

Mayor & Council of Sharpsburg
Meeting Minutes-APPROVED
January 10, 2022

- I. Call meeting to order and pledge-Joe Kudla-meeting was called to order at 5:55 pm
- II. Attendance: Russ Weaver, Joe Kudla, Mia Parsons, John Hammond, Carrie Estell, Dee Snyder, Ed Beeler, Jake Martz (via ZOOM), Tim Lung (via ZOOM), Robbie Waters (via ZOOM), Jeff Cline, Perry Jamieson, Mike Arant, Lucy Baker, and Sarah Baker.
- III. Meeting minutes from December 2021 to approve-Ed motioned to approve, Joe seconded motion and all were in favor of the December's meeting minutes.

Jeff Cline, Washington County Commissioner awards Miss Sharpsburg, Lucy Baker, a special recognition for being Miss Sharpsburg, being a good citizen and assisting the community. Mr. Cline awarded Lucy a framed award.

Mayor's Report

Audit/Budget December Actuals-Russ discussed the budget and December's intake and output. The water rebate reflects on the finances for December with a 40K check to assist the residents with their water bills. John motioned to accept the finances and Mia seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Carrie briefly explained the main focus/purpose of the audit, the accounting firm's findings and the difference between accrual and cash basis for book-keeping.

Russ spoke of the ordinance to acquire the two empty lots on the top of town, (Main and Church Streets, parcel #s 01-008773 & 01-004999). Each councilmember had a copy and read through the documents. Everyone was in favor of the ordinance; all voted AYE. Carrie signed off on the ordinance.

Zoning with Tim-Tim enjoys his work with everyone and some of the highlights from 2021 were that a fee for permits is now permitted, the GIS map that is linked to the town's website is helpful for zoning, tax purposes and property searches, procedures for Board of Zoning Appeals, (BZA), has started. For 2022-sub-division process for the Big Spring property, working session for the BZA to finalize procedures.

- **Follow up to December report** - Requested guidance from the Town Attorney, Brian Kane regarding property maintenance enforcement of owner-occupied property in the Town as it relates to the current Town codes. Received the following response from Mr. Kane
 - *"... I recall the last time this all came up years ago the answer was that the adopted building code had minimal maintenance requirements but that, while the IPMC (International Property Maintenance Code) would be much more comprehensive, the fear was that the Town did not have the human or financial resources to actually enforce the IPMC, so if that consideration is coming back around there needs to be a fiscal impact analysis done to advise the council about that impact. Years ago, the Town passed an ordinance adopting all of the building trade and similar codes that the County had in force then – plumbing, electrical, mechanical, fire, etc., though there are likely many more now and that ordinance may need updated. I seem to recall the County had at the time adopted a livability code but not the IPMC so using the County for enforcement purposes would not be an option. I know Hagerstown has the PMC but they have a very different enforcement mechanism."*
- **0 W. Antietam St. (Crampton)**
Continuing discussion regarding the Mayor & Council discussion concerning the open foundation hole and safety issues. The County building permit has expired, waiting for a response from Rich Eichelberger, Director of the County Department of Permits and Inspections regarding the process for issuing a new permit and if there is any action the County can take to correct the issue. Still waiting for a reply as of Jan 7.
- **Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program**
Previously reported that I had contacted the Maryland Historic Trust regarding eligibility for state and federal tax credits for rehabilitation and preservation of historic structures in the Town and the possible necessity to adopt Historic Preservation Zoning. The response was that Homeowners located within the boundaries of the state and national registered district and with properties considered contributing to the district are eligible for the historic tax credit regardless of any local designations. The Town is designated on the National Register. The County Planning Department responded that in order for properties within the Town to be eligible for County tax credits, the Town would need to adopt Historic Preservation zoning regulations and appoint a Historic District Commission. To be discussed with the Planning Commission.
- Processed and issued a Town permit for a 28.5' x 14' stick-built storage shed to be located in the rear yard of 205 South Church Street. No County building permit required (<400 sq ft.).
- Received a zoning permit application on Dec 28, 2021 for the Short-Term Rental at 110 S. Mechanic Street, owned by Gideon Properties. The Board of Zoning Appeals approval of the Special Exception required that the permit application be submitted by no later than 12/30/2021. I will be processing the application and working with the County regarding any required building inspections and fire marshal review prior to issuance of the zoning permit and occupancy permit.

