolution honoring John D. Campbell who retired from the City of Morganton on January 1, 2019 with 27 years and 11 month’s service. John retired from the Public Safety Department as Fire Captain.

Upon motion by Councilman Fleming, seconded by Councilman Hawkins, and carried unanimously, the Council adopted Resolution #19-02 honoring retiree John D. Campbell

Historically, the City has followed the North Carolina General Statutes and awarded a retiring member their fire services helmet. This has been done by the Council declaring the particular item as surplus and then allowing someone to purchase for the officer for a fee of one dollar.

City staff recommends that his fire helmet, Cairns 1044 DSW Serial Number 10074952, be declared surplus, sold for one dollar, and presented to retired Captain Campbell.

Upon motion by Councilman Fleming, seconded by Councilman Hawkins, and carried unanimously, the Council declare as surplus a fire helmet, Cairns 1044 DSW Serial Number 10074952, sold for one dollar paid by the City Manager, then presented to retired Public Safety Captain Campbell.

Campbell expressed his thanks to those who helped make his time here enjoyable. He stated that Morganton is a great place to work and to raise a family.

• The Mayor read a resolution honoring Stevie J. Clarke who retired from the City of Morganton on January 1, 2019 with 22 years and 7 month’s service. Stevie retired from the Recreation Department as Parks Maintenance Supervisor. Stevie was unable to attend the meeting and will be given his resolution at a later time.

Upon motion by Councilwoman Cato, seconded by Councilman Simmons, and carried unanimously, the Council adopted Resolution #19-03 honoring retiree Stevie J. Clarke.

• The Mayor read a resolution honoring Tim Corpening who retired from the City of Morganton on January 1, 2019 with 31 years and 5 month’s service. Tim retired from the Wastewater Department as Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent.

Upon motion by Councilman Hawkins, seconded by Councilwoman Cato, and carried unanimously, the Council adopted Resolution #19-04 honoring retiree Tim Corpening.

Corpening expressed his thanks to his coworkers at the waste treatment plant. He also expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to develop in a leadership role.

• The Mayor read a resolution honoring Teresa C. Massey who retired from the City of Morganton on January 1, 2019 with 33 years and 7 month’s service. Teresa retired from
the Public Works Department as Senior Administrative Specialist. Teresa was unable to attend the meeting and will be given her resolution at a later time.

Upon motion by Councilwoman Cato, seconded by Councilman Fleming, and carried unanimously, the Council adopted Resolution #19-05 honoring retiree Teresa C. Massey.

VII. Service Pins – The Personnel Committee and City staff have decided to recognize long-term employees for years of service at a Council meeting. Jason Oliver is Maintenance Crew Leader in the Recreation Department with 25 years’ service. Oliver was unable to attend and will be presented his service pin at a later time.

VIII. Public Advocacy Issues and Strategies

• The Mayor announced the upcoming events at CoMMA: Kinky Boots, January 11; “We Shall Overcome” A Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., January 21; and Carolina Blue, January 29. The Mayor also announced a “pop-up” Farmer’s Market, Saturday, January 19.

• The Mayor read a proclamation for Big Brothers, Big Sisters (BBBS) - National Mentoring Month. Councilwoman Cato presented the proclamation to Terri Martino of Big Brothers Big Sisters stating that she knows the impact of BBBS on the community. Martino thanked the Council for the support of BBBS in Burke County and shared the story of her involvement with BBBS.

• The yearly Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) was presented by Finance Director Karen Duncan and Tom McNeish of Elliot Davis. Duncan presented a PowerPoint which showed the City’s financial condition as of June 2018.

Tom McNeish thanked Karen and team for the work put into to the CAFR. McNeish stated that a lot of what they do in terms of auditing depends on processes that the City team has in place all year long. What Elliott Davis does is to provide an opinion on the audit. They give their professional opinion on whether the City is following the accepted practices. McNeish stated that they do this so those who are interested in the credit worthiness of the City can be assured the financial statements are accurate. One thing they are not doing is conducting a fraud audit.

