Mayor & Council of Sharpsburg

Meeting Minutes-APPROVED

Monday, July 11, 2022

6 PM

In attendance: Russ Weaver, Jacob Martz, Ed Beeler, John Hammond, Mia Parsons, Tim Lung (via speaker phone), Carrie Estell, Chris Vincent, Jen Bruni, Perry Jamieson, Ron Bowers, Matt Kudla, and Michael Fitzgerald

Call meeting to order and pledge-Mia

Approve June Meeting Minutes-vote was conducted via email, mayor asked for a “formal” vote, Ed motioned, Joe seconded and all were in favor, Mia abstained from voting as she did not read over the minutes.

**Public Comments**

**Ron Bowers-**Mr. Bowers was introduced and spoke to residents and council on his reasons for running for county commissioner. He is re-entering politics as he sees that there is a need in the county for common sense zoning and more conservative projects to preserve farm land and open space.

**Mike Fitzgerald-**Mr. Fitzgerald spoke of an easement that was not properly written due to language that did not fulfill the Board of Zoning Appeals that is connected to one of his properties that is a short-term rental unit/Airbnb. Tim spoke to him and they will meet this Friday to work on the language of the document. Tim suggested he consult with his lawyer.

**Mayor’s Report**

Accounting & Audit-audit will be done mostly electronically and the accounting is completely in QuickBooks; there should be a seamless transition from Russ’ excel sheets to QuickBooks’ budget reports. Second payment of Recovery Act will be electronically received soon. The next reporting date is April, 2023 and would be good if all monies were spent.

Sidewalk Policy-No Mow Worries has done a great job with some of the sidewalks that Joe chose to get repaired. The sidewalks are owners’ responsibilities and there has not been a reinforcement of this policy. Moving forward, the council will discuss a sidewalk policy that will benefit the town and assist some residents with the high cost of repair. Joe offered to write up a policy for council to review.

Update on Wells-the county is offering to drill the well; Russ went over many scenarios of % of water flow and % of profit, councilmembers spoke of asking the county for most of the profits. The wells, after they are dug, won’t be operational for almost a year due to testing during different scenarios.

**Zoning-Tim Lung (via speaker phone)**

* Continue to work on obtaining the necessary information to complete the zoning permit application for the Short-Term Rental at 110 S. Mechanic Street, owned by Gideon Properties. Per the involved parties, the offsite parking agreement/easement as required as a condition of the BZA’s approval has fallen though. Have be in contact with Mr. Fitzgerald regarding possible alternatives and a means to move forward. As long as Mr. Fitzgerald can provide an off-street parking space behind the house on his property, he would only need an access easement from the adjoining property owners to obtain access to the space. Mr. Fitzgerald would need to prove to the satisfaction of the Town that the access easement would be valid for as long as he is operating a short term retain on his property. This change would not require going back to the BZA.
* The subdivision plat of the Hull property to create a lot Town Spring to be conveyed to the Town has been recorded in the County Land records. A deed of conveyance is being prepared by the Town Attorney. There has been some discussion regarding the adequacy of the easement to provide access to the area behind the wall that is not accessible from the alley.
* Received a building permit application for a detached deck surrounding a previously permitted above ground pool at 123 W. Antietam St.
* Regarding the expired building permit for the Stephen Crampton property. Informed Mr. Crampton that he may reapply for a new permit and that the designated side yard setbacks on the original permit were incorrect. The permit will need to be reviewed by the Planning Commission per section 406 of the Zoning Ordinance.
* Have been working on a resolution to the complaint regarding the electronic sign at the Fire Department.
* Need to schedule a Planning Commission meeting to discuss and take action on several items.

**Council comments**

* Joe Kudla-streets, roads & culverts
  + Walls-ownership/responsibility was transferred to MDOT; nothing was officially transferred. The town would like the walls repaired as they are a historic feature. The latest letter from an MDOT department housed in Baltimore was of the mindset that they did not feel the walls were in need of repair, the walls do not pose a safety issue. Carrie and Russ sent an email letter requesting assistance from Corderman, Wivell and MDOT on securing historical grants to see about the repairs, hoping for some historical grant monies
  + Antietam Bridge work is almost complete, No Mow Worries will be taking out the cracked pipe and replace with PVC and smooth out the area.
  + Sidewalk near the Hull resident was a major safety hazard, there was some discussion on creating a sidewalk policy as home owners are responsible. All sidewalk work will be put on hold until Joe drafts a policy to have council review adopt.
  + MDOT will be showing mayor and council some ideas for the parking on Main up towards the national cemetery. Parking that is close to the intersection makes for a safety issue.
  + After the couple of storms, there were a few complaints on flooding, there was some in the 300 block of Main. This may be due to the school construction, there was a pond that assisted with rain water, but since the school construction completion the pond was filled in.
  + Tim suggested to seek out the county’s storm water inspector and will reach out to them this week.
* John Hammond-Building and Infrastructure-JS electric estimate needs to be more specific. He did not like the language used, it was vague and Carrie will reach out to get a more specific estimate on the outside electrical work. The circuit breaker estimate, John felt was too high for what the work entailed. Russ asked if anyone wanted to vote on doing the circuit breaker to be rehoused from Nutter’s Ice Cream to Town Hall, no one motioned. This issue will be set aside.
* Robbie Waters-parks, railroad station, town operations (not present)
* Ed Beeler-museum, historical records, communication
  + Attendance for June 2021: 209 Attendance for 2022: 211
  + Attendance for Founder`s Day Exhibit: 11
  + Donations: Two pictures-train station and Burnside Bridge from Kreitzer family
  + This month we received a new computer, a museum software package for better record keeping and a website is being developed
  + On Coming Events:
    - Sharpsburg School History Exhibit on August 20th
    - Discussion by Dr. Emilie Amt on the Sinclair’s of Sharpsburg on August 5th at 7pm.
* Jacob Martz-Vice Mayor, communications, Memorial Day Parade, grants
  + Post parade meeting discussed observations and improvements, the parade committee did a great job. At this meeting Jake and Russ awarded Ava Gift the Sharpsburg Community Award. The parade committee also branched out to have a traffic committee that included Officer Peyton and the Washington County Fire Police to discuss improvements to parade line up and traffic direction.
  + Mahan/Rykiel finalized contract and have set up a project profile to invoice us on their upcoming work on the historical pocket park.
* Flag policy-flags will be out a week before and a week after Memorial Day and the weekend of Fourth of July. Instead of realying on volunteers, we will have Robbie/RW Properties to do this task. Many flags were being flown damaged because of the weather. (Russ’ suggestion)
* Mia Parsons-Planning-(Streetscape), grants Planning Commission (sea containers, alley names, peddlers) Tolson’s Chapel & School banners, vet banners. Planning meeting to be scheduled the later part of July. Antietam Cable 5G will also be a subject to discuss.

