

The Town of Laurel
Mayor and Council Meeting
February 3, 2020

A Mayor and Council Meeting was held in the Mayor and Council Chambers of the Laurel Town Hall, February 3, 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, Jonathan Kellam, and Robin Fisher-Cornish. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey, Chief Dan Wright, Finance Manager Mary Introcaso, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, and Town Manager Jamie Smith. It was noted that Alderman Kelly Pettyjohn, Councilwoman Cheryl Martin, and Councilman Jeff Hill were absent.

The Mayor and Council Regular Public Hearing Minutes of November 18, 2019 were presented for review and adoption. Councilman Lee made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of November 18, 2019. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0, with Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish abstaining.

The Mayor and Council Regular Session Minutes of November 18, 2019 were presented for review and adoption. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of November 18, 2019. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 4-0, with Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish abstaining.

The Department Head Reports for November 2019 and December 2019 were presented for review and adoption. Director of Code Enforcement West advised he had no additions to his report. Director of Code Enforcement West stated all ten units at The Villas on Broad Creek have been issued permits and four of the villas are under construction. Public Works Director Foskey stated Well 7 expansion at Rt. 13 Water Plant will be coming to a close and it will be online in the next few weeks. Public Works Director Foskey advised in November they hired a new Wastewater Operator due to Mr. Mike retiring. Chief Wright advised he had no additions to his report. Mayor Shwed complimented the police department by stating they handle a lot more than just traffic tickets. Mayor Shwed advised Alderman Pettyjohn is not in attendance, but her reports were submitted to Mayor and Council for review. Finance Manager Introcaso stated she had no additions or changes to her report. Town Manager Smith explained the town received bond bill money, which was used to renovate the roof at Dunbar. She advised the Telamon classrooms facing the playground had water leaking and a maintenance man inspected the roof. Town Manager Smith explained a new roof was needed and the company who replaced the Social Services roof was utilized to replace Dunbar's roof. Town Manager Smith advised the town is receiving several developer calls who are looking to develop along U.S 13. Town Manager Smith stated she has been getting quotes regarding highway signs that would be placed along the north and south side of the highway. She explained the signs would have the town's branding and the project would be implemented in next year's budget. Town Manager Smith stated she has reviewed the Del-Dot's sign requirements. Mayor Shwed stated this is a good idea to install highway signs. Town Manager Smith advised Director of Code Enforcement West, Chief Wright, and herself had reviewed the surveys regarding the Dunbar Property subdivision. President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the November 2019 and December 2019 reports as presented. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilman Hill absent.

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Mayor Shwed presented the 2nd and Final Reading of Ordinance 2019-14, an ordinance amending Chapter 55 Section 4 & Section 10 Brush, Grass, and Weeds. Town Manager Smith stated drainage of roofs and paved areas, yards and courts, gutters, and other open areas on the premises shall be not be discharged in such a manner that creates a public nuisance. Town Manager Smith advised it must remain on their property and it can't be discharged onto streets or other's property. Councilman Lee made a motion to accept the 2nd and Final Reading of Ordinance 2019-14. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilman Hill absent.

Town Manager Smith gave an update on Town Code Concerns. She explained Councilman Hill brought up comments on how properties look in the town at a past Mayor and Council Meeting. Town Manager Smith advised the property mentioned is being utilized as a used car lot and was grand-fathered in. The property was zoned commercial and now is zoned town-center. Town Manager Smith explained the town attorney originally advised that the town couldn't do anything. She advised the town attorney did more research and the town could do away with the grand-fathered in clause with stipulations. Town Manager Smith explained you must decide which properties wouldn't be allowed to be grand-fathered in anymore and you must allow a certain time period for property owners to transition. If the town chooses to remove the grand-fathered in clause the town must change their zoning ordinance, which would go through Planning & Zoning and then to the Mayor and Council for recommendation. Town Manager Smith explained if Mayor & Council decided to remove the grand-fathered in clause they should look into it and decide on a later date. President of Council Calio advised to keep the item on the agenda, so it doesn't get lost.

