

The Town of Laurel
Mayor and Council Meeting
February 18, 2020

A Mayor and Council Meeting was held in the Mayor and Council Chambers of the Laurel Town Hall, February 18, 2020 beginning at 7:00 p.m. The following persons were in attendance: Mayor John Shwed, President of Council Chris Calio, Council Members Randy Lee, Cheryl Martin, Jonathan Kellam, Jeff Hill, 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 stated Mr. Tom Sombar from Sombar Co. is in attendance tonight to present the FY 2019 Audit. Mr. Sombar reviewed the audit documents with the Mayor and Council and explained the different aspects of it. Mr. Sombar explained the different expenses used throughout each department. Mr. Sombar explained the licenses and permits increased, the taxes and assessments increased, and government grants increased. Mr. Sombar stated the town assets have increased including cash and the town's liabilities have decreased including accounts payable. Mr. Sombar stated this was an excellent year for the town and it showed a more optimistic picture. Mayor Shwed inquired if there were any irregularities. Mr. Sombar stated no, we didn't find any irregularities, but we would like the town to put more focus on their smaller funds. Mayor Shwed thanked Mr. Sombar for his time and presentation.

Mayor Shwed stated Mr. Chris Couch, Executive Director, from the Boys and Girls Club is in attendance tonight. Mr. Couch stated he is in attendance tonight to seek Mayor & Councils support regarding a USDA Grant Application and to give a brief Boys and Girls Club update. Mr. Couch advised the Armory Building was built in 1925. By applying for the USDA Grant, it will help allow repairs to the ramp behind the building and the roof of the gymnasium. Mr. Couch explained their Annual Report consisted of 471 members, an average attendance of 131, and they served 21,000 meals. Mr. Couch explained their different activities including their Before and After School Care Program, Teen Program on Friday Night, and Girls on the Run. He stated their Before and After School Program was ranked a 5 star through the Department of Delaware. Mr. Couch advised they have a Lego League and they recently competed in Dover and placed, and they will be moving into Regional Competition. Mr. Couch advised they will be holding the Junior Youth of the Year on March 19, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. He explained 3 women and 3 men are nominated and a group of panels will select the Junior Youth of the Year. Mayor Shwed thanked Mr. Couch for his presentation and stated the Boys & Girls Club is doing an excellent job serving our community.

The Mayor and Council Special Session Minutes of January 27, 2020 were presented for review and adoption. Councilman Hill made a motion to accept the special meeting minutes of January 27, 2020. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilman Kellam and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish abstaining.

The Mayor and Council Regular Session and Closed Session Minutes of February 3, 2020 were presented for review and adoption. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the meeting

minutes and closed session minutes of February 3, 2020. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilman Hill abstaining.

The Department Head Reports for January 2020 were presented for review and adoption. Director of Code Enforcement West stated the renovation regarding Food Lion started two weeks ago. Mayor Shwed explained he wrote a letter to the Store Manager regarding the renovation and he will be contacted by Food Lion's media reps. Public Works Director Foskey stated he had no additions. Alderman Pettyjohn advised she had no additions or changes to her report. Finance Manager Introcaso stated she had no additions or changes to her report. Town Manager Smith stated we held our 1st Reading of Ordinance 2019-5, an ordinance amending the 2017 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. She explained we must have 30 days between each reading due to it is a change of land use. Town Manager Smith stated the Mill Dam Bridge will be closing on March 2, 2020 and will be closed until spring 2021. President of Council Calio inquired if the floating dock will be shut down. Director of Code Enforcement West advised everything will be closed including the parking lot and the floating dock. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the January 2020 reports as presented. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Town Manager Smith gave a brief update regarding the Zoning Ordinance. Town Manager Smith explained the Planning & Zoning Committee met this month to review the proposed Mixed-Use District. She explained she's been working with Ms. Debbie Pfiel and the town has 18 months in order to adopt a Mixed-Use District. Ms. Pfiel has created a Mixed-Used Draft and updated the Overlay District for the Planning & Zoning Committee to review. Town Manager Smith stated Planning & Zoning will be meeting in March to review the Final Draft. She explained Planning & Zoning and Mayor & Council will both need to hold a public hearing regarding the Mixed-Used District.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2020-1, an ordinance amending Chapter 87 Housing Standards Section 80. Town Manager Smith stated when a house is condemned a placard is posted, and if the placard is pulled off the town may have the owners arrested. She explained the town has been having to repost posters. She stated she's been working with the town attorney, Director of Code Enforcement West, and Alderman Pettyjohn. Town Manager Smith explained this ordinance will make the property owner or resident liable and they will have to come before the Alderman Court. Mayor Shwed stated the purpose of this ordinance is to get better accountability who is pulling the placards. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2020-1. Councilman Hill seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilman Hill made a motion for approval to support the Boys & Girls Club USDA Grant Application. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

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Mayor Shwed stated the need to Re-Address and to give a new Street Name for property off West 6th Street due to 911 having an issue finding the property. Town Manager Smith advised Sussex County Addressing contacted the Director of Code Enforcement West requesting the town to name the dirt alley and to re-address the property. She explained the property has a Bell Avenue address, but you must access West 6th Street in order to get to the property. Mayor Shwed recommended to re-name the alley way Waller Lane in honor of the Waller Family. Councilman Kellam made a motion to re-name the alley way Waller Lane. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the FY 2019 Audit. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mr. Nick Parsons explained he attended a Mayor & Council Meeting in August to present his Eagle Scout Project. He explained the project is completed and he wanted to thank Town Manager Smith and Public Works Director Foskey. Mr. Parsons stated he has become an Eagle Scout.

Mr. Rick McVey, resident of Central Avenue, gave handouts to Mayor & Council regarding where building permits were issued in the town from 2017, 2018, and 2019. He explained there were 100 building permits in 2019 compared to the 61 permits and the 59 permits in 2017 and 2018 respectively. He stated West Laurel needs a little more significance and the town needs to try to find a way to invest more money in the Code Department.

Mr. McVey gave handouts to Mayor & Council regarding his Security Camera System Program. He explained the installation fee is \$200. The camera consists of a 2 mega camera pixel and they are flood lights on them.

Mr. McVey stated a Community Clean-Up will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2020 near Webb Avenue and 7th Street at 11:00 a.m.

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

Regular Session Recessed at 7:58 p.m.

Regular Session Reconvened at 8:11 p.m.

Councilwoman Martin made a motion to draft a new resolution to appoint a new Town Attorney. Councilman Hill seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilwoman Martin made a motion to approve a gift of \$200 and a recognition plaque. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

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

Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Mayor

President of Council

Town Manager

Recording Secretary