**Community Partners**

* **Officer Tracey Peyton** (submitted electronically)
  + **Security Checks:** park-6, ball field-3, school-6, Antietam Station-8
  + **Patrol-** 2 hrs. foot patrol, traffic enforcement 3 hrs., 3 citations & 3 warnings. Traffic accident investigated, assisted with EMS overdose, emergency petition filed, assisted county with 911 call to Snyder’s Landing, presented traffic survey to council and attended parade traffic review meeting. One full day was lost due to personal emergency.
* **Chris Vincent**-Antietam Advisory board-provided a written report; he emphasized the battlefield would like public opinion on the ground use plan. Carrie will post on Facebook.
  + The committee met on Wednesday, June 22, 2022. The following members were in attendance: Supt. Susan Trail, Chris Vincent, Justin Mayhue, Mike Barnhart and Vernell Doyle. John Schildt was absent due to medical appointment. The committee held it’s first in-person meeting since January of 2020. The committee was provided applications of volunteers to serve on the committee. Based on these, three individuals were selected for consideration and their names will be provided to the County Clerk. The three selectees are: George Franks, Miriam Cunningham, and Gerard Kendle.
  + Superintendent Trail discussed the rehabilitation project of the Visitor’s Center. The project is moving along nicely. The completion date has been adjusted to October with a possible ribbon cutting expected the 3rd week of the month. Work continues indoors with some drywall and the elevator shift. Outside, the stonewall, siding and roofing is being completed with work on the walkway starting. The museum exhibits fabrication has started. The film company has started work on the new orientation film. The script is being reviewed and seasonal photos have been taken. The new film will be approximately 23 minutes. Filming will be conducted in October. Most of the filming will be off site, near the park except for some filming at the Burnside Bridge. The film is expected to be completed at the end of 2023. Part of the film will be used on the video screen that will be in the Visitor Center lobby.
  + The 160th Battle Anniversary schedule will be posted soon. Due to the work at the Visitor Center and other projects the event will be much like last year with the two weekends in September. Many of the events and activities will be concentrated around the Visitor Center and the Mumma farm.
  + New arrivals in Law Enforcement; Joshua Baldwin replaced Jay Cooper and Conner Lacour is serving in a seasonal position. Other Projects: HPTC continues to work on the preservation project at the Piper house. The metal roof replacement and window repairs are complete.
  + Work continues on the exterior and the outbuildings. Work will begin soon at the David R. Miller house, focusing on the porch, windows, and the stucco. The Pry House rehab of the front portico and windows continues. The grass has been noticeability high throughout the park. Park maintenance has been working to manage grass cutting over the spring along roads, monuments, and trails. A new mowing contract will begin in July to manage all the additional areas.
  + The public review of the Land Use Management Plan / Environmental Assessment is scheduled for July. This plan and the EA defines the framework for the treatment of the battlefield landscape and describe specific guidelines and tasks aimed to maintain and enhance the park's historic character. The purpose of this Landscape Management Plan is to develop comprehensive, sustainable land use strategies that will preserve significant landscape elements and integrate natural and cultural resource values, including a framework to: - Sustainably manage agricultural uses and forests. - Protect critical view sheds from surrounding development. - Restore historic viewpoints, currently obstructed by overgrown vegetation. - Protect witness trees that were standing at the time of the Battle of Antietam. - Stabilize eroding shorelines and trails. - Advance watershed stewardship goals. - Increase resiliency to climate change impacts; and - Improve opportunities for park visitors to learn about the battle's events and significance. Public participation is vital to the planning process. You are invited to review and provide comments on the EA from July 7 through August 8. The Public Comment site can be found at: https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=173&projectID=104934&documentI D=121932
  + The next meeting is scheduled for September 14th, 2022
* **Mike Arant**-Town Crier (not present)

**Old Business/ACTIONS:**

Electrical estimates-JS Electric was reviewed and we will request a more precise wording. Carrie will reach out again to Shifler Electric for their estimate.

Council furniture-there were two formats-curved at 17,000 and not curved at 7,500. Council all agreed to go with the American Design non curved format in Whiskey color. DSL will be contacted.

**New Business**

Meeting adjourned at 8:46, John motioned, Mia seconded and all were in favor.

Next meeting is scheduled Monday, August 1, 2022