



CORPORATION OF HARPERS FERRY

Town Council

MINUTES

Regular Meeting **Monday, 13 September 2021** **7:00 p.m.**
Town Hall • 1000 Washington Street, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425

Called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Vaughn. The Town Council met in Town Hall. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no audience members were physically present. With the exception of the Bookkeeper, all presenters communicated with the Town Council through Zoom Webinar. The meeting was live-streamed for the public on YouTube, in compliance with the State's emergency guidance on the Open Governmental Meetings Act.

Member	Title	Status
Greg Vaughn	Mayor	Present
Kevin Carden	Recorder	Present
Chris Craig	Councilmember	Present
Greg "Storm" DiCostanzo	Councilmember	Present
Laurel Drake	Councilmember	Present
Jim Jenkins	Councilmember	Present
Christian Pechuekonis	Councilmember	Present

The agenda was approved as amended.

No public comments were presented.

1. Mayor's announcements.

- Mayor Vaughn stated that Region 9 has hired a new stormwater specialist who offered to evaluate Harpers Ferry's stormwater concerns.
- The Gazebo Park fireplace has been repaired and is now fully functional, fulfilling a goal that began during former Mayor Jim Addy's tenure more than a decade ago.
- Mayor Vaughn publicly recognized the Harpers Ferry-Bolivar Historic Town Foundation for all its hard work and organization since the early 2000s, noting that its contributions have been outstanding.
- Recorder Carden noted the passing of former Sheriff Pete Dougherty.

2. Approval of minutes.

a. Regular meeting: 9 August 2021.

Approval of the 9 August 2021 minutes was postponed to the next regular meeting.

b. Special meeting: 16 July 2021.

The minutes for 16 July 2021 were not yet available but were erroneously approved at last month's regular meeting.

Motion	Motion to rescind approval of the minutes for 16 July 2021.
Motion by	Chris Craig
Second	Jim Jenkins
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

3. Treasurer's reports and approvals.

a. Review and approval of financial reports: July 2021.

The financial reports for July 2021 were approved as received.

b. Approval of invoices and purchases over \$500.

None.

4. Town reports.

a. Police Department.

i. Police report for the month of August 2021.

Chief Brown reported that for the month of August 2021, there were 162 incidents, 102 citations issued, 12 assists to other agencies, and no accidents or call-outs.

b. Ordinance Compliance Officer.

i. Report for the month of August 2021.

A written report for August 2021 was received from the Ordinance Compliance Officer.

Mayor Vaughn said he has directed the Ordinance Compliance Officer to enhance efforts and focus on neglected properties, which have a negative effect on all property owners. The Mayor will be spearheading an effort to strengthen ordinances on neglected, abandoned, and derelict properties.

c. Town Council Ad Hoc Meeting Committee.

i. Discussion and action on future meeting protocols.

Christian Pechuekonis said that each deliberative body may decide whether to return to in-person meetings or continue meeting by way of Zoom Webinar. A meeting agenda preamble which includes a method for allowing public comments will be placed on future meeting agendas.

d. Town Council Ad Hoc ARPA Committee.

- i. **Committee report on Harpers Ferry’s response to the American Relief Plan Act.**
The ARPA Committee has chosen for all ARPA funds to go toward water projects.
(See item 4.f.v.)

e. **Budget and Finance Committee.**

- i. **Discussion and action regarding new locks for the Town Hall building.**

Motion	Motion to approve up to \$900 to change locks in Town Hall as soon as possible.
Motion by	Christian Pechuekonis
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

- ii. **Discussion and action regarding park landscaping and maintenance at the corner of Franklin and Washington Streets.**

Motion	Motion to accept the Cornerstone Lawn Services bid, up to \$3,000, for landscaping, clean-up, weeding, bed maintenance, flower installation, and fountain restoration, from Budget Line 906 Arts / Humanities / Preservation for park maintenance.
Motion by	Christian Pechuekonis
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

- iii. **Discussion and action regarding funding for three new benches for the park at the corner of Franklin and Washington Streets.**

Motion	Motion to approve up to \$1,500 for the purchase of three park benches.
Motion by	Christian Pechuekonis
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

- iv. **Discussion and action on increasing the Harpers Ferry Magistrate’s fee.**

Motion	Motion to raise the rate for magistrates’ arraignments by call-in to \$50.00 per occurrence, to be effective 17 September 2021, providing that further research reveals no conflict with Town ordinances.
Motion by	Christian Pechuekonis
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

f. Water Department.

i. General report.

Bill Robinson reported that the water loss rate for last month was 18.44%. Leak detection efforts are ongoing, including for fire hydrants. Construction on the water treatment facility improvements continues. Sludge removal was interrupted by construction at the facility, but the grinder pump is being rendered obsolete by the upgrades. The Operator-in-Training has submitted his resignation.

ii. Presentation and discussion on monthly Water Treatment Facility Improvements Engineer's Report.

Bill Robinson presented an overview of the written report from GD&F.

iii. Discussion and action on Resolution #6 and invoices for the Water Treatment Facility Improvements.

Motion	Motion to approve Resolution #6 for the Water Treatment Facility Improvements Project and payment of associated invoices, totaling \$269,265.21, to the USDA.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

iv. Discussion and action regarding the Water Commission's recommendation for rebidding of the Elks Run / 8" Main Relocation Project.

Motion	Motion to approve the Water Commission's recommendation to rebid the Elks Run / 8" Main Relocation Project, provided that an acceptable bid process is in place.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Christian Pechuekonis
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

v. Discussion and action on approving ARPA's entire initial allocation of monies toward the Elks Run water project.

Motion	Motion to apply ARPA's entire initial allocation of monies toward the Elks Run water project.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

vi. Water Plant Manager's report.

Manager Chris Styer said he would still like to give a tour of the water treatment facility to any members of the Town Council who have not yet gotten to do that.

g. Ordinance Review Committee.

i. Discussion and action on first reading for approval of Ordinance 2021-06 Water Commission, creating a seat on the Water Commission for a voting representative resident in the Corporation of Bolivar.

Motion	Motion to approve first reading for approval of Ordinance 2021-06 Water Commission.
Motion by	Laurel Drake
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

ii. Discussion and action on first reading for approval of Ordinance 2021-07 Parking of Commercial and Recreational Vehicles, related to the parking and standing of commercial or recreational vehicles and food trucks.

Motion	Motion to approve first reading for approval of Ordinance 2021-07 Parking of Commercial and Recreational Vehicles.
Motion by	Christian Pechuekonis
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

iii. Discussion and action in preparation for a first reading to create a fence ordinance and related revisions to Ordinance Article 1302 and Appendix A – Historic District Standards and Guidelines.

Mayor Vaughn distributed a draft fence ordinance for consideration. Recorder Carden presented a general overview of the fence ordinance issue, beginning in 2016 and leading up to the present.

h. Planning Commission.

i. Planning Commission report.

Tim Wisecarver presented a brief overview of last month's Planning Commission meeting.

i. Historic Landmarks Commission.

i. Historic Landmarks Commission report.

Guy Hammer presented a brief overview of last month's Historic Landmarks Commission meeting.

ii. Update on Weaver property and discussion on potential next steps.

Guy Hammer reported that he and the Ordinance Compliance Officer performed a walk-through of the Weaver property. It was decided to restrict access to the patio and certain other areas, and to place a cover over the cistern. The Weaver family has been very cooperative. A restoration grant may possibly be pursued for the property. A letter from the Weaver family will be required before a grant may be provided.

iii. Discussion and action to appoint a member to the Historic Landmarks Commission to fulfill a vacant unexpired term.

No action was taken on this item at this time.

5. Organizations / other reports.

a. Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Public Library.

i. Discussion on Board of Trustees vacancy for Harpers Ferry.

Janet Harrison, President of the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Public Library Board of Trustees, stated that there is currently a vacancy on the Board for a representative from Harpers Ferry. The Town will publicly advertise the vacancy for letters of interest for appointment.

6. Unfinished business.

a. Discussion and action on selecting an option for improving High Street pedestrian traffic as proposed by WVDOH, to include requesting additional funding for the project from the State.

Mayor Vaughn provided background information leading up to the current proposals before the Town regarding this project.

Upon discussion, Jim Jenkins said he would contact HFNHP Superintendent Brandyburg to discuss a realignment of the street by about two feet. This was seen by the Councilmembers as the best option for the project, as it would allow expansion of the sidewalk. A site visit would be scheduled, to include the Superintendent and the Park's Resource Management Specialist, Andrew Lee.

It was noted that during former Mayor Wayne Bishop's tenure, a \$400,000 grant was approved, but a 20% match (\$80,000) from the Town is required before the project can be started. Christian Pechuekonis suggested sending a letter from the Mayor and Town Council to our County and State representatives to see if the matching funds could be secured. If funding cannot be secured, it was felt that Option 2.b. (from the options listed in a document Mr Pechuekonis provided at this meeting) would be the best plan to pursue.

7. New business.

a. Discussion and action on 2021-22 snow removal bidding contract proposal.

Motion	Motion to send out an RFP for snow removal during the 2021-22 winter season and to advertise it in the Journal and the Spirit of Jefferson for the next three weeks.
Motion by	Christian Pechuekonis
Second	Jim Jenkins
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

b. Discussion and action for approval of a four-month temporary lease agreement between the Corporation of Harpers and the US Postal Service to utilize first-floor vacant space.

Motion	Motion to rent the first-floor vacant space at Town Hall to the US Postal Service for \$300 per month, as-is.
Motion by	Jim Jenkins
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

c. Discussion and action regarding matching funding for construction of the Armory Canal Trail.

Chris Craig explained that the construction of the Armory Canal Trail, along the former Potomac Street Extended, would require matching funds of approximately \$116,000. He recommended that the Town contact County and State representatives about relief funding. A sample letter was provided; however, Mr Craig felt that in addition to the letter, a sit-down meeting will need to occur with the County and State representatives to discuss and explain the Armory Canal Trail project.

Motion to adjourn by Laurel Drake, second by Christian Pechuekonis. Meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

The above minutes are true and correct, as approved.

Mayor: _____ Date: _____

Recorder: _____ Date: _____