

The Town of Laurel  
Mayor & Council Meeting  
July 20, 2020

A Mayor & Council Meeting was held virtually by utilizing Zoom, on July 20, 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, Robin Fisher-Cornish, Cheryl Martin, Jonathan Kellam, and Jeff Hill. 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 was absent.

The Mayor and Council Regular Session Minutes of June 15, 2020 were presented for review and adoption. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the regular session meeting minutes of June 15, 2020. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

The June 2020 Department Head reports were presented for review. Mayor Shwed explained the reports were submitted electronically to Mayor and Council. Mayor Shwed stated Department Heads are in attendance to tonight and inquired if they wished to comment on their reports. Town Manager Smith advised the town requested Bond Bill money for Dunbar and unfortunately due to COVID-19 the town was unable to receive the funding. She stated a portion of Dunbar's roof near the 1<sup>st</sup> grade wing has a leak. She explained the town could use the rest of the bond bill money from last year and the money from the sale of the lots to repair the roof. Town Manager Smith advised we received bids prior to COVID-19, but now we need to receive up to date bids. Town Manager Smith stated we received a grant from DNREC regarding an Energy Audit for Dunbar. Mayor Shwed inquired if Mayor & Council had any comments or questions regarding the reports. President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the June 2020 Department Head Reports. Councilman Lee seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Shwed presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2020-4, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 92, Licenses, Section 12, License Application. Mayor Shwed stated, "The Town Manager may withhold the issuance of a business and/or rental license for the outstanding balance(s) of water/sewer/trash, grass cutting, clean ups, taxes and/or any other outstanding fee owed to the Town of Laurel. Should the town withhold the issuance of a license because of the above, the license will be considered late/past due if not paid by the deadline date and a late fee imposed as stated in this Chapter." Town Manager Smith advised this has been the town's policy for years. She explained Director of Code Enforcement West reviewed the policy, but it's never been enforced as an ordinance. Councilwoman Martin made a motion to accept the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2020-4. Councilman Hill seconded the motion. President of Council Calio recommended to change the word "may" to "shall." Vote was 7-0.

Town Manager Smith stated each year the town utilizes the Sussex County 1974 Assessments for our annual Real Estate Taxes and assessments for properties located in the Municipal Boundaries. The Mayor & Council must adopt the assessment list from Sussex County, so the town may move forward with annual tax billing. The Court of Appeals will be held in August, where the public may appeal the assessment and the appeal will be sent to Sussex County.

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Councilman Hill made a motion to accept the Sussex County 1974 Assessment List. Councilwoman Martin seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired if Town Manager Smith could bring the Mayor & Council up to speed regarding the One-Laurel Steering Committee Meetings. Town Manager Smith explained the purpose of the committee is for the community to work together as one. She advised the town is utilizing Mr. Bill McGowan to spear head the meetings. Mr. McGowan has been working with the Laurel Library regarding community involvement "Share, Inspire, Do." Town Manager Smith stated the Steering Committee met last week and are meeting Wednesday, July 22, 2020. She explained we will be having an Open Community Meeting in August where the committee and community members will be working together on a small project. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish advised we are addressing the town as a whole and for everyone to work together.

Councilwoman Martin stated she will be at a Task Force Meeting with Superintendent Larrimore on Monday, August 24, 2020.

Councilman Kellam thanked Town Manager Smith and Chief Wright regarding the One-Laurel project. He advised everyone to continue to be safe.

Councilman Hill stated he reviewed Director of Code Enforcement West report and it is great to see all the construction and improvements within the town.

Mayor Shwed stated it's great to see a lot of reconstruction and remodeling in the town and especially on the main street of Central Avenue. Mayor Shwed complimented Chief Wright regarding the police department handlings listed in his report.

Mr. Tony Windsor inquired when the Mayor & Council Meetings go back to the Mayor & Council Chambers will Zoom also be available for a virtual option. Town Manager Smith advised she needs to look into other options and the town is still required to offer a virtual meeting if meetings were to go back to the Mayor & Council Chambers.

Town Manager Smith reminded Mayor & Council we will be holding our regular scheduled Mayor & Council Meeting on Monday, August 17, 2020.

Town Manager Smith advised the town was a recipient of a \$4,000 grant from Sussex County regarding the Bandstand in Market Street Square Park.

Town Manager Smith stated the town applied for reimbursement of \$5,500 from the Cares Act from the state.

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Town Manager Smith advised the town has received a Preliminary Approval from a State Parks Matching Grant of \$100,000 for Tidewater Park. Mayor Shwed inquired if Town Manager Smith would reach out to Senator Coons and Senator Carper regarding the railroad easement. Town Manager Smith explained Del-Dot recommended that the town to begin on Phase II in order for the project to begin. Phase II consists of working at Janosik Park to complete the repair of the walkway and the shoreline erosion.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish congratulated Chief Wright pertaining the grants received for the police department.

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

Meeting Adjourned at 7:31 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