



### **A Message from the Mayor's Desk**

I am very pleased that now that we have Alexis Oliphant on board as our Operations Manager and that she and Town Manager Jamie Smith have found a way to reactivate our Town Newsletter. Hopefully, this medium will add to the communications between Mayor and Council and the public.

I hope everyone had a joyous Holiday Season and I wish all a very healthy, happy, and successful New Year! As we begin 2018 I want all of us to focus on positive issues instead of negative issues. In 2017 Mayor and Council enacted new legislation dealing with vacant properties. I encourage all citizens to evaluate any property you own and take action on things that you think need improvement. Take advantage of financial incentives available to properties in the Downtown Development District.

Nothing is more important to the financial health of the Laurel Community than new economic development. I encourage all citizens to become "Economic Development Ambassadors". I encourage the leadership of the Laurel Chamber of Commerce to take an active role in promoting new business development Downtown and along Route 13.

New properties, both residential and business, are needed to add to the tax rolls so that Laurel is able to grow its tax base rather than raising taxes. Mayor and Council have extended water and sewer services to hundreds of acres along Route 13. When I talk residential I mean owner occupied upscale housing, perhaps on the East side of Route 13. I have said this before - I am still looking for that "hero" who is finally going to build something that will jump start development in the Route 13 Corridor. The late Johnny Janosik was one of those "heroes". Who is going to follow in Johnny's footsteps???

While we work on bricks and mortar economic development, we can still look forward to the aesthetic appeal of the proposed "Ramble Project". A nature park on Independence Green, kayakers and birders on Broad Creek and new supporting businesses would also add spark to the community.

Trash the negatives with 2017; accentuate the positives in 2018!

Your fellow citizen,

Mayor John J. Shwed

### **Winter Edition Newsletter**

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## Town News Project Updates

### 6<sup>th</sup> Street Storm Water Separation Project

The 6<sup>th</sup> Street Storm Water Project has been underway since 2017. The project consists of separating the existing sanitary system and storm water system along 6<sup>th</sup> street. The contractor for this project is Zach Excavating. The project was funded by Delaware Natural Resource Environmental Control. The final inspection of the project will take place on January 16, 2018.

### USDA Phase 2 Project

The USDA Phase 2 Project began in late 2015 and early 2016. The project entails adding water and sewer at the end of Discount Land Road in Laurel. The project also consists of a lift station upgrade and a new Water Treatment Plant. The Water Treatment Plant went online as of December 5, 2017. Phase 2 Project scheduled completion date was April 2017. The project should be completed by the end of 2017 or early 2018. The project is helped funded by a partial grant and a partial loan. The town has completed Phase 1, which was installing water and sewer on the Route 13.



### 9<sup>th</sup> and Maple Repaving

The town determines what streets needs improvement by ranking the streets from one to ten to determine, which streets are in critical condition. 9<sup>th</sup> and Maple were selected due to the severity of pot holes and cracks. The project is funded by Community Transportation Funds. Jerry's Paving is the contractor for the project.

### Comprehensive Plan

Per state requirements all Municipalities are required to update their Comprehensive Plan every five years. The town received grant funding through the Neighborhood Building Blocks Grant and hired consultant LeeAnn Walling of Cedar Creek Planning and Communications. In April 2016 Mayor and Council appointed a Laurel Advisory Team to establish the guiding principles for the draft Comprehensive Plan. The team met with Ms. Walling throughout the summer and a first draft of the Comprehensive Plan was completed and presented to Mayor and Council and Planning and Zoning in February 2017. Mayor and Council reviewed the plan and submitted their comments to the Planning and Zoning Committee. Planning and Zoning held a Public Hearing on August 9, 2017 for the draft Comprehensive Plan. On September 13, 2017 Planning and Zoning voted to recommend for approval for the Mayor and Council the draft Comprehensive Plan. The 1<sup>st</sup> reading for the Comprehensive Plan was on October 2, 2017 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading for the Comprehensive Plan was on October 16, 2017 at the Mayor and Council Meetings.

