

The Town of Laurel  
Mayor & Council Meeting  
March 15, 2021

A Mayor & Council Meeting was held in the Mayor & Council Chambers at the Laurel Town Hall, on March 15, 2021 beginning at 7:00 p.m. The following person in attendance Mayor John Shwed, President of Council Chris Calio, Council Members: Randy Lee, Jonathan Kellam, Cheryl Martin, Jeff Hill, and Robin Fisher-Cornish. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey via Teleconference, Chief Dan Wright, Alderman Kelly Pettyjohn via Teleconference, Finance Manager Mary Introcaso, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, and Town Manager Jamie Smith.

The Mayor & Council Public Hearing Minutes of February 16, 2021 were presented for review and adoption. Councilman Hill made a motion to accept the public hearing minutes of February 16, 2021. Councilwoman Martin seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

The Mayor & Council Regular and Closed Session Minutes of February 16, 2021 were presented for review and adoption. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the regular and closed session meeting minutes of February 16, 2021. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

The Mayor & Council Regular and Closed Session Minutes of March 1, 2021 were presented for review and adoption. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the regular and closed session meeting minutes of March 1, 2021. Councilman Hill seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish absent.

The February 2021 Department Head Reports were presented for review. ***Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish entered the meeting at 7:09 p.m.***

- Director of Code Enforcement West stated he had no additions to his report.
- Public Works Director Foskey explained there was money leftover from the Wilson Street Repaving Project to help complete the small paving portion on North Willow Street. Public Works Director advised the milling work on Wilson Street to Delaware Avenue will begin Monday, March 29, 2020.
- Alderman Pettyjohn advised she had no additions or changes to her report.
- Chief Wright stated he had no changes or additions to his report. Mayor Shwed advised the police department are doing a great job under difficult circumstances.
- Finance Manager Introcaso stated she had no changes or additions to her report.
- Town Manager Smith stated Dunbar expenditures are high due to the boiler repair and roof repair, which was covered by Bond Bill Money.

- Town Manager Smith advised Del-DOT is willing to replace the three streetlights at the Mill Dam Bridge on their own costs. Del-DOT is proposing to install solar lights with a battery that lasts five days without charging. President of Council Calio proposed to keep a track on the solar lights to see if they would be beneficial elsewhere in the town.
- Town Manager Smith advised she had a ZOOM Meeting last week regarding the TAP Funding Phase II. She stated new constructed walking areas on town property must meet the storm water regulations for an impervious surface. Town Manager Smith stated Janosik Park will remain the same with the proposed concrete with the brick lines. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired if the plastic will be removed from the Mill Dam Bridge. Town Manager Smith advised yes.
- President of Council Calio inquired how the Youth Questionnaires for One-Laurel were distributed. Town Manager Smith advised the surveys were distributed to high school students randomly. She stated Mrs. Sessoms from the Ark Education Resource Center and the School Resource Officers helped distributed surveys.

