

Town of Sharpsburg



Town Crier

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The minutes of the Council meeting are an overview of business conducted and are not the official minutes of the meeting. The official minutes are available at the Clerk's office.

The meeting was called to order at 7pm by Mayor Hal Spielman. The minutes of the January meeting and the January Treasurer's report were both approved as presented.

Public Comment

In regards to the former BP sign being used by C.A.W.A.T.; Russ moved to approve the sign and Ed seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Parks & Railroad Station: Mayor Spielman is concerned about the park facilities. The park is in need of closing and getting rid of all weeds and a full load of mulch. Mayor Spielman also suggested the possibility of looking into getting new play equipment for smaller children to place in the area between the pavilion and the large play set. Russ suggested looking into the Project Open Space Program to possibly obtain funds to assist with this. Kimberly stated that she believes the deadline is June, but that she will look into it and all the requirements to apply.

The open house at the Railroad Station went very well. Jeff Jones, one of the members of the Hagerstown Railroad Museum at Antietam Station stated that they had over 1,000 people attend.

Building: Darryl was not able to attend the meeting, but he did state that cameras for the building would run about \$100-\$500, depending on what kind we would want and how many we would want.

Russ suggested that Kimberly determine what she would want, since she is the one that is here more than anyone else and let Darryl know. Russ suggested to price out cameras that record, vs. cameras that you can review a screen and watch and the decision would be made at the next meeting.

Brandon spoke in regards to the chair caddy for the back room and said that the smaller caddy would be the best option, as it would fit on the elevator.

Ed spoke in regards to the Canal Boat Hatch that is on loan to us from the Washington County Historical Society. He stated that the hatch is about 15 feet long and appears to have weight to it. Tamara said that her husband could pick it up for us and bring it to Town Hall. Vernell Doyle of the Sharpsburg Historical Society gave some history on the artifact. She stated that it was a part of the C&O exhibit at the Discovery Station and that it is an actual Canal Boat hatch. It is unclear if it was a part of Canal Boat

57, or another boat. It was felt that Sharpsburg would be a good place to display the hatch, since we are a canal town. Many questions were raised as to where we would put it once we got it here. It was thought it would be too heavy to hang on the wall. It was suggested to place it against the wall in Town Hall, or down along the wall on the first floor. Hanging it on the wall coming up the stairs was another suggestion. Brandon stated that he believes to get it up to the second floor a window would need to be removed and equipment would need to be brought in to hoist it. It was suggested to get the hatch and store it until we could figure out a place to display it. Tamara said that Brandon and her husband could go together and pick it up.

Another issue is the stage backdrop that is currently along the wall on the first floor. The question was raised to hang it on the wall on the first floor, however; the railing support would hinder this suggestion.

Streets: Nothing to report

Planning and Zoning: Russ has had a few applications to join the Planning Commission. Chris Vincent, Meredith Poffenberger and Vernell Doyle are interested. Russ moved that these three be added to the Commission. They, along with previous members Marty McElroy, Rob Tudor, Steve Kemmett and Patty Hammond will be informed of the meeting and this will get underway. Russ asked if the members could get the Municipal Maryland magazine as well. Kimberly stated that she would check with MML. Russ stated that in the Herald Mail today, Smithsburg adopted a nuisance abatement code and adopted a code to address dilapidated buildings. Russ stated that he felt this was a good idea and he asked Kimberly to see if she could get copies of the ordinances from Smithsburg. He feels that we need to do a better job of enforcement and he feels that we need to look at and strengthen the ordinances. He feels that the Planning Commission can help with this task and that they can also take a look at the trees in town and come up with a policy in regards to the trees. There is currently no written policy on the trees and nothing in writing from the State Highway as to tree ownership (i.e. the Town, the resident, etc.) Mayor Spielman stated that the only written information that was found was an opinion from Charles Wagaman, attorney at the time of the streetscape project, which states that if the Town put a tree in, then it is the responsibility of the town to take care of any issues that arise from the planting of that tree. If a resident did not put in what was suggested from the Town (i.e. a maple tree), then the responsibility would be on the home owner to take responsibility of that tree. The letter from Mr. Wagaman stated that the Town asked each resident to put in a maple tree, but some refused and wanted flowering trees or no tree at all. In this instance, the home owners that wanted a tree other than a maple tree, would be responsible for that tree.