**Town News  
Know the Code**



**Vacant House Structure**

The purpose and intent of this Article is to require registration of vacant structures in the Town of Laurel to protect the public health, safety. Vacant structures are sites that might become possible ordinance violations, illegal activity and pose a greater burden on Town Code enforcement, fire resources and police costs. Some highlights of the code are listed below:

A Vacant Structure means a building, structure, or dwelling that has been unoccupied for more than ninety (90) consecutive days; or a commercial tenant space greater than 5,000 square feet in an otherwise occupied structure, that has been left unoccupied for more than ninety (90) consecutive days.

Evidence to prove that a structure is vacant may include, but not limited to: accumulation of mail, advertising flyers, or other materials delivered to or posted upon the property or premises; disconnection of telephone, electric, gas, heating, water or sewer services; overdue sewer service charges; overdue water charges; or overdue property taxes; one (1) or more property maintenance violations issued against the property address of the vacant structure within one hundred twenty (120) days preceding the issuance of a violation notice finding vacancy.

Occupied is any building or structure occupied by one or more persons actually conducting a lawful business or who resides in all or any part of the structure as the licensed business-occupant, or as the legal or equitable owner/occupant(s) or tenant(s) on a permanent, non-transient basis, or any combination of the same.

The Code Enforcement Officer or his/her designee shall inspect any premises in the Town to enforce and assure compliance with the provisions of this Article. Once a vacant structure is registered as such, the vacant structure shall be inspected annually for as long as it remains vacant. The vacant structure shall be secured. The exterior structure and surrounding premises shall be maintained in accordance with all Town of Laurel Code requirements.

Any owner of a vacant structure, residing outside of Sussex County, shall be required to have a licensed property manager residing or having an office located in the County. A Property Manager may be a family member or another designated individual who does not manage any other real estate for a fee and who resides in the County acting as a property manager. The property manager, including family members and designated individuals, shall have charge, care and control of the vacant structure, and shall provide access to the vacant structure for inspection upon request of the Code Enforcement Office or his/her designee within 30 days of notice.

**Towns News  
Know the Code**

**Vacant House Structure Continued**

There are two ways to register a structure as vacant.

- (1) The owner shall register with the Town not later than 30 days after any structure becomes vacant, as defined. The registration of the vacant structure shall include the site address, the name and current owner or owners, current address of the owner and other persons or entities having an ownership interest, tax parcel number, proof of insurance on the structure, description of the structure, plans for the structure (to eliminate the vacancy), the responsible person or agent and their contact information.
- (2) The Code Enforcement Office or his/her designee, shall investigate any structure that may be subject to registration. The Code Enforcement Office or his/her designee may register the structure as a vacant structure.

Within five business days of registration, the licensing and permitting office shall notify the owners of the registered property by certified mail at their last known address according to the records of the Town of Laurel.

The annual registration fee shall be paid at the time of registration. If the Code Enforcement Office or his/her designee registers the structure as vacant the fee shall be due no later than 30 days after the structure is registered as vacant. The annual registration fee shall be due on the registration anniversary date every subsequent year as long as the structure remains vacant.

If a property owner fails to register the vacant structure or fails to pay the registration fee within 30 days of the due date, the owner shall be in violation. A lien for the amounts owed may be assessed against the vacant structure and surrounding premises.

**Peace and Good Order**

An ordinance regulating the possession of firearms, ammunition, components of firearms, and explosives in municipal buildings and police stations in the town of Laurel. Municipalities are permitted to adopt Ordinances regulating the possession of firearms, ammunition, components of firearms, or explosives in municipal buildings and police stations under the House Bill 192 by the 148<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the State of Delaware.