- Received a complaint regarding glare from lighting at the Fire Hall into the windows of adjacent residential properties. The Town does not have any regulations regarding lighting and glare/spill over.
- Notified the County Department of Environmental Management that the Town had not received a building permit application for additional cell antennas and equipment being installed on the County's water tank.
- Conducted a search on Airbnb and VRBO websites for potential Short-term Rentals within the Town. Discovered 9 listings including 5 rooms within the Jacob Rohrerbaugh Inn which is permitted as a Bed & Breakfast Inn. The remaining 4 appear to be located on S. Mechanic Street (2), and Chaplin Steet (2). Only general map locations are shown on the websites with no addresses. Will be doing further research to determine addresses and possible notification of property owners regarding need for zoning compliance.
- Researching other Town's ordinances for a definition of a "block". Is currently defined in the subdivision ordinance but not in the zoning ordinance. Need a definition due to limitations on Short Term Rentals, no more than 2 per "block". To be discussed with the Planning Commission.
- Researching the process of identifying and possibly disposing of un-improved alleys within the town. To be discussed with the Planning Commission
- Researching the ability to possibly obtain storm water/green space credits for converting the old convenience store/gas station property at the corner of Main St and Church St. into open space. To be discussed with the Planning Commission.
- Researching the possible need to update the Zoning Ordinance regarding cellular communications antennas as a result of 5G service and possible proliferation of antennas on existing structures, light poles, etc. To be discussed with the Planning Commission.

Council Reporting
2021 Accomplishments and 2022 Plans
15 minutes/per councilmember

- Jacob Martz-Vice Mayor, communications, Memorial Day Parade, grants
 - 2021 highlights were the Memorial Day Commemoration and Parade. Some of the challenges were getting back from the COVID lock down and getting permission to use the school's parking lot for staging purposes. There were many positives of the parade-expanded the number of participants, increased media and communication, overall, the parade was a great success-we had the National Guard Band and the Fly Over. A citation was created for the Grand Marshall and was under budget. The parade booklet was well received and community members assisted a great deal. The parade committee is a great pool of community members and we all work well. Flags were replaced, the monuments were washed and for 2022 the parade will build on its success and be better. The start time will be at 2 pm, will be providing a catered lunch for the dignitaries, grants have been pursued to increase the parade's budget. Other highlights of the year include applying for grants, helping with the land acquisition for the pocket park, assisted with coordinating the workshop by David Guiney. Currently working on scheduling landscape architects for the park. Assisted with upgrading the office, working on sound system bids, website upgrades with council emails and the Sharpsburg Community Service award were started and will continue.
- Robbie Waters-parks, railroad station, town operations
 - Robbie thanked all councilmembers for their work and dedication. Some highlights of 2021 were: painting the pavilion, resealing the basketball court, mulching the park, clearing out alleys so they're more accessible to residents, overall regular town maintenance. Looking ahead to 2022-Fishing Rodeo, some type of Field Day to get the kids out and using the park more, open the pond park area to be used more and beautification project.
- Joe Kudla-streets, roads & culverts
 - Good portion of 2021 was getting acclimated to the position and its responsibilities. Collaboration between the MDOT folks and town has been a positive experience and we have made allies in that government department. Street signs were replaced and a street cleaning collaboration with Williamsport has been positive. Carrying into 2022-continue to work on infrastructure, use of MDOT resources, Mick Carr, getting culverts cleaned out and street cleaning. Work with engineers on road projects and get something in writing that assists with ownership issues, along with maintenance of bridges, street ways and sidewalks.
 - Russ suggested best use of infrastructure monies for streetscape, roads, bridges, wells and trails. Russ also commended all councilmembers for their pride and work in their community.
- Mia Parsons-Planning-(Streetscape), grants-2021 accomplishments were the first phase of the arborist report. Mia wants to collaborate more with Joe on sidewalk issues. Part of her plans for 2022 are to put into place the arborist's suggestions and implementing the plan set out. Getting bids for the tree maintenance and possibly expand the rest of Main Street and the side streets for tree repair/maintenance. Sidewalks are still an issue and she will work closely on who is responsible for the upkeep and repair. Streetscape-safety rails might be a state highway responsibility. Holiday banners were well received and got many compliments. The hardware that was sent was incorrect and this is getting fixed. Veterans and other seasonal banners are being considered. Looking into Sharpsburg residentst whom lost their lives in war; Come All Who Are Thirsty could possibly assist with this task.
- John Hammond-Building and Infrastructure