Members of the audience asked if that means that the tree in front of their property could be cut down if it is not a maple tree. They were encouraged to not cut the tree down until this could be looked into further and a tree plan could be established. Audience members also stated that they were never asked what type of tree that they wanted in front of their property. This is a murky area, we only know what information was found when Kimberly went through about 500 pages of correspondence from that time. Mr. Wagaman's opinion is just that "an opinion" and now the current Council will need to figure out what to do about the trees. Russ stated that hashing the trees at every meeting doesn't really get us anywhere and we would need to sit down and discuss and research how other towns handle trees and figure out a plan. It was also asked if the Town will be trimming the trees this winter. The answer to this is "no", since we would have to figure out the ownership of the trees, etc.

It was asked who was on the Planning Committee and who is on the Board of Appeals. Russ clarified that Chris Vincent, Vernell Doyle, Meredith Poffenberger, Patty Hammond, Steve Kemmett, Marty McElroy and Rob Tudor are the members of the Planning Committee. The Board of Appeals consists of Sid Gale, Jeff Prenger, Lauren Wolfe and Dave Peters is an alternate. Kimberly will post these names out front. It was questioned what their rules are. Russ stated that they are published on the town website, in the library and in the Clerk's office. Russ stated that the Planning Commission meetings are public meetings and that when a meeting is established, Russ will inform Kimberly, so that she can advertise. Russ clarified that the Planning Commission is a group that puts together recommendations for the

Mayor and Council. Those recommendations are brought before the Mayor and Council and are then voted. The Planning Commission will discuss a topic and then take public input on the subject and use those inputs when presenting to the Mayor and Council.

Battlefield Advisory Committee: The next meeting will be April 5th. There is no current report from the committee, as the meetings are now quarterly.

Public Safety: Nothing to report

Mayor's Report: Mayor Spielman reported that the Joint Veteran's Council is seeking donations for a Vietnam War Memorial to honor the 17 Washington County residents that died while serving in the war. Land has been established near City Park in Hagerstown for the Memorial. Two Sharpsburg Residents are included in the 17. It was moved by Russ and seconded by Ed to donate \$1,000. The motion carried. Russ stated that this is something that the public will support. Kimberly will put it in the Crier and Beth and Dwayne Harris of Victory Garden Ranch will help get the word out.

Tolson's Chapel sent correspondence to the Mayor and Council asking for them to continue supporting them and asking for membership dues of \$25 for an annual membership. Russ moved to give the membership dues of \$25 and Tamara seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Old Business

Trees: This was already discussed earlier in the meeting

New Business

Mowing Contract: Last year's contract did not include the Pond or the Mark A. Smith Park, due to the fact that we were going to use the inmates to perform the mowing and upkeep of these properties. Since the inmates were cut down to once a month, we had to ask the current contractor to mow these properties, and negotiate a price. We are going to re-bid the mowing contract again for this year with these areas back in the contract. We also need to add the back of the parking lot at the old Legion building in the contract as well. As well as the fence row at the Legion Building. The bid sheet was reviewed and clarified, so as not to cause confusion to the bidder. Kimberly will get the word out and publish when the bids are due and when they will be opened. It needs to be clear that the vegetation needs to be removed from the brick sidewalks and that the clippings need to be swept from the sidewalks and not blown all over the property or vehicles.

Kimberly asked if flower beds should be included in the contract. It was the feeling of the group that Kimberly and Tamara would organize a group to plant the flowers in the flower beds. Using a Master Gardener was suggested, if needed. There are two local Master Gardeners that may be interested. It was also suggested that we could use students that are in need of student service hours to help as well. Ms. Harne offered to contact the high school and get some information on the program so that we could possibly utilize them.

Canal Towns Partnership: Kimberly explained about the Canal Towns, which includes towns that border the C&O Canal towpath from Great Falls to Cumberland. The Partnership was developed to help bring hikers and bikers off of the Canal and into the bordering towns, to help the businesses in each town. Kimberly stated that Brunswick and Hancock have both donated \$500. No price has been set, so each town could donate what they feel. Ed moved to give the Partnership \$500 and Michael seconded the motion. The motion carried.

South County Senior Center: Mayor Spielman got word that the South County Senior Center, which meets at the old Keedysville School, is leaving. This would mean that the senior citizens from this part of the county would not have a place to go, and would be forced to go to Hagerstown to the Senior Center there. Mayor Spielman sent an email to the County Commissioners to see if there was anything that they could do to prevent this from happening. If the Senior Center leaves, the other activities that occur at the school will eventually be forced to leave, as there will not be enough revenue to keep the facility open. Russ stated he would take it to his church and suggested contacting the local churches with this news as well.

