

The Town of Laurel
Mayor & Council Meeting
February 22, 2022

A Mayor & Council Meeting was held in the Mayor & Council Chambers at the Laurel Town Hall, on Tuesday, February 22, 2022, beginning at 7:11 p.m. The following persons were in attendance Mayor John Shwed, President of Council Chris Calio, Council Members: Randy Lee via teleconference, Jonathan Kellam, and Donald Holden. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey, Chief Dan Wright, Alderman Taylor Oliphant, Finance Manager Mary Introcaso, and Town Manager Jamie Smith. It was noted that Councilwoman Cheryl Martin, Councilwoman Robin Fisher-Cornish, and Recording Secretary Alexis were absent.

The Mayor & Council Regular and Closed Session Minutes of January 18, 2022, were presented for review and adoption. President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the regular and closed session minutes of January 18, 2022. Councilman Holden seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

The January 2022 Department Head Reports were presented for review.

- Director of Code Enforcement West stated the clean-up at the Rigby began today and the demolition of the Justice House on Mechanic Street destroyed by the fire started on Saturday.
- Public Works Director Foskey stated Hunter Wolske earned his water license and Ray Sommers passed his Level 1 Wastewater Test.
- Chief Wright stated the Citizens Police Academy begins March 2nd with 24 people signed up to attend. Mayor Shwed thanked Chief Wright regarding the school threats posted on social media.
- Finance Manager Introcaso stated she had nothing to add to her report.
- Alderman Oliphant stated she had nothing to add to her report.
- Town Manager Smith stated the town received notice from Mr. Ray Bivens advising the town received a grant opportunity pertaining Tidewater Park for Shade Structure. Town Manager Smith stated Willow Street was closed for a period to allow Del-DOT to complete their repair punch list items. She advised the street has opened back up.

Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the January 2022 Department Head Reports. Councilman Holden seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

Mayor Shwed presented the consideration of Ms. Cheri Clark's Request for allowing free range chickens and her comments from last's months Mayor & Council Meeting. Town Manager Smith stated Mayor & Council must decide whether to adopt Ordinance 2021-5 amending Chapter 49 Animals allowing urban chickens or to adopt Ordinance 2021-7 Chapter 49 Prohibited Animals for not allowing urban chickens. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2021-5. Councilman Holden seconded the motion. Vote was 3-2, with Mayor Shwed and Councilman Lee opposing and Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

Mayor Shwed presented the Fourth Street & Delaware Avenue Changing Committee Update. Town Manager Smith stated she needed to delay the update as the entire committee has not submitted the pro's and con's of the changing of Fourth Street and Delaware Avenue. Town Manager Smith stated Fourth Street will be one-way from Central Avenue to Market Street and Delaware Avenue will be one way from Fourth Street to Market Street.

Mayor Shwed presented the Laurel Little League Parade Request. Town Manager Smith stated the Laurel Little League submitted a Parade Request for Friday, April 8, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. starting at North Laurel Early Learning Academy ending at the Laurel ballpark. Councilman Holden made a motion to accept the Laurel Little League Parade Request. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2022-1, Amending Chapter 114 Objectionable Objects. Town Manager Smith stated Chapter 114 Objectionable Objects, Private Property, Article I, Section 3 will be amended to read as follows "Any animals or animal structures refer to Chapter 49. President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2022-1. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 3-2, with Mayor Shwed and Councilman Lee opposing and Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

Councilman Holden inquired when the Rigbie Apartments were last inspected. Director of Code Enforcement West stated the Rigbie was inspected in September 2021 and they had an electrical inspection completed by a third party and the Fire Marshall completed a fire system inspection on the same time.

Councilman Holden inquired if Mr. Musser's property located on West Street is inspected. Director of Code Enforcement West stated every rental property in town is inspected once a year with all inspections beginning July 1.

Mayor Shwed inquired if the town has received word from the Fire Marshall about the cause of the Rigbie fire. Director of Code Enforcement stated per the fire marshall, it's suspicious circumstances unknown nature.

Town Manager Smith stated the town will be hosting a SCAT Meeting on Wednesday, March 2, 2022.

Mrs. Diane Oney, resident of West Sixth Street, inquired if Central Avenue could be renamed to Frank Calio Avenue as he is an icon to the town and state. Town Manager Smith advised Central Avenue is a state-maintained road and when she spoke with the state today they stated it would be up to Sussex County 911 Addressing. Town Manager Smith stated she will follow up with the county.

Councilman Holden made a motion to hold a closed session to discuss legal matters. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

Regular Session Recessed at 7:37 p.m.

Regular Session Reconvened at 7:59 p.m.

Councilman Holden made a motion to moving forward with the Refinance of USDA Loans 3 & 5. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

With there being no further business, President of Council Calio made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Holden seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Mayor

President of Council

Town Manager

Recording Secretary