Town Manager Smith presented a Draft Water and Sewer Service & Pre-Annexation Agreement. Town Manager Smith advised properties who reside out of town limits pay 200% of the town water and sewer rate because they don't pay taxes. Town Manager Smith advised the town was approached by a gentleman who would be willing to be annexed into the town if he could pay in town water and sewer rates, but he is not annexable at present. Town Manager Smith explained the draft agreement proposes the property owner to pay in-town water and sewer rates and pay a fee in lieu of taxes. Once the property becomes annexable the property owner must annex into the town. The property owners will be required to pay impact/connection fees and the water/sewer rate, which may be subject to change. Town Manager Smith advised this agreement will be recorded with the land records of Sussex County. President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the Draft Water and Sewer Service & Pre-Annexation Agreement. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilman Hill absent.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2019-5, an ordinance amending the 2017 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Town Manager Smith stated we held a public hearing regarding a property located on Woodland Ferry Road to be changed from residential zoning to commercial zoning and to amend the town's Future Land Use Map. Mayor Shwed stated it is an ordinance to amend the 2017 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, to change the future land use

map for property located at 10185 Woodland Ferry Road, tax map #232/12.14/8.00 from residential zoning to commercial business zoning. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2019-5. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilman Hill absent.

Councilman Lee: *It will enhance the community and the property is already surrounded by commercial property.*

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish: *It's a part of the town's Comprehensive Plan and contiguous to other properties.*

Councilman Kellam: *The property is already surrounded by commercial property.*

President of Council: *Concur with the previous statements.*

Mayor Shwed: *Concur with my colleagues.*

Mayor Shwed complimented Reimagine Laurel for submitting their application to the HGTV TV show. Mayor Shwed advised he will be attending the Availability of Healthy Foods in Dover from the Department of Agriculture on Wednesday, February 5, 2020.

Councilman Kellam thanked the town staff and police department for their great work.

Councilman Lee complimented the application to HGTV and thought it was great for members of the town to get together.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish complimented the police department and it's been a while since the community has respected the department, which she believes is a win-win. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish stated February is Black History Month and encouraged people to learn more about the history.

Mayor Shwed advised Lieutenant Tyndall from Georgetown Police Department and Chief Wright gave a presentation regarding the Opioid Epidemic to the Laurel School District.

Mr. Rick McVey, resident of Central Avenue, inquired if the bond money is payable or non-payable. Town Manager Smith stated bond money is non-payable.

Mr. McVey inquired if the property owner regarding the town codes sits on the Planning & Zoning Commission. Town Manager Smith advised yes.

Mr. McVey inquired if the parcel property owner pays any fees to amend the charter. Town Manager Smith stated there is no fee to amend the charter or Future Land Use Map.

Ms. Anne Davis, resident of Pine Street, inquired if any town members make-up the Reimagine Laurel Committee. Town Manager Smith advised she and President of Council Calio.

Ms. Davis inquired if the HGTV TV show selects one area of the town. Town Manager Smith explained they look at the town as a whole.

Mr. McVey questioned what is Reimagine Laurel. Town Manager Smith explained it is a committee that was started in 2013 associated with the Ramble. The committee is made up of Dr. Jules Bruck and Ed Lewenidowski from the University of Delaware, President of Council Chris Calio, Town Manager Smith, Brian Shannon from the LRC, State Representative Dukes, Bill McGowan, and members of the Laurel Public Library. The committee represents the town, property owners along Broad Creek, and property owners along Market Street.

Town Manager Smith advised the town will be hosting the SCAT Dinner on Wednesday, March 4, 2020. Town Manager Smith advised this month's SCAT Dinner will be held next Wednesday, February 12, 2020.

Town Manager Smith stated we will be holding a second Mayor & Council Meeting in February on Tuesday, February 18, 2020.

Councilman Kellam made a motion to hold a closed session to discuss contractual matters. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 5-0, with Councilwoman Martin and Councilman Hill absent.

Regular Session Recessed at 7:43

Regular Session Reconvened at 8:12 p.m.

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

Meeting Adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Mayor

President Council

Town Manager

Recording Secretary