

**SHARPSBURG MAYOR AND COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 8, 2024**

The Mayor and Council of Sharpsburg, MD held their monthly meeting on Monday, January 4, 2024 in the Council meeting room of Town Hall located at 106 E. Main Street in Sharpsburg. In attendance were Mayor Russell Weaver, Councilmembers Ed Beeler, Joseph Kudla, John Hammond and Mia Parsons. Absent were Vice Mayor Jacob Martz and Councilmember Robbie Waters. Town Clerk Debra Smith was also in attendance and Zoning Administrator Tim Lung was in attendance via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE: Mayor Weaver called the meeting of the Mayor and Council to order at 6:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilmember Kudla.

GUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Atlantic Security System Service Agreement for Parks – Rick Toms from Atlantic Security explained to the Mayor and Council the two-(2) plan options available for the security cameras in the parks. Plan A includes an annual cleaning and test of the system as well as a warranty on parts and labor. Plan B is for the annual cleaning and test of the equipment only, no warranty coverage with this plan. (ACTION ITEM)

Request for Alley Access – Lee Downey has submitted a request to the town for issuance of a permit to provide access to a public alley in the Town behind W. Chapline St. for a proposed new single-family dwelling to be constructed on an existing lot of record which is located in the County and has ally frontage. The Fire Company is will provide comments after accessing what improvements may be required in order to adequately serve this property. Mayor Weaver has also asked for any comments from the Planning Commission and will provide an answer on the matter at Februarys meeting. (ACTION ITEM)

Josh Gettridge of 133 E. Main Street came before the Mayor and Council to state his displeasure in the towns process and cost to obtain an in-home occupation permit to conduct an auto repair business. After speaking with Mayor and staff members on previous occasions, Mr. Gettridge stated that he has obtained a business license and believes that his business should be grand-fathered in. It was explained that when the previous business closed, the property reverted back to the original TR zoning after a period of 1-year. The \$600 special exception fee covers the cost of attorney and staff review and advertising. Mr. Gettridge reiterated his dis-satisfaction with the management of the culvert by his house. He thinks that the management of the waste coming from the grass gully on 65 is not adequately managed or maintained. While both the town and MDOT have cleaned the culvert on various occasions, the matter of ownership still has not been determined.

Mayor Weaver tabled the vote on the **approval of minutes** and the **financial report** until February. (ACTION ITEM)

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT– Tim Lung

- Continued to correspond with Lee Downey regarding the process for obtaining access to the “Roulette Property” located in the County that fronts on the alley behind W. Chapline Street for the purpose of constructing a dwelling (See related agenda item).
- Continued to correspond with a consultant for Verizon regarding procedures related to the possible placement of a new wireless communication tower at various locations in the Town. Such a facility would require approval of a Special Exception by the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- Resolved matter of un-permitted auto repair business operating at the rear of property along the south side of E. Main Street. Business has closed, sign removed. Owner would have the option to apply for a Zoning Special Exception to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

- Waiting for a response from the State Highway Administration regarding the sight distance issue at the corner on Church St (MD 65) and E. Main St. (MD34).
- Reviewed and signed off on a building permit application for a roof improvement project at the Fire Department building at 110 W. Chapline St. ● Reviewed and approved a Zoning Permit for a small shed to be located at 225 E. Main Street. No County building permit required.
- Regarding the alley naming matter. At the request of the Mayor to follow up on the Council discussion at its December meeting, the following are the suggested, approvable, alley names that were presented by the County at the April 2022 Council meeting. Extracted this from the minutes. "Some suggestions for new alley names that Mr. Hays and Mr. Griffith thought that reflected the history of the town were: Biggs Alley, Tolson Alley, Garrison Springs Alley and Clipp Alley. Russ thanked the gentlemen for their thoughtfulness. The need to name the alley by Tolson's Chapel is needed as it will be part of the town's walking tour." (See related Jan. agenda item)
- Corresponded with Meghan Jenkins, Staff liaison to the County Historic District Commission (HDC) regarding the status of establishing a draft MOU with the Towns for possible delegated authority to comply with Historic overlay zoning and eligibility for Tax credits. The HDC is closing in on the draft for the ordinance update. It's been through its round of review by the County Attorney and the HDC will have a wrap up meeting to discuss any final comments before scheduling a hearing in the next couple of months. Requested to forward the Draft to the Town for comments when it is hearing time

