

September 2025

Shepherdstown  
WEST VIRGINIA

# TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER



## Hello neighbors,

As summer gives way to fall, Shepherdstown is entering one of its most beautiful and exciting times of year. The changing season brings not only crisp mornings and colorful leaves, but also a full slate of community events—from First Friday, Shepherd University Homecoming, BooFest, and the wonderful stretch that is Christmas in Shepherdstown.

The coming weeks will be busy at Town Hall as well, as we continue to move forward on innovations and projects to strengthen our community and support our residents. This monthly newsletter recaps important events, committee work, and key initiatives that shaped our work in September and set the stage for continued progress!

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



## Town Hall Paid Internships

Working with Shepherd University, the Town is excited to launch a new paid internship program in fall 2025. One or more Shepherd University students will be hired to assist Town staff and the Historic Landmarks Commission with important historic preservation and community-focused projects.

For more details and application information, [click here](#) or contact Amy Boyd at 304-876-2398 or [clerk@shepherdstown.us](mailto:clerk@shepherdstown.us).

The Town plans to announce additional internship opportunities soon.



## Ground Lounge Opens Its Doors

The Ground Lounge, operated by Meditative Medicinals, has opened upstairs at 123 W. German St. Services include red light therapy, cold plunge, grounding mats, sauna, and other holistic offerings—perfect for relaxation, recovery, and self-care.

Owner Samantha Savoca chose September 22, the fall equinox, to officially open, as the date reflected an alignment with natural rhythms and seasonal balance.

The Ground Lounge adds another dimension to Shepherdstown's growing wellness and arts scene, and we look forward to seeing it thrive!



## Water Tank Cleaning / Inspections

Earlier in September, Shepherdstown's two Route 45 water tanks underwent their regular five-year cleaning and inspection. Each tank holds 750,000 gallons, and specially trained divers spent four days in the water using vacuum-like equipment to remove sediment, check interior surfaces, and replace anodes—designed to corrode before the tank itself.

The tanks were found to be in very good condition, with the anodes working as intended and no issues requiring immediate attention.

One problem was discovered: corroded nuts on an intake line had left only a single bolt holding a 16-inch inlet in place. The divers replaced the hardware with stainless steel, ensuring the tanks remain secure for years to come. The entire project cost about \$25,000, which is considered reasonable compared to past estimates for similar work.

Because diving in potable water requires strict safety and disinfection protocols, few companies are willing to take on this work. Shepherdstown partnered with a specialized firm out of Charleston, which completed the project successfully and at a fair price.

In addition, the Town contracts an annual inspection of the raw water intake pipe in the Potomac River, located near the boat ramp on Princess St. Divers clean away algae and buildup using underwater power-washing equipment, while also checking for damage from debris or needed repairs. This yearly maintenance, which typically costs around \$7,000, helps ensure a safe and reliable water supply for the entire community.

## Lead & Copper Testing



Additionally, on the subject of Town's water health, every three years, Shepherdstown's Water Department conducts lead and copper testing as part of a federally required monitoring program. We implemented this year's survey in August. The results are in—and the news is good. The testing showed that Shepherdstown water continues to pass rigorous safety standards.

In keeping with Federal requirements, the testing followed a “first draw” method: randomly selected residents filled a sample bottle with water first thing in the morning, set it out for pickup, and the Town sent it to a certified lab.

Shepherdstown maintains 20 Tier-1 testing sites, chosen because of older plumbing or the presence of short lead “goosenecks”—small pipe connections used decades ago between cast iron mains and galvanized lines. Importantly, Shepherdstown has no lead service lines.

All 20 samples from this year's survey came back well under the federal action level of 15 parts per billion for lead, meaning the Town's drinking water continues to meet safety standards. Individual results were sent to participating households, and the full report will soon be posted on the Town's website for residents to review.

This round of testing shows Shepherdstown's system remains in strong compliance, with results that reinforce the importance of ongoing monitoring and maintenance.





## Around Town

The City of Shepherdstown encourages local groups, clubs, and community organizations to take advantage of meeting space available at Town Hall. Whether you're part of a civic group, nonprofit, neighborhood association, or club, Town Hall provides a welcoming setting to gather, plan, and connect.

If your group is interested in using the space, please [contact Town Hall](#) for scheduling and additional details. By making this resource available, we hope to continue strengthening the spirit of community that makes Shepherdstown so special.

The familiar downtown **Market House** is scheduled for exterior maintenance this fall. Work will include a fresh coat of paint to help preserve the historic structure and ensure it continues to serve as a proud centerpiece of Shepherdstown. The project reflects Town's ongoing commitment to caring for our shared spaces and honoring the history they represent.

Cultivating Safety. Our **Police Department** is stepping up traffic enforcement along German Street, High Street, and Duke Street, where vehicle speeds have become a growing concern. With students back in town and pedestrian activity at its peak, safety is the top priority.

By stepping up enforcement in these key areas, the Town is working to create a safer environment for residents, students, and visitors alike while reminding everyone that our streets are shared spaces that require care and attention.



On Saturday, Sept. 20, Town hosted its first-ever [Constitution Day parade](#) – the “We the People” parade – which began at 10am along German Street, culminating downtown in front of Town Hall, where attendees and participants gathered in a community-wide celebration of the nation’s founding document.

The parade coincided with the 20th consecutive Constitution Day Lecture hosted by Shepherd University’s [Robert C. Byrd Center](#) for Congressional History and Education. The lecture series was launched in 2005, when the late Sen. Byrd—West Virginia’s longest-serving senator—successfully championed legislation establishing Constitution Day, commemorating the signing of the Constitution in Philadelphia on Sept. 17, 1787.

The event was an undeniable success, with well over a hundred collective attendees and participants involved—which, according to event organizers, sets the stage for both inspiration and momentum looking ahead to next year’s event, and beyond!







## **Town Run Watershed Baseline Study Underway**

Shepherdstown's Water and Sanitary Departments have partnered with Decota Consulting Company, Inc., to launch a detailed baseline study of Town Run. This effort is designed to give the Town a clear picture of current watershed conditions, identify potential risks to our water supply, and guide decisions that will protect this vital resource for years to come.

The study begins with a kickoff meeting that brings together Town staff, consultants, and key stakeholders. From there, Decota will review existing data, reports, and GIS mapping, while adding new information on stormwater systems, septic systems, runoff patterns, land use, and other potential pollution sources. Special attention will be given to areas where water quality may be influenced by agriculture, stormwater, or aging infrastructure.

Hydrological data—such as historical streamflow measurements—will also be analyzed to better understand how Town Run has performed over time. Decota will then carry out an extensive water-sampling plan throughout the watershed to establish baseline water quality conditions. Samples will focus on locations most likely to be impacted by septic systems, agricultural runoff, