

July 2025

Shepherdstown  
WEST VIRGINIA

# TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER



## Hello neighbors,

As summer hits its stride and we soak up these extended sun-filled days, we want to take a moment to look back on a busy and inspiring July here in Shepherdstown.

From community celebrations and historic commemorations to meaningful progress on town initiatives, the past month offered up plenty of reasons to stay engaged and remain excited about what the future holds for this place we call home.

— James Gatz |  
[jgatz@shepherdstown.gov](mailto:jgatz@shepherdstown.gov)



**On July 9**, the Town Council officially adopted the 2025 Comprehensive Plan—a once-per-decade roadmap that outlines our town's shared vision for the future.

Shaped by months of public input and planning, the Plan sets the course for how town will grow, adapt, and thrive over the next ten years.

We will speak in more detail about the Comprehensive Plan in upcoming announcements.

## CATF Partnership Yielding Results

Throughout July, Town has continued its commitment to CATF—[read more here](#)—and that commitment is yielding results. A recent note from CATF Interim Managing Director, Amy Wratford, explained that over opening weekend, the theater festival hosted the editor-in-chief of American Theatre magazine, Rob Weinert-Kendt.

He attended all five plays, the lecture and playwrights' panel, and Breakfast with Peggy. His supportive article about his CATF experience can be [found here](#). Wratford emphasized, "It is incredibly affirming to have this kind of recognition from an industry leader."





## Bee Line March Milestone

On July 19, Shepherdstown hosted the final event in a summer-long tribute to the 250th anniversary of the Bee Line March—a remarkable Revolutionary War journey that began right here in our community.

Held at Morgan's Grove Park, the event featured a full-day Revolutionary War encampment with reenactors, period-authentic displays, drill demonstrations, educational talks, children's games, and live music by the Old Line Fife and Drum Corps.

Reenactors then marched from the park into town (amid a slight rain-delay), culminating in a gathering downtown at McMurran Hall with closing remarks from historian Travis Shaw.

A dedicated group of residents lined portions of Fairmont and King Streets—patiently waiting in the light rain to cheer on the marchers.

The event capped a summer of commemorations, which included a June 14 ceremony and a special museum exhibit featuring colonial-era longrifles.

Special thanks to the local chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution, as well as Peter Smith with [Historic Shepherdstown & Museum](#), for all their hard work.

## Standing Firm

Also this month, the Mayor and Town Council issued a formal letter and public statement to the Jefferson County Commission expressing serious concern over the Commission's recent decision to remove all members of the Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA) Board—including all municipal representatives—and restructure the board without clear justification or public input. [Read the letter here.](#)

Additionally, in late July, the Mayor and Town Council sent a letter to the West Virginia Public Service Commission in support of the Charles Town Utility Board (CTUB) in its recent claim against the for-profit West Virginia American Water company (WVAW)—which currently plans to provide water/sewer services to a newly proposed housing development located in CTUB's Jefferson County service area.

In short, if WVAW moves forward with its plans, the project will result in duplicative underground water and sewer infrastructure in the area, inefficient use of resources, and higher utility rates for customers served by CTUB and WVAW in Jefferson County. The Town is collaborating with other area municipalities to ensure the continued availability of safe and affordable water services for our residents and across Jefferson County.

We will update the public on this issue as it unfolds.

## Help Shape the Future of Shepherdstown!

Town Hall is always looking for volunteers to serve on committees and get involved. Your voice and time can make a real difference! Don't hesitate to contact us:

**304-876-2312 | [clerk@shepherdstown.us](mailto:clerk@shepherdstown.us)**



## Did You Know?

The Shepherdstown Water Utility and the Shepherdstown Sanitary Utility are owned and operated by the Corporation of Shepherdstown. Each is overseen by a board whose members are appointed by the Town Council. These boards meet jointly because their issues tend to be closely related. The meetings are on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6pm and are open to the public. The Water and Sanitary Utilities operate under a set of regulations set by the WV Public Service Commission (PSC).

Each year, a detailed report on the state of our treatment plant, distribution system, and finances is submitted to the PSC and is available to the public [right here](#). You can see annual reports dating all the way back to 1991.

Shepherdstown has a long-standing right to draw water from the Potomac River, which is our primary water source. Our current permit allows us to draw up to one million gallons of water per day—an amount more than sufficient to meet our current needs. Town Run is designated as our secondary source, to be used in case of emergency. We can draw from it to mix with the Potomac water when specific conditions are present, such as unusually high algae content in the river water. Town Run is also used in the rare instance when the Potomac water is contaminated.

Currently, the Utilities serve 1,835 water customers and 1,255 sewer customers through 22.37 miles of water pipelines and 16 miles of sewer lines. Our service areas are larger than the town limits.

The Water Utility also provides all water for the Shepherdstown Volunteer Fire Department operations, and regularly tests and maintains the 200 fire hydrants in our system. Additionally, when errant drivers damage hydrants, the Utility repairs or replaces them. Recently the WV Public service Commission changed its regulations for hydrants. This is why you see new paint and IDs on each hydrant. All of the costs mentioned in this paragraph are paid for by the Water Utility, using the money you pay in your monthly water bill. **Thank you!**



## Experience Shepherdstown

On the collaboration front, July saw the emergence of several exciting developments rooted in partnership and community spirit. First, the Town is proud to continue its financial support of [Experience Shepherdstown](#)—the nonprofit organization behind some of our most beloved local events, including First Fridays, BooFest, and Christmas in Shepherdstown.

Their work helps the Town do more to drive foot traffic downtown, support small businesses, and celebrate the charm of our community year-round. BooFest planning is already underway, and volunteers are encouraged to get involved.

Town Council also finalized an agreement with the [Rotary Club of Shepherdstown](#) to accept the donation of a custom “WV Swing,” soon to be installed by Rotary in Rumsey Park.

Additionally—working in partnership with the Historic Landmarks Commission—the Town has contracted with the Mills Group to create a series of helpful guides for caring for historic buildings and homes. A public meeting is scheduled for September 3rd at the [Shepherdstown Community Club](#) to share progress and gather input.

Keep an eye out for reminders about the project and meeting as we get closer to the meeting date.



## — The Monthly Town Poem—

### *Pandemic, Sixth Month Near Dawn*

— By Justin Duewel-Zahniser

Staring out the kitchen window at 3:04 am.  
Ghost light of the half-moon blankets the back lawn.  
Bamboo finger shadows cast over the quiet garden.

Unkempt hair in the window's reflection.  
I grab a handful where the neck and back have come together.  
At least it's a connection, you know?

Two rabbits chew young clover by the fence where the kayaks hang.  
A squirrel looms over them, clinging sideways to the black slats.  
They are all uncomfortably close together.

**Shepherdstown is spilling over** with writers, artists, and creative talent—and poetry is one of the ways our community shines. Our hope is to feature a “Poem of the Month,” in every newsletter. That poem will also be posted on the front window of Town Hall.

We'd love to hear from you. Submit your work for consideration, and you may see your poem highlighted accordingly!

[clerk@shepherdstown.us](mailto:clerk@shepherdstown.us)

# Upcoming Dates/Times for Town Council and Committee Meetings (Town Hall)

All meetings are typically convened in-person at Town Hall and broadcast via Zoom, with the exception of Age-Friendly Shepherdstown—which is held only via [Zoom here](#).

For all meetings, if a Zoom link is available for that meeting, it can be found [on this page](#) by clicking on the respective meeting and "2025"—and then the Video link within the "Resources" column that coincides with that date/time.

## Meetings:

- Town Council: Wednesday, August 13, 6:30pm.
- Age-Friendly Shepherdstown: Wednesday, August 13, 1:30pm.
- Finance Committee (special meeting): Wednesday, August 6, 6:30pm.
- Historic Landmarks Committee: Monday, August 11, 6pm.
- Parks and Recreation Committee: Tuesday, August 26, 6pm.
- Planning Commission: Monday, August 18, 6pm.
- Public Works Committee: Monday, August 25, 6pm.
- Town Grants Committee: Tuesday, August 5, 6:30pm.
- Tree Commission: Thursday, August 14, 6pm.
- Water & Sanitary Boards: Thursday, August 28, 6pm.



## Mayor's Office Hours:

Fourth Wednesday of every month at 6:30pm, Town Hall.  
Email [jgatz@shepherdstown.gov](mailto:jgatz@shepherdstown.gov) with any questions.

Municipal Court hours: Third Wednesday of every month starting at 5:30pm, Town Hall.  
[Click here](#) for more information.