

The Town of Laurel
Mayor and Council Meeting
October 15, 2018

A Mayor and Council Meeting was held in the Mayor and Council Chambers of the Laurel Town Hall Monday, October 15, 2018 beginning at 7:06 p.m. The following persons were in attendance: Mayor John Shwed, President of Council Chris Calio, Council Members Randy Lee, Cheryl Martin, Jeff Hill, Jonathan Kellam, and Robin Fisher-Cornish. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey, Chief Dan Wright, Alderman Kelly Pettyjohn, Finance Manager Mary Introcaso, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, and Town Manager Jamie Smith.

Mayor Shwed advised two Laurel Administrators from the Laurel School District are in attendance for tonight's meeting, Ms. Lisa King the Principal and Ms. Dawn Massey the Vice Principal of the Laurel Middle School. Both Ms. King and Ms. Massey participated in a presentation regarding Community Outreach. Ms. King advised their goal is to increase a partnership within the community. Ms. King advised they visited Holly Brook, Little Creek, Wexford Village, and Carvel Gardens to pass out LMS Open House flyers and student schedules. They also received book packs and school supplies from Bay Shore Community to pass out to students. Ms. King advised the school held a Sussex Science Night, which parents, students, and teachers explored science with hands-on activities. Ms. King informed Senator Bryant Richardson and Representative Dave Wilson have participated in events. Mayor Shwed thanked both Ms. King and Ms. Massey for their presentation.

Mayor Shwed advised Mr. Tony Langley & Ms. Lisa Langley are in attendance for tonight's meeting regarding a Code Invoice Appeal. Mr. Langley stated he received a \$185.00 bill from the town for mowing his property on Oak Lane Drive. Mr. Langley advised even when we received the violation letter a correspondence would have been nice. Mr. Langley received quotes for properties less than 8,000 square feet. He advised he mowed his property on September 14, 2018 and on September 24, 2018 the property did not need mowing. Mr. Langley advised on September 28, 2018 he explained his wife rode by the property and it did not need mowing. Director of Code West advised Mr. Langley & Ms. Langley received their violation letter on June 12, 2018 from Code Enforcement Officer Charlie Wheatley. Director of Code Enforcement West stated the property was mowed on September 26, 2018 at which time the grass was over 8 inches. Director of Code Enforcement West advised \$185.00 is a high fee, but the price is based on what FEMA allows. Ms. Langley inquired why the prices differ from the code book online. Town Manager Smith advised fees are accepted by resolution and we are updating the code book. Mr. Langley explained he may not agree with it, but he will take care of it.

Mr. Ken Everline, resident of Washington Street, thanked Mayor and Council and Chief Wright due to the slower traffic traveling through his neighborhood.

Mayor Shwed advised Mr. LeRoy Phillips is in attendance for tonight's meeting regarding the Vacant Housing & Building Ordinance. Mr. Phillips advised he owns three houses located on

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104 Central Avenue, 105 Central Avenue, and 214 E. Market Street. Mr. Phillips explained his three properties are completely used for their antique business. He advised he was levied

the \$500.00 fine for the vacant housing because he was approved to utilize his properties as a warehouse. Mr. Phillips advised he does not have the \$1,500 and will need time to clean up the three properties. Mayor Shwed advised the community is not being helped by having un-occupied homes or run-down homes. The goal is to either fix the properties up or sell them. Mayor Shwed advised Mr. Phillips that we heard what you told us, and we will try to work with you.

The Mayor and Council Regular and Closed Session Minutes of September 17, 2018 and October 1, 2018 were presented for review and adoption. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the meeting minutes and closed session minutes for September 17, 2018 and October 1, 2018. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilman Hill and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish abstaining.

The Department Head Reports for the month of September 2018 were presented for review and adoption. Director of Code Enforcement West stated he received plans for the renovation of North Laurel, and plans have been reviewed and submitted for Burger King. Alderman Pettyjohn advised she had no changes or additions to her report. Mayor Shwed thanked Alderman Pettyjohn for her nice letter that was read during Cpl. Ryall's retirement dinner. Finance Manager Introcaso advised tax bills were sent out and the auditor will be starting next week. Town Manager Smith listed different community events that will be held in town. On October 25, 2018 the Laurel Elementary School is holding their Fall Festival. On October 27, 2018 the Town and the Police Department will be holding the "1st Annual Trunk or Treat" from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. where Beauty for Ashes, Laurel Community Hardware, and Sportz Tee's businesses reside. The Town and Police Department will be holding "Movie Night," on October 20, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at Janosik Park. The Veterans' Day Parade and Festival will be held on November 10, 2018. The Parks and Recreation will be holding the "1st Annual Christmas Markets on Broad Creek," on December 7, 2018. The Christmas Markets will be located on Front Street and may utilize Janosik Park. Public Works Director Foskey advised he had nothing to add to his report. Chief Wright advised he attached the 2017 Police Awards for Mayor and Council and thanked everyone attending John Ryall's Retirement Party. Mayor Shwed thanked both public works staff and police department regarding the Homecoming Festivities. Councilman Hill made a motion to accept the Department Head Reports for the month of September 2018. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Town Manager Smith gave a brief update pertaining to the Vacant Housing and Buildings Ordinance. Town Manager Smith advised 147 letters were sent out to properties. Out of the 147 letters: 6 properties were removed from the list due to water, 17 properties received a building and demolition permit, 22 properties were for sale, 10 properties have water usage, 12 properties

had letters returned, 2 properties foreclosed, and 6 properties have paid the fee. Town Manager Smith advised if the property owner does not respond we will bill onto their taxes. Director of Code Enforcement West explained most of the properties that are not responding are the same properties who do not respond to grass violation letters.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2018-7. Mayor Shwed stated the ordinance proposing that the town annex certain territory contiguous to the present southern limits of the town of Laurel owned by MRJ Rentals, LLC, located south of West 10th Street and West of Conrail right of way, tax map #'s 4-32/8.10/89.00 & 4-32/8.14/27.00, amending the zoning map and zoning ordinance of the Town of Laurel to include said property in a Light Industrial Use (L-I) District. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2018-7. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilman Lee stated the request was made by the property owner and we will welcome anybody who wants to be part of our town.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish advised it is continuous growth and progress for our town.

Councilwoman Martin stated it is good to have added tax revenue to our town.

Mayor Shwed advised an annexation is voluntarily and we will always be supportive.

President of Council Calio stated they requested to be part of the town and it is conforms to our Comprehensive Plan for our short-term growth plan.

Councilman Kellam stated the paper work was properly submitted and it is a part of our Comprehensive Plan.

Councilman Hill stated it is voluntarily and hopefully they have plans for the property.

Ms. Ann Davis, resident of Pine Street, inquired if the 12 violation letters returned regarding the Vacant Housing Ordinance were paying taxes. Town Manager Smith advised no, and properties will go to a tax sale.

Mayor Shwed advised he attended the Apple Scrapple and came in 2nd place in the Scrapple Sling.

Councilman Hill thanked Del-Dot for the quick work they did on the Poplar Bridge.

Councilman Lee made a motion to hold a closed session to discuss contractual matters. Councilwoman Martin seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Regular Session Recessed at 8:21 p.m.

Regular Session Reconvened at 8:51 p.m.

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With there being no further business to discuss, Councilwoman Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

Mayor

President of Council

Town Manager

Recording Secretary