The possession of firearms, ammunition, components of firearms, or explosives in Town municipal buildings and police stations are prohibited in all municipal buildings and police stations. A municipal building is defined as any building where the Town meets in an official capacity, any building containing the offices of elected officials and public employees actively engaged in performing governmental business, but excludes any parking facility. The definition of a municipal building also includes any Town owned or leased building where the Town is meeting in or occupying such a building, but only during the time that the Town is meeting in or occupying such a building. A conspicuous sign shall be posted at the entrance of all municipal buildings and police stations stating the possession of firearms, ammunition, components of firearms, or explosives are prohibited. Any intentional violation of any person shall be subject to a fine of at least \$50.00 and not exceed \$500.00 or imprisonment not more than 30 days or by both fine and imprisonment.

## Town News Know the Code



### Snow and Ice Removal

Just a reminder that snow or ice must be removed from sidewalks and pavements within the 24 hours after the falling snow has ceased.

The Town Manager is authorized to remove any accumulated snow and ice from any property located within the corporate limits of the Town of Laurel whose owner fails to remove accumulated snow or ice within 24 hours.

Just a reminder if possible remove vehicles parked on road for plowing.

## Town News Reminders



### Mayor and Council Meetings

The Mayor and Council Meetings are held the first and third Monday's of each month. The Mayor and Council Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and are located at Laurel Town Hall 201 Mechanic Street.



### Garbage, Recycling, and Yard Waste

Trash is picked up on the east side (East of Central Avenue) of town on Tuesdays. Trash is picked up on the West side (West of Central Avenue) of town on Fridays. Yard waste is picked up every other Wednesday. Recycling is Thursdays same week as Yard waste.



### How to Report Street Light Outages

Delmarva Power offers 2 different links for reporting street light outages.

(1). You can use the app through smart phones. Link listed below.

<http://www.delmarva.com/library/templates/interior.aspx?pageid=6442452970>

(2). You can go online at the link listed below.

<https://delmarva.streetlightoutages.com/map/default.html>

**Town News  
Yard Waste & Recycling  
Regulations**



**Yard Waste Regulations**

Yard waste consist of grass clippings, leaves, and shrubbery (absolutely NO soil or food products.) If bagged, it must be in recyclable paper yard waste bags. Yard waste may be cut into no longer than 4-ft lengths, bundled (cotton string only) and placed at the curb for pickup. If yard waste is placed in a trash can, the can must be at the curbside with the lid off (not in a bin or your recycle can). Logs are limited to 30 lbs. and 4 inches in diameter. To ensure pickup, yard waste should be put at the curbside the night before pickup day. Yard waste that is in plastic bags or that is comingled with trash or recycling WILL NOT be picked up. Yard waste is picked up every other Wednesday.



**Items You Can Put in Your Recycling Cart**

- Newspapers
- Office Paper
- Colored Paper
- Paper Bags
- Steel Cans
- Tin Cans
- Aluminum Cans
- Clean Foil
- Pizza Boxes
- Paper Boxes
- Corrugated Boxes
- Cereal/Snack Boxes
- Plastic Cups
- Plastic Bottles/Jugs
- Butter Containers

**Items You Can't Put in your Recycling Bin**

- Plastic Grocery Bags
- Clothing & Textiles
- Scrap Metal & Wood
- Shredded Paper
- Batteries
- Food & Yard Waste
- Styrofoam Boxes & Egg Cartons
- Motor Oil & Chemical Containers
- Window & Mirror Glass
- Electronics & Light Bulbs



## Laurel Police Department Message



Laurel Police Department  
205 Mechanic Street  
Laurel, Delaware 19956



The Laurel Police Department is currently in a hiring process. Their goal is to hire 3 new officers to help replace two officers due to resignation and retirement. The Laurel Police Department received notification they were selected to receive a COPS grant. The Cops Grant will help with the hire of a third officer. By receiving the COPS grant it allows the department to have a full-time detective. The Laurel Police Department are continually striving to update their fleet of cars.

The Laurel Police Department donated bikes to students at Dunbar Elementary and North Laurel. The Laurel Police Department also donated jackets and socks at the Laurel Library for Code Purple.