Councilman Lee made a motion to accept the February 2021 Department Head Reports. Councilman Hill seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2021-1 Cooper Street Speed Limit. Town Manager Smith advised she researched the town code Chapter 161, Vehicles and Traffic, Section 72 (A) and the code currently doesn't have a 15-mph speed limit. She explained in order to reduce the speed limit at Cooper Street the charter must amend that section by adding a sentence allowing Mayor and Council to establish a speed limit of 15-mph. Once the second reading is completed Mayor and Council may make a motion to reduce the speed on Cooper Street from 25 mph to 15 mph. Mayor Shwed stated where no special hazard exists, and except as set forth in Subsection B hereon, a speed of twenty-five (25 miles) per hour shall be lawful, but any speed in excess of such limit shall be absolute evidence that the speed is not reasonable or prudent and that it is unlawful. Where it is has been deemed a hazard by review of the Police Chief, Public Works Director, and Town Manager and recommended to the Mayor and Council for consideration and approved as such by Mayor and Council, a speed of (15 miles) per hour shall be lawful, but any speed in excess of such limit shall be absolute evidence that the speed is not reasonable or prudent and that is unlawful. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2021-1. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2021-2, an ordinance amending Chapter 175 of the Code of the Town of Laurel by adding a Traditional Neighborhood Development Zone (TND). President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2021-2. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. President of Council Calio inquired if both zoning amendments were available on the town website. Town Manager Smith stated yes. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2021-3, an ordinance amending Chapter 175 of the Code of the Town of Laurel by amending Article 4, Section 8, Large Parcel Development Overlay District (LPD-OD). Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2021-3. Councilman Hill seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the Del-DOT Repaving Agreement Discussion Update. Town Manager Smith stated the Del-DOT Repaving Agreement Discussion was brought to Mayor & Council's attention at February's Mayor & Council Meeting. She explained she met with State Representative Dukes and Senator Richardson to express concerns with the town taken over maintenance on Del-DOT maintained roads. Town Manager Smith advised she met with two Del-DOT Representatives regarding the town's concerns with snow-plowing and street repaving maintenance on state maintained roads. Town Manager Smith explained the language would be modified in the agreement regarding snow plowing and street sweeping. She stated Del-DOT will repair manholes and drainage inlets to Del-DOT specs prior to repaving. She advised Del-DOT would turn maintenance over to the town and Del-DOT will work with the town on major repairs. Town Manager Smith explained the town couldn't receive Municipal Street Aid Funding for the maintenance of state maintained roads as Municipal Street Aid Funding is for municipal streets only according to Delaware Code. Town Manager Smith advised she is working with SCAT regarding Del-DOT'S Street Repaving Agreement. Mayor Shwed proposed to invite State Representative Dukes and Senator Richardson to a Mayor & Council Meeting to express concerns. Councilman Hill stated we can continue to voice our concerns, but our streets are going to continue to deteriorate. After a general discussion Mayor & Council proposed to sign the amended agreement while continuing to work with SCAT and state officials with concerns.

Mayor Shwed presented the discussion of 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Town Manager Smith advised the town's 2020 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities were cancelled due to COVID-19. She stated the Firework Company kept last year's firework deposit of \$5,000 and she proposes to move forward this year with a firework display only. Town Manager Smith stated the current COVID-19 regulations requires a face masks, hand sanitizer, and social distancing. She stated the town will not know the new rules and regulations before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. She stated the firework display costs \$17,500. The town currently has a \$5,000 deposit from last year and the town currently has \$5,000 budgeted again this year. Town Manager Smith advised the town will once again be requesting donations again this year. Town Manager Smith stated if the town can't collect the full donation the town will cover the cost in this year's budget. Town Manager Smith stated the firework display will be on Saturday, July 3, 2021. Mayor & Council agreed to hold a firework display only on Saturday, July 3, 2021. Town Manager Smith advised she will continue to work with the Department of Health.

Mayor Shwed presented the One-Laurel Mural Painting. Town Manager Smith advised Mr. McVey's One-Laurel Group Pride and Ownership Group project is to create a mural on the side of Dunbar's Gymnasium facing Webb Avenue. Town Manager Smith stated three murals created by students have been submitted to the Mayor & Council and the public for review. Discussion was held on the process on how the mural will be selected and utilizing the citizens during the

process with Mayor & Council making the final decision. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish stated Mr. Michael Morris is an artist who is a local native of Laurel who could help with the mural.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish stated the Southern Delaware Alliance Racial Justice is moving to Western Sussex County where she participates in training and programs and will have more information in the near future.

Councilman Kellam thanked the town staff for their hard work and continues for everybody to keep safe.

Mayor Shwed encouraged citizens to come out and vote on Thursday, March 25, 2021 for the General Municipal Election 2021.

Town Manager Smith stated there will be two Mayor & Council meetings in April with the first meeting swearing-in the newly elected officials.

Pastor Eugene Martin from Soul Outreach Ministries stated she is in attendance tonight to familiarize herself with the town.

President of Council Calio read a letter from Mr. David King Sr. regarding the Cooper Street Article published in the February Edition of the Laurel Star.

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

Meeting Adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

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Mayor

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President of Council

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Town Manager

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Recording Secretary