Mr. Vincent questioned when brush pick up would be. This was not discussed yet, but it was felt to have it the second week of May. Kimberly will contact Bartlett and get this set up. This is just a brush pick up. No garden material, yard waste, etc. will be collected. When the date is established, Kimberly will get the word out.

Ed moved to adjourn at 8:21pm and Tamara seconded the motion. The motion carried. The next meeting will be held Monday March 6th at 7pm.

Town News

Town Meetings

Town meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 7pm in the council chambers of Town Hall. All town meetings are open to the public.

Mayor and Council Workshop Session

The Mayor and Council will be having a workshop session on Tuesday February 28th at 7pm in Town Hall to discuss future planning. Workshops are open to the public.

150th Memorial Day Parade

Planning is underway for the 150th Memorial Day Commemoration. The wreath laying in front of Town Hall will begin at 11am, with a concert by the Rohrersville Band to follow. The parade will begin at 1:30.

Memorials and Sponsorships for the commemorative parade book are now being accepted. The cost is \$2 for up to three lines. Submissions should be typed or printed legibly. Submissions can be mailed to the Town, or dropped off at Town Hall with payment no later than April 3, 2017.

Pre-orders for parade books are available at Town Hall as well. The cost of the book is \$3.

If you have old parade books, parade pictures or any other parade memorabilia that you would like to contribute to be included in the parade book, please contact Kimberly in the town office. The items would be scanned and returned to you the same day.

A reminder from the Tax Collector

If you have not paid your fiscal year 2017 taxes, that were billed in July, 2016, they must be paid as soon as possible. Final bills will be going out next month. Taxes that have not been paid by May 5, 2017 will be forwarded to the County Treasurer, and will be at risk to be sold at tax sale.

If you need to know the amount that you owe, contact Kimberly at town hall.

Community News and Events

Sharpsburg Historical Society to offer Scholarship

The Sharpsburg Historical Society is pleased to announce that it will offer the Sharpsburg Historical Society Scholarship of \$1,000. Applications will be available to Boonsboro High School graduating seniors planning to pursue a career in history, historic preservation, museum studies, or natural resource studies. For further information, call 301-432-8410.

Maryland Municipal League Scholarship

The Washington County chapter of the Maryland Municipal League is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a Washington County graduating senior. Applications are available at Town Hall and at the guidance office of Boonsboro High School.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be constructed in Hagerstown

The Joint Veterans Council of Washington County has authorized a plan to establish a Vietnam War Veterans Monument to honor all who served in the armed forces during the Vietnam War era, and to specifically remember the 17 men from Washington County who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Land on South Walnut Street, close to City Park, has been approved for the Vietnam War Veterans Monument by the City of Hagerstown and a design has been accepted by the Vietnam War Veterans Monument Committee.

Now comes the fundraising phase of the project. If you would like to donate to this project, donations should be made to the Joint Veterans Council PO Box 453 Hagerstown, MD 21741. Please specify "Vietnam Monument" in the memo line of your check.

For more information, contact Jim Kline, Chairman at 301-800-6823.

Meeting of the Sharpsburg Merchants' Association

The Sharpsburg Merchant's Association will be meeting in Town Hall on Monday February 27th at 6pm. If you own a business in the 21782 zip code, you are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Victory Garden Ranch to host an Open House

Save the date! Victory Garden Ranch, located at 101 West Main Street, will be having their official open house on Saturday March 25th from 12 pm – 5 pm. Stay tuned for more info!

Victory Garden Ranch is open now Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 12 pm-5 pm. Stop in for some fresh coffee, and browse their veteran and/or veteran connection made products.

Town Government

Town Office – 301-432-4428

Hours of Operation: Monday-Thursday 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

Zoning Administrator hours: Tuesdays 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Additional hours for the Clerk and Zoning Administrator are available by appointment

Mayor and Council

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| Hal Spielman – Mayor | 301-432-6854 |
| Russ Weaver – Vice Mayor | 301-432-5907 |
| Ed Beeler – Councilperson | 301-800-6877 |
| Darryl Benner – Councilperson | 301-991- 2230 |
| Michael Carr – Councilperson | 301-991-6988 |
| Brandon Smith – Councilperson | 301-491-4866 |
| Tamara White – Councilperson | 301-432-7754 |
| Kimberly Fulk – Town Clerk/Treasurer/ Tax Collector | 301-432-4428 |

The Sharpsburg Town Crier
PO Box 368
Sharpsburg, MD 21782