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- **Wells** –Received one bid response which is significantly higher than plan. We will discuss during old business.
- **Historic Park**–Frederick Seibert and Associates to present detailed design January 10th from 10 - 1.
- **Big Spring**–We were not selected for a grant and have this project is on hold.
- **Boyer House** – Received SHAF feedback based on meeting with our attorney. We will discuss during old business.
- **Streets & General Maintenance**– Great job of addressing recent winter storm!
- **Audit** – Action plan to address issues is moving forward.
- Mayor Weaver stated that he will be sending a letter to the library board inquiring why the library was open on Saturday during the snow storm.

CORRESPONDENCE

- MML Meeting- January 22nd @ 6PM at the Elks Club

COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS for December 2023

COUNCILMEMBER BEELER- submitted the Annual Report for the Sharpsburgh Museum of History for 2023 which included 1,653 visitors. A grand opening and ribbon cutting in April and an increase in funding are among the 2024 goals.

COUNCILMEMBER KUDLA – meeting next week on the Church/Antietam Street drainage issue. The radar signs have been charged and should be installed next week. The culverts have been cleared. Inquired about the matter of a complaint regarding the lack of sight caused by the flags on the porch on the corner of E. Main Street and N. Church Street.

COUNCILMEMBER HAMMOND – nothing to report.

COUNCILMEMBER PARSONS – Planning Commission will meet Thursday, January 25th.

COUNCILMEMBER WATERS – Not present, but Mayor Weaver stated that the letter to the playground company regarding the towns dis-satisfaction is still pending. (ACTION ITEM)

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

M. DEP. WATKINS REPORT December 2023:

Antietam Station – 4, Elementary school – 4, Little League – 5, Park – 3, Traffic Enforcement – 3.5 hours
Calls For Service – 1, Jefferson Security lot – 1 night
Total Sheriff's Office events in December – 65
MDOP – 1, TFMV – 1, Theft – 0, Disorderly – 2, Undesirable - 0

PARK ADVISORY BOARD- Chris Vincent – December meeting was canceled. Next meeting will be in March. Currently interviewing for a new Superintendent.

TOWN CRYER – Mayor Weaver stated that Mike Arant has been running a series on our local Veterans and asked that anyone knowing of a local Veteran, to please contact Mike.

OLD BUSINESS

E. Antietam Street Drainage Project Update – this project needs to be completed within the next FY if not sooner.

Well Drilling Project Update – W. C. placed the project out for bid with only one-(1) official bid received. Negley's Well Drilling, Inc. from Newburg, PA with a total base bid of \$97,424.00. Contingent bid items (additional casing and well bore) costs of \$25,450.00 for a total proposed bid of \$122,874.00. If the bid is accepted, the project will proceed within 90 calendar days of 12/19/2023. Because the project cost could well exceed the bid, it was proposed to delay any discussions on water rebates until after the well drilling project. *A projection of proposed projects and associated funding was presented with a review of the towns finances to be done at the February meeting. **Motion** by Councilmember Beeler, second by Councilmember Kudla to accept the bid as presented. Motion carried. *(ACTION ITEM)

Lutheran Cemetery Status – Table until February. (ACTION ITEM)

Boyer House Update - Mayor Weaver reviewed the current draft sales agreement between SHAF and the Town for the Boyer House. A lengthy discussion on terms within the agreement and its intended use ended with Mayor Weaver stating that he will send Council the final documents for comments and a final vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Alley Naming and Signage - Table until February. (ACTION ITEM)

Motion by Councilmember Kudla Martz, second by Councilmember Beeler to closed the meeting at 8:45 PM. Motion carried.

February 5, 2024 Meeting Action/Agenda Items:

- Approval of December minutes and financial report
- Atlantic Security System Service Agreement for Parks
- Request for Alley Access
- Lutheran Cemetery Status
- Discussion on naming and placing signage on allies.
- Councilmember Waters to provide Town Clerk Smith with details regarding the delay with the manufacturer so they can be relayed back to the Andrew Eshelman at the County Parks & Rec.
- Financial Review

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Smith
Town Clerk