Detective Tyler Bryant received the award for Crime Stopper Officer of the Year for a Small Department.

## Winter Safety Tips



### Safety Driving Tips from Laurel Police Department

- Wait for the town to clear roadways after the snow has stopped falling.
- If you have to drive:
  - Slow down
  - Give plenty of space between cars
  - Be prepared to stop more often than usual
  - Stay on main roadways



### Safety Tips from Laurel Public Works

How to avoid water lines from freezing:

- Make sure lines are properly insulated under the house
- If lines are exposed to the elements you can use heat tape
- If you are uncertain if pipes are not insulated properly you can always allow a faucet to drip to help eliminate frozen or broken pipes

## Community Activities

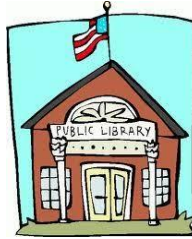


### Laurel Chamber of Commerce

Yoga Class starting January 8<sup>th</sup>. Details listed below:

- Class being led by Dr. Elanor L. Stump
- Cost is \$60.00 due on the first class  
**(No DROP-INS)**
- Bring mat or purchase one for \$10.00
- Class runs from January 8 to February 12, 2018 from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- To register call 410-251-8519

Party at the Pond Event on April 14<sup>th</sup>.



### Laurel Public Library

Hours:

- Monday-Thursday: 10am-8pm
- Friday: 10am-5pm
- Saturday: 10am-2pm
- Sunday: Closed

#### Events listed below:

- Essential Oils Make and Take  
Saturday, January 20  
11:00am-1:00pm
- Laurel Garden Club Meeting  
Thursday, January 18  
10:30am-12:00pm
- Happy Knitters  
Thursdays  
10:30-11:30am
- Life in Laurel  
Thursday, January 25  
10:30am-12:00pm
- Rehoboth Art League  
Saturday, January 20  
10:30am-1:30pm
- Yoga 4 You  
Mondays  
5:00-6:00pm
- Tai Chi  
Wednesdays  
10:30am-12:00pm
- Jack's Tech Talk  
Mondays and Wednesdays  
5:30-7:00  
(Call for an appointment)

### Laurel Historical Society

Visit two historical locations in Laurel. Information pertaining the historical sites are listed below.

#### The Cook House Museum

- Located at 502 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Laurel Delaware.
- Open by an appointment basis. Contact number is 302-875-2820
- Open on the first Sunday of each month from 1:00-4:00 pm.
- Admission is FREE

#### The Laurel Heritage Museum

- Located at 215 Mechanic Street, Laurel Delaware (Behind Town Hall)
- Open by an appointment basis. Contact number is 302-875-2820
- Open on the first Sunday of each month from 1:00-4:00 pm.

#### Become a Member!!!

Membership Levels Per Year:  
Individual: \$20.00  
Family: \$40.00

Membership benefits include periodic newsletters and invitations to programs and events held by the Historical Society.



## Community Activities



**January 15:** No School Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
**February 19:** No School Presidents Day



### Middle School Basketball Schedule- Boys (Home Games Only)

- 1/22/18 Dover Central Middle School  
Monday, 4:00 pm
- 1/24/18 Dover AFB Middle School  
Wed, 5:15 pm

### Middle School Basketball Schedule Girls (Home Games Only)

- 1/22/18 Dover Central Middle School  
Monday, 5:15 pm
- 1/24/18 Dover AFB Middle School  
Wednesday, 4:00 pm.



