



Town of Sharpsburg

Town Crier



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Town Council Minutes

These are not the “official” minutes of the meeting, they are an overview of the business that was conducted. Official minutes can be obtained from the Town Clerk.

The meeting of the Sharpsburg Town Council was called to order at 7:08pm by Mayor Spielman. The minutes of the January meeting and the January Treasurer’s report were both accepted as reported.

Public Comment

Steve Kemmet of Captain Bender’s was present to ask permission to place one table in front of his establishment from April 1-October 31st. Permission was granted indefinitely, but will be revoked if the Mayor and Council have just cause to do so.

Mr. Kemmet also asked permission to have an outdoor, fenced in area in front of his establishment on September 14th during the heritage festival. It would open at 11am and close when the festival closes. Permission was granted.

Meredith Poffenberger approached the council about the possibility of having a town clean-up day. This would be a day when residents could clean up their properties, with some help from the girl scouts and possibly the boy scouts and other young people and volunteers. She will work on the logistics and details and report back to the council. The town will have a bulk trash pick up to coincide with this day. Meredith would also like the girl scouts to clean up the Big Spring on April 20th, Arbor Day. After further investigation, there are several hoops to jump through with the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources before anything can be done to the spring, or the wall behind the spring. Kimberly is working on getting the required meetings and permits.

Vernell Doyle spoke of the sign that the Historical Society will be purchasing for the Big Spring. The council will meet with her on Monday, February 11th to determine the best location for the sign.

Committee Reports

Parks and Railroad Station – the town was awarded a \$24,000 grant for benches, trash receptacles and bike racks for the town. Kimberly will be meeting with the State Highway regarding the grant on February 7th.

Building – the council agreed to get rid of the Verizon phone line in the town hall and go with Comcast.

Streets – We will contact contractors in regards to getting estimates on fixing the road on High Street near the water tower and also the possibility of placing speed bumps in the area.

Battlefield Advisory Committee – this meeting will be held on Wednesday. Mr. Jamieson will be providing Kimberly with the notes to place in the crier.

Public Safety – once again, if residents see suspicious activity, witness vandalism, etc. that they need to call the sheriff's department and not the Mayor or a Councilperson.

Old Business: Fishing Rodeo – this will be held on Saturday, May 4th at the town pond. Brandon has agreed to help with organizing this, but volunteers are needed as well.

Town Project for the 250th commemoration – The town will be working on a quilt, like was done for the 225th anniversary. There is a small group organizing this and more details will be provided soon.

New Business – The town council agreed to sponsor the 250th celebration with the Historical Society.

Iron Bridge at alley behind post office – this will be repaired when Clint's Welding is able to complete the work.

Heritage Festival – this will be a one-day event this year. The committee is in need of members to help with the planning and carrying out of this event.

Kids Group – Dale Settle is willing to take some time to do activities with the kids of Sharpsburg if the town would like him to do so. This was tabled.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm. The next meeting will be Monday, March 4, 2013 at 7pm.

A Little Piece of History

In honor of Black History Month, we are pleased to share a brief history of Tolson's Chapel.



Tolson's chapel was built in 1866 on land that had been donated by an African American couple from Sharpsburg. The structure was dedicated in October 1867 as part of the Methodist denomination, and named for John Tolson, the first minister.

In 1868, the chapel served as a schoolhouse for local African-American children. Responding to the lack of educational facilities for African-American children after the civil war, the federal Freedman's Bureau

helped local communities throughout the South and in the former border states hire teachers and help build schools. Ezra Johnson opened the “American Union” school in Tolson’s chapel. In addition to the day school for children, he started a night school for adults, a Sabbath school and a temperance organization.

Tolson’s Chapel served double duty as a school and church until 1899, when Sharpsburg’s first African-American schoolhouse was built nearby at the end of High Street.

By the 1970’s, only annual “homecoming” services were held in the church. The last two members passed away in the mid-1990’s.

Today, Tolson’s Chapel still stands mainly in part to the “Friends of Tolson’s Chapel” non-profit group. These individuals, as well as support from the town, local government officials, grants and the Save Historic Antietam Foundation, have enabled the group to restore the church to its original beauty. Preservation and restoration still continues continuously. If you are interested in joining the efforts, through financial means, volunteering of your time and/or talents, contact the Friend’s of Tolson’s Chapel at PO Box 162, through Facebook at Friend’s of Tolson’s Chapel, or through their website at www.tolsonschapel.org.

-information obtained from the Tolson’s Chapel brochure

Upcoming Events

Sharpsburg Heritage Festival Meeting

The next meeting of the Sharpsburg Heritage Festival will be on Wednesday, February 27th at 7pm at town hall. Everyone is welcome to attend!

250th Committee Meeting

The 250th committee of the Sharpsburg Commemoration celebration will be meeting on February 28th at 7pm in Town Hall. So far, the events being discussed are:

- Wreath laying at the Chapline Plot in Mt. View Cemetery
- Old fashioned Ice Cream Social
- Signage placed at the Great Spring with a ceremony to commemorate the placement
- Raffle to raise money for the Historical Society
- T-Shirt sales to benefit the Historical Society

- Book Signing at the library
- A register book and information area

These events are still in the stages of planning and volunteers and ideas are always welcome! Come out to the meeting and be a part of this historical event!

Sons of Confederate Veterans

Battle of Sharpsburg Camp #1582, Sons of Confederate Veterans, will meet Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at 7pm at Town Hall. Guest Speaker will be Mr. C.W. Whitehair, who will be presenting a talk on his ancestor who fought in the Confederate Army at Gettysburg. The meeting is free and open to the public. Contact Camp Commander Michael Wasiljov at mike24745@aol.com, or 301-992-3122 for more information.

Community News

Announcements

Planning for the Parade is Underway!

The Sharpsburg Memorial Day parade committee is working on the details for this year's parade. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings to assist with ideas and the planning of this special yearly event. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 7pm in the town hall.

Annual Fishing Rodeo in need of Volunteers

The annual fishing rodeo is slated to be held on Saturday, May 4th at the town pond off of South Church Street. This event is a free event open to the local children. The children enjoy this activity and it gives them a chance to learn about fish and fishing while having fun. If you would like to assist with this event, or help with the planning of the event, please contact Kimberly Fulk at the town office at 301-432-4428 or at townofsharpsburg@comcast.net

Reporting of Problems or Vandalism

If you are experiencing problems with trash service or other town issues, please make every attempt possible to contact the town clerk as opposed to contacting the Mayor, Vice Mayor or a Councilperson. Since our elected officials all have full time jobs, your problem can more than likely be expedited quicker by contacting the clerk, as opposed to waiting on a return call from an official. After hours, the clerk can be reached at 301-302-7347.

If you witness vandalism, or suspect suspicious activity, please call the sheriff's department, NOT an elected official. Thank you.

BATTLEFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Partnering with the Boonsboro Free Library, the battle field is sponsoring three Civil War book discussions. About 80 people attended a reception on January 18 that introduced the series. The discussions will be held at the Boonsboro Library at 7pm on three Fridays: February 8th, March 8th and April 5th. To learn more about the series and to register for it, visit www.washcolibrary.org or call 301-739-3250, extension 186. People who register will be eligible for a battlefield tour on Saturday, April 20.

In January, the Visitor's Center gained high-speed internet access. There are also plans to have wireless service at the Samuel and Elizabeth Mumma house.

Two staff members conducted an oral history interview with Ed Bearss, Marine veteran of World War II, former chief historian of the National Park Service, military historian and popular tour guide. The interview focused on the administrative history of the NPS during Mr. Bearss's long and distinguished career.

-Perry Jamieson

Church News



Pictured: From Left to Right: Bob Milburn, Alice Swartz (oldest member at 91 ½,) Kathy Muck (Alice's Daughter,) Rev. Ralph Jamison (retired minister,) Rev. Harold Ebersole (retired minister,) Gary Nunamaker and Pastor Gene Renner

On Sunday, February 3rd, the Sharpsburg Bible Church (which is 140 years old,) broke ground for a new addition to this building that was first used 32 years ago. After the regular church service, the congregation stepped outside and despite the cold and snow, kept warm under the bright sun as they listened to the words of Pastor Gene Renner read from the Bible. A prayer was offered by retired Pastor Ralph Jamison. The people were in fine voice as they united their voices singing "To God Be the Glory" without music. Pastor Gene asked us all to remember the power of God, who has allowed this growth and reminded us that this church will serve God, love God and teach God. Dirt was already dug in the shape of a cross to make it a little easier to dig, since the ground was frozen. The honor was done by the pastor, the elders; Alice Swartz, the oldest member at 91 ½ and Megan Broadwater, representing the youth. Pastor Gene has served as minister to this church for 36 years; four of those years were at the old building.

- Darlene Hoffman