McNeish stated the good news is Elliott Davis has issued an unmodified/clean opinion of the transactions and records. They felt the financials were accurate in all material respects.

One thing Elliott Davis looks at are internal controls – reconciling accountings, properly approved disbursements, that each check and receipt are coded properly. They assess and evaluate the controls. Based on their evaluation of the City’s internal controls there are no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. He stated this is a testament to Karen Duncan and the finance department.
McNeish stated they do a separate audit for all the State and Federal grant funding. He stated that these grants come with a lot of strings attached. Elliott Davis looks at major programs to see if the City is in compliance with the grant requirements. McNeish stated the good news is that they did not note any instances of non-compliance.

IX. North Carolina Municipal Power Agency Number 1 Update – There Manager stated there was nothing to update.

X. Consent Agenda – The City Manager presented the Consent Agenda and asked if any items should be removed from the Consent Agenda. No request was made.

Upon motion by Councilman Hawkins, seconded by Councilman Fleming, and unanimously carried, the Consent Agenda was approved and each individual item adopted as stated, these being as follows:

A. Approved minutes for a Regular Meeting held on December 3, 2018 and a special joint meeting held on December 11, 2018 as submitted.

B. Approved tax releases in the amount of $153.02.

C. Approved a Budget Amendment (Ord. #19-02) in the amount of $24,500 for the purchase of software and equipment for the Narcotics Investigations Unit.

D. Amended the City’s Schedule of Fees and Charges to increase from $25 to $75 the fee for a “special event” not requiring street closure, and from $75 to $125 for such events requiring street closure, and to provide an additional fee of $10 for each occurrence of any recurring special event over and above 15 times within the 90-day period allowed by the permit.

E. Made reclassification changes as described for the positions of Administrative Specialist in the Public Works Department and Maintenance Supervisor in the Parks and Recreation Department.

XI. Items Removed from Consent Agenda – There were no items removed from the Consent Agenda.

XII. New Business

1. Consideration of Proposed Amendments to Ordinance Establishing Speed Limits in Designated School Zones

The City Attorney stated that Appendix I, Section 138, of the City’s Code of Ordinances establishes a special speed limit of 25 mph, during certain hours, on certain designated streets near school locations in Morganton. This Ordinance has not been updated in many years, and fails to address certain new school sites opened in the past few years.
Further, some of the zones described in the existing Ordinance are no longer applicable or appropriate for regulation. After consultation among the Departments of Public Safety, Public Works, and Development & Design, the City Attorney has drafted a much-revised Section 138, to better reflect the needs for special speed limits around school areas.

Among other things, the amendments would clarify and expand the designated zones along NC 18 in front of Walter Johnson Middle School and New Dimensions School, would better designate the zones around the new Mountain View Elementary, and would delete two previously designated zones—one on West Union near Mimosa Street and on Burkemont Avenue—which are no longer used by school children on foot.

Councilman Simmons asked if there are visual warnings. The City Manager stated that some of the operating lights may be moved to other areas. She stated that signage will be placed, but flashing lights are almost a thing of the past. Councilman Simmons stated the flashing lights at Hillcrest (on East Union) certainly get your attention.

Upon motion by Councilwoman Cato, seconded by Councilman Hawkins, and carried unanimously, the Council adopted Ordinance #19-01 amending Appendix I, Section 138, Speed Limit in School Zones, of the City’s Code of Ordinances.

XIII. Other Items from City Manager and City Council Not on Agenda – There were no other items presented.

XIV. Reports – Reports were distributed to Council.

XV. Adjournment – The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Preparation of Minutes. These minutes were prepared by Mikela D. Russell, Assistant City Clerk. Copies of all resolutions, ordinances and orders referenced in these minutes are intended to be incorporated into these minutes as if fully set forth herein. Prior to including them into the official minute book, the minutes have been read and approved by the City Manager and the City Attorney, then distributed to each member of the City Council for further review and final approval, at a subsequent Council Meeting.

Mayor                                                                 Assistant City Clerk