### Varsity Boys Basketball (Home Games Only)

- 1/16/18 Milford High School  
Tuesday, 5:45 pm
- 1/18/18 Indian River High School  
Thursday, 5:45 pm
- 1/30/18 Lake Forest High School  
Tuesday, 5:45 pm
- 2/1/18 Sussex Academy  
Thursday, 5:45 pm
- 2/7/18 Salisbury School (MD)  
Wednesday, 5:45 pm
- 2/15/18 Woodbridge High School  
Thursday, 5:15 pm

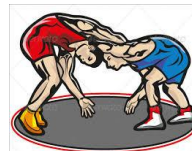
### Varsity Girls Basketball (Home Games Only)

- 1/23/18 Seaford High School  
Tuesday, 6:15 pm
- 2/7/18 Salisbury School (MD)  
Wednesday, 4:30 pm
- 2/13/18 Delmar HS/MS  
Tuesday, 5:45 pm



### Varsity Wrestling (Home Matches Only)

- 1/10/18 Milford High School  
Wednesday, 5:30 pm
- 1/12/18 Lake Forest High School  
Friday, 5:30 pm
- 1/24/18 Woodbridge High School  
Wednesday, 5:30 pm



### Middle School Wrestling (Home Matches Only)

- 1/17/18 Beacon Middle School  
Wednesday, 4:00 pm
- 1/29/18 Delmar HS/MS  
Monday, 4:00 pm

## Laurel's History



### Did You Know?

There have been six Delaware Governors that have called Laurel their home. During the beginning and mid-19th century Laurel was heavily politically involved. During 1805 through 1855 there were four Laurel men elected governor.

The first Delaware Governor from Laurel was Nathan Mitchell, who was an original settler from Laurel. Mitchell had a lengthy and honorable military career and served in the Revolutionary War. Mitchell trained as a lawyer and had interests in numerous mills. Mitchell was elected in 1805 as a Federalist and served until 1808. The second Laurel Governor was John Collins. Collins was first a miller in which he owned and operated a mill located in Nanticoke. Collins in 1821 was elected as a Democrat-Republican and served one term. Collins was the third Governor for the state of Delaware who passed away while in office. William Barkley Cooper was the third Laurel Governor and grandson of Laurel's founder Barkley Townsend. Before winning the election in 1841, Cooper was first appointed as Sussex County's Justice of the Peace from 1797 to 1805. From 1808 to 1812 Cooper was Sussex County's Sheriff. Cooper was appointed to the bench of Common Pleas in 1817 and where he served more than 12 years. He won the 1841 election as a Whig. Cooper continued to serve as Governor until 1845. William Ross was elected as the fourth Laurel Governor in 1851 after moving to Seaford. Ross first worked in his father's mercantile business and years later opened his own business in Seaford before beginning his political career. Elbert Nortrand Carvel was the fifth Laurel Governor who ran from 1949 to 1953 and from 1961 to 1965. Before Carvel was elected to governor he was appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Delaware in 1944 and served for four years. In 1948 Carvel acted as a Delegate in the Democratic National Convention.

## Comcast Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Town of Laurel is conducting a survey regarding Comcast customer satisfaction. The survey will take only just a few minutes of your time. Please fill out the survey and return to Town Hall by mail or walk-ins. Town Hall’s mailing address is 201 Mechanic Street Laurel, Delaware 19956. We look forward from hearing from you.

**How was your experience with Comcast and its services? Please place a check in a box pertaining your response.**

	Miserably	Somewhat Satisfactory	Neutral	Very Satisfactory	Delightfully
<b>Overall Quality</b>					
<b>Value</b>					
<b>Purchase Experience</b>					
<b>Installation or First Use Experience</b>					
<b>Usage Experience</b>					
<b>After Purchase Service (warranty, repair, customer service, etc.)</b>					

**How long did it take for Customer Support to resolve your problem? Please circle response.**

- Less than five minutes
- 5 minutes to less than 10 minutes
- 10 minutes to less than 20 minutes
- 20 minutes to less than 30 minutes
- 30 minutes or more
- Next day
- More than a day
- Problem did not get resolved
- Not applicable

**Based on your awareness of Comcast’s services, is it better, the same, or worse than other service providers? Please circle response.**

- Much Better
- Better
- About the same
- Worse
- Much Worse