

Mayor & Council Meeting Sharpsburg via ZOOM platform
January 4, 2021, 6:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

In attendance/in person: Russ Weaver, Ed Beeler, Kevin Tucker, John Hammond, Mia Parsons, Carrie Estell, Winston Estell, Jacob Martz, Hal Spielman, Joe Kudla and Jeni Bruni

Via ZOOM: Jen Bruni, Stephanie Jamieson & Tim Lung

- I. Call meeting to order at 6 pm and all attendees participated in the pledge of allegiance
- II. Seat John Hammond-email votes from Mick Carr, Ed Beeler, Robbie Waters, Brian Gabriel
- III. Swear in new mayor and council members-Kevin Tucker from the MD courts

Russ Weaver, Mia Parsons, Jacob Martz & John Hammond

IV. Meeting minutes from November 2020 are on town's website are open for comments for 30 days.

V. Presentation of New Treasury Report-July 1, 2020-December 31, 2020, basic treasury report was presented for council members' review. Big expenses were highlighted, new furnace and snowplow services. Ed Beeler approved, and Jacob Martz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. Budget was reviewed and summarized. Income was highlighted as opposed to expenses. Miscellaneous expenses were detailed as many of the monies were for the Railroad Station repair and their new roof. Financial reports, in the future, will be submitted electronically to members a few days prior to the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS-none were provided.

Mayor's Report-

Vice Mayor's role and responsibilities were discussed, hoping the new council members get to know each other and a vice mayor can be appointed in February.

New Zoning employee-will start soon, his name is Tim Lung and worked in Boonsboro this past summer and worked for 32 years at Washington County; towards the end of this time Tim was the Zoning Administrator and director of the Division of Plan/Review and Permitting. He comes highly recommended.

Election feedback by new councilpersons from their constituents-

Jacob Martz-better communication, gutter repair, activities for the community, footprints of some of the residence addresses and property issues, porches, opening the park is an issue, flag donation, (Beth Harris).

John Hammond-more initiative to get things done in town. The war memorials to be updated and improve the overall aesthetics of the town square. Water and sewer rebate potential.

Ed Beeler-more communication.

Facebook is a good way to assist with communication. To assist communication, reinstate the Town Crier newsletter or utilize Facebook or the town's website to make communication more effective.

Connecting with the community via Meet with the Mayor and/or Connect with the Council. Each quarter to meet in the town's various businesses, (Pete's Tavern, Nutters Ice Cream and Captain Benders) to informally meet with the community.

Grants need assistance, there is money out there, and the applications take time and effort. Russ has been working on an open space grant for a nice entrance to the town, something with benches, plants, and signage. This grant was submitted on time and hopefully we will hear some good news.

Water and sewer, potential to have wells to offset cost of water.

Parade committee to be expanded and include gold star families, Jacob Martz did a great job last year and may take this event on as committee chair.

Hours for town hall: Monday-1-5, Tuesday 10-5, Wednesday 1-5, Friday 10-2

Town Hall Clean UP- next week, (January 11th – January 22nd)

Sheriff hours and duties were discussed and there are some concerns. Parking tickets were a concern. The town has the right to ask the sheriff to perform specific duties, we get him one day each week, we have him on a rotating schedule. We share him with Keedysville and Williamsport. Sheriff has a schedule that is set by the county, if there are issues specific, we can call and request certain areas to be monitored. Hal and Russ mentioned that the sheriff is willing to assist and is good to work with.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (Recognize & assign responsibilities)

Committees were discussed and described. Mayor asked councilpersons to look and see what they may want work on and be part of-

A. Parks & Railroad Station

a. Repair equipment and open park-there is damage to parts of the equipment as teenagers/kids vandalized the house/closure on top of the slide; this was done by lighting a fire. Russ and Robbie are to take a closer look at the damage, Jacob will be part of this as he got some community feedback that the park needs to be open.

B. Building

C. Streets

D. Planning & Zoning-grant for open space for 65 and 34, this could be a great opportunity for a park like green space. The town owns the cemetery that is connected to the Holy Trinity Church, as this property was recently sold.

a. Holy Trinity Church was sold, no longer have the custodial relationship with the historic cemetery across the street; the summer of 2020 was the last year the grass there will be maintained.

b. Contact information for this sale and any questions can be addressed to Tanya Sell and/or Dee Snyder.

E. Battlefield Advisory Committee

a. Concerned citizens have reached out with their concern for the removal of the statue of Robert E. Lee at the Antietam Battlefield, (John Jenkins & Sherrion Struppler)

F. Town Archives & Historical Planning (appears that Ed Beeler would like to continue in this role)

G. Public Safety

Old Business/ACTIONS-action items reviewed-light in the municipal parking lot, new zoning administrator, train station roof, illegal, short-term rental on Mechanic Street, High Street signs, walls on Main Street, (some are federally owned) and need repair, tree policy clarification, water rebate, water and sewer update, and open park and surveillance to deter vandalism.

New Business

105 Mechanic Street, there is a tree that partially fell, and Mr. Arndt was told by the council years ago that the tree was the town's responsibility. The tree in question is in between the street and the sidewalk. Review of the tree policy, all old trees on Main Street were taken down and new trees were put in, the town takes care of pruning. Main street trees that were planted are maintained by the state. Primary and secondary rights were discussed. The tree is an issue as a safety problem, the tree was planted by a homeowner. Council will need to decide the issue, the tree needs to be taken down. Years ago, there were limbs that were in the road, there was a cost to this that the town paid for this service. The town does have a policy on trees, town only pays for maintenance.

The state has a policy for removing a tree and we will need to get a permit to have the tree removed. The past legal work done on town trees was reviewed and the council voted anonymously that the owner is responsible for the tree as per the legal precedence of town's stance and legal action in the past.

TC tree service looked at the tree and the tree, in their professional opinion, was rotting and will come down soon.

Few trees not on Main street and number about six.

The mayor will write a letter saying that the tree needs to be taken down and that the owner will be given 30 days to take the tree down and if the town must pay for the removal, this amount will be added to the resident's tax bill. The letter will be sent registered mail this week.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm