

**SHARPSBURG MAYOR AND COUNCIL**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2026**  
**6:00 PM**

The Mayor and Council of Sharpsburg, MD held their monthly meeting on Monday, February 2, 2026 at 6:00 PM via Zoom. In attendance were Mayor Russell Weaver, Vice Mayor Jacob Martz, Councilmembers Joseph Kudla, Anne Marie McCullough, Heather Waters and Robbie Waters. Town Administrator Debra Valentine-Smith and Zoning Administrator Tim Lung were also present.

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE** led by Councilmember McCullough. Mayor Weaver asked for a moment of silence for the many people that have lost their lives to the freezing temperatures.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Motion** by Councilmember R. Waters, second by Councilmember McCullough to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – *(comments were requested to be submitted in writing by email prior to the meeting due to being conducted by Zoom)* Erin Short submitted a statement by email. Mayor Weaver asked Mrs. Short if the statement could be read into the record under Correspondence at the end of the meeting and she agreed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

December 1, 2025 Minutes - **Motion** by Councilmember R. Waters to approve the minutes, second by Councilmember Kudla. Motion carried.

December 1, 2025 Executive Minutes - **Motion** by Councilmember Kudla to approve the executive minutes, second by Councilmember R. Waters. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT**

December 2025 and January 2026 - **Motion** by Councilmember H. Waters to approve the financial reports as presented, second by Councilmember McCullough. Motion carried.

**ZONING ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT** – Tim Lung  
DECEMBER 2025 - JANUARY 2026

- Responded to inquiries and questions regarding zoning and permitting requirements.
- Attended a virtual kick off meeting for the update of the County’s Water and Sewerage Plan.
- Reviewed Maryland Dept of Planning FAQ sheet for Accessory Dwelling Unit zoning.
- Reviewed, researched documents and attended the County Board of Zoning Appeals hearing for a Special Exception to locate a cell tower on Mondell Rd.
- Reviewed and signed off on a building permit application for a proposed garage on property located along the south side of west Main St.
- Attended a virtual meeting with municipal planners to discuss HB0099, a bill to remove the 5-yr express approval for annexations.

**MAYORS COMMENTS** – Mayor Weaver reviewed the accomplishments of 2025.

2025 was a year of real progress for the Town of Sharpsburg, with a focus on building off a strong foundation for what’s ahead and making Sharpsburg “Just What a Small Town Should Be”. Municipalities are under a lot of pressure to get things done quickly and correctly, while trying to serve a wide range of people, often with conflicting needs and interests. I thought it might be instructive to explore 2025 **in terms of what some municipalities use to assess their progress. Generally, there are four key areas:** operational capacity and administrative efficiency, financial health and budgeting, public safety and service delivery, and community engagement. Let’s take a brief look at the first two.

We create **operational capacity** by empowering individual council persons to act in an area of citizen need while enabling them with funds, town resources and access to county and state resources. As you review the list of accomplishments attached to this Crier you will see how well the current council has embraced this operational model. Add to that the **administrative efficiency** of our town and zoning administrators and you have an operationally sound municipal

government. Our town zoning administrator is recognized by the courts as a zoning expert and works tirelessly to assure the speed and accuracy of permit approvals.

Sharpsburg town government **financial health** has always been a top priority for sitting mayor and councils. We finished with a surplus again in 2025 and for the second year in a row successfully completed our annual audit with zero exceptions. As far as I can tell the only two times this has been accomplished in town history. This means that we are again fully compliant with all accounting and audit requirements. I would like to congratulate our town administrator on her outstanding efforts. Our annual **budget** is fully automated for the first time, broken down by operational area and project, and reviewed monthly at regular council meetings as well as published on the town website and in the Town Crier providing full financial transparency

I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with our council and staff and am especially proud of how we stayed focused in 2025 not taking the bait and getting trapped in pointless arguments. Thank you to everyone who helped make 2025 such a successful year. As we look to 2026, we're excited to keep serving our residents and strengthening our community.

## List of accomplishments from 2025

### PLANNING & ZONING

- New businesses - 4065 Floral & Antietam Institute moved into 101 W. Main
- Comprehensive Plan - Community Survey
- W.C. Historic Preservation Tax Credit MOU
- **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Zoning Ordinance text amendment requirements per new State Legislation** - During its 2025 session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB 1466 ("Accessory Dwelling Units – Requirements and Prohibitions"), which codifies state policy supporting development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), effective October 1, 2025. It also requires that counties and municipalities with planning and zoning authority adopt a local law authorizing ADU development on land with a single-family detached dwelling unit by October 1, 2026. Letter sent to legislators requesting that this legislation not apply to properties within a designated historic district.

### PROJECTS

- Started and completed the Historic Park
- Well Project / Water Rebates
- Speed Study @ Main & Church after holding public meetings with both citizens and MDOT
- Big Spring Wall Restoration
- Street and Culvert repairs were made as well as signage replacements
- Purchased and Installed aerator/fountain at the town pond
- W.C. Meter Vault Replace Project
- Charter Review and Amendments
- Periodic street sweeping and leaf removal

### FINANCES

- The Towns Financial Audits for the last 2 years have shown that the town is operating positively while maintaining the current tax rate of .35/\$100 of assessed value and remains fully compliant with accounting and audit requirements.
- Received \$370,122 in POS funding for the Historic Park

### EVENTS

- Christmas In the Square and Sharpsburg Day – both successful events
- Memorial Day Parade – always the town's main attraction
- Added an additional Brush collection in the spring (April/October)
- Hometown Hero Banner Program- re-started

### 2026 Focus/Pending:

- Planning Commission By-Laws
- Sign @ Elementary School
- Lutheran Cemetery
- Special 250 Year Anniversary event
- Expanded Memorial Day Ceremonies
- Revitalization and restructuring of Sharpsburg Museum of History

## **COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS AND VISION/PROPOSED CIP FOR 2026**

### **COUNCILMEMBER MCCULLOUGH –**

- Maintaining the Lutheran Cemetery is a priority but guidance is needed regarding the cleaning of the headstones (Historic Society). The previous study will also be of assistance in associating some of the headstones to the proper locations.
- Attended a meeting of the Green Team in Keedysville where Dee Price of the Soil Conservation District offered information on stream restoration. Tim Lung stated that Dee also reached out to him regarding the feasibility of funding for Sharpsburg's pond.
- Also met with the Master Gardners and would like to replace the Liriope/monkey grass at the Historic Park because it is considered invasive.

### **COUNCILMEMBER KUDLA –**

- Sidewalk replacement is a priority and MDOT has a funding program of an 80/20 split.
- The Chapline Street culvert replacement also need to be completed.
- The results of the speed study on MD 35 will be discussed in March

### **VICE MAYOR Martz –**

- Completing the Historic Park is a priority
- Would like to see a mobile payment system implemented for town events
- Met with Huntzberry Brothers to mark off a proposed parking lot at the community park
- Drafted letter of opposition to proposed cell tower installation near Sharpsburg.
- Met with MDOT representative to discuss installation of Civil War Trail signage on State owned pole.
- Continued Memorial Day planning. Next meeting of Memorial Day Committee will be on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 6:00 pm

### **COUNCILMEMBER H. WATERS –**

- Would like to get more of the community involved in town events
- Start a National Pet Day in town

### **COUNCILMEMBER R. WATERS –**

- Complete the painting of curbs and signage replacement and straightening

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

### **OFFICER D. WATKINS – COMMUNITY DEPUTY**

January end of month report:

Antietam Station - 4 checks.	Total WCSO events - 109.
Park - 4 checks.	Accidents - 1 (not intersection related).
Little League - 3 checks.	
120 E Main St. - 3 checks.	
School - 2 checks.	
Traffic Enf. - 1 hr.	
Calls for Service - 1.	
Training - 2 days.	

### **Chris Vincent – Battlefield Advisory Committee**

The committee met on Wednesday, December 10, 2025.

Attending the meeting: Sup. Andrew Banasik, George Franks, Vernell Doyle, Justin Mayhue, and Miriam Cunningham. Superintendent Andrew Banasik provided an update on park activities and events. Visitor Center repairs. The Park has started the foundation leak repair, and the construction company worked through the shutdown. There is a lot that is going on with the project, including re-supporting the trellis beams as well as waterproofing the foundation. In digging out of the foundation in preparation for the waterproof work, the contractor found a large crack in the foundation. As the crack is outside of the current scope of work, the Park and the contractor are working together to fix the issue. It is estimated that the entire project will be done by March. Once it is completed, the Park will monitor the museum for humidity for a period of time (probably a month) before returning the artifacts to the exhibits. The December Luminaries were a huge success, and the Park staff is working on an after-action report of the event to try to make 2026 even smoother. It took lots

of coordination of the volunteers and the staff to pull off the event this year due to the government shutdown. The staff is committed to making it safer and more efficient in both the setup and the clean-up on Sunday morning. At 2:15 am, there were still people going through the Park for the event. His biggest concern is the closeness of real candle flames to structures, so there will probably be more electronic candles next to the Mumma Farm for 2026, like those surrounding the Dunker Church. The fourteen National Cemeteries have been meeting to coordinate a standardization of processes and information for preservation and restoration. It is an ongoing project, and the leadership of the NPS and others are looking at this project with interest. The next step is to plan how the restoration of Antietam Cemetery will move forward, a challenge since there are no dedicated cemetery staff. Work continues on the Pry House with the 4th side of the house getting its windows and doors replaced. The Medical Museum will not be able to operate the field hospital out of the Pry House for the foreseeable future. Staffing at the Park is stable, but one change: the staff biologist is leaving the position. There is still a hiring freeze in effect, so this position will not be filled at present. No real projects for 2026 due to funding issues. Park Staff cannot appropriately plan for various projects because of this. The Staff will have a meeting in the new year to discuss priorities, including how to weave the battlefield into the America 250<sup>th</sup> celebrations. The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2026.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Review of Pending FY26 Projects** – discussed under Mayors comments and year in review.

**CIP Review**- discussed under Councilmembers reports.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**2026 Calendar of Events** – consensus of annual calendar of events

## **CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Erin Short of 225 E. Main Street read the following statement into the record.**

*To the Mayor and Town Council Members,*

*In November 2025 the Town Council voted to leave the seat left vacant by Ed Beeler's resignation empty until the it is filled by the November 2026 town election. That vote was a violation of the charter, which requires the seat be filled by the council. In December 2025 the Mayor stated the town needed clarification from legal counsel because the charter is "silent" on a timeline and process. Filling the vacant seat was not on the agenda of the January 2026 town meeting that was cancelled due to illness. Filling the vacant seat is not on the agenda for the February 2026. I will file a Writ of Mandamus should the town council continue stonewalling this issue.*

Mayor Weaver thanked Ms. Short for her comment and opened the floor to Council to either speak on the matter or comment on their November 2025 vote regarding the vacant seat. No comments were made.

**Come All Who Are Thirsty (CAWAT) Park Closure** – Dwayne and Beth Harris are giving up the lease at the Mark A. Smith Memorial Park and offered to leave the monument and dog tags if the town takes it over. **Motion** by Vice-Mayor Martz for the town to take over the responsibility of the park, second by Councilmember R. Waters. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT - Motion** by Councilmember R. Water to adjourn the meeting at 7:46 P.M., second by Councilmember H. Waters. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Valentine-Smith  
Town Administrator