- 2021 assisted with the Stewart property and the two out buildings, Big Spring town ownership and drilling of the new wells. The water rebates for the town's tax paying residents were well received. Hoping for the wells to benefit the residences and there will need to be a legal component to the next meeting with the county.
- 2022-get a better handle on folks who violate grass rules. There needs to be a more aggressive approach to enforcement. There are quite a few houses that look run down and the idea of a tax break was suggested. Russ mentioned folks who keep their homes in good repair would find this unfair. Joe mentioned the tax credit program and 20% of an owner's repairs/improvements would be taken off their tax bill. Many lots have an increased number of abandoned cars, this is another issue for Tim to look into.
- Pond beatification was mentioned, we have not heard from the Bowman Trust. John spoke about a floating deck for disabled people who would enjoy fishing. John motioned for \$1500 for the cost, Joe seconded the motion and all were in favor of the plan to purchase the floating dock for the pond.
- Ed Beeler-Historical Planning, town archives, communications, grants
 - 2021-Museum's attendance has been increasing. The museum has two student interns, Adam Oates and Max Gregg, (Adam responsible for artifact processing and exhibits and Max responsible for maintaining the dioramas and artifacts pertaining to the Battle of Antietam.
 - Many Historical Artifacts were received on loan from SMH, (Daniel Marker Refile, Joseph Chapline's brass money box and candle stick holder, diary of Joseph Chapline's grandson's wife Mary Fales Hays, the 1840's – 1850's receipts from that time period, Col. Edward Mobley's boots and jacket, who was once a sheriff of Washington County from 1850's to 1860's and was in Sharpsburg's memorial parade in 1899.
 - TV spot was a great boost for the museum and a relationship with the TV station has been established.
 - 2022
 - tours for the history club and others from Sharpsburg Elementary School. Home school groups will also be welcomed
 - Miss Sharpsburg will be an elementary student in the Sharpsburg school zone
 - Nonprofit status to be one of the big goals for 2022
 - Partner with the Sharpsburg Historical Society to preserve the history of the town
 - Initiate a return of Sharpsburg Days in the first week of October
 - Look for a larger building or site for the museum as it is growing
 - Would like an increased budget for the next fiscal year
 - Showcase a volunteer each month for recognition
 - Suggested a Christmas Committee to meet and decide on Christmas decorations and events
- Russ encouraged all councilmembers and public in attendance to join Sharpsburg's Historical Society
 - Russ also spoke about the land purchase agreement and the great opportunity of getting the lots and creating a great park for the community members and visitors.
 - John spoke of the inmate program to work any extra projects around town, there was some discussion of contact persons and what types of projects that would be suited for the price of paying the guard.
- Mike Arant-Town Crier
 - Marks the one-year anniversary of the new edition of the Town Crier
 - There are about 170 electronic subscribers and anyone wanting a paper copy, the library provides one free of charge
 - This year the editions will be in honor of another wonderful Sharpsburg resident
 - The community calendar and the Town Crier in its entirety is posted on Facebook and the calendar of events are in the county wide page of What's Happening
- Meeting was adjourned 8:30-Ed motioned, Joe seconded and all were in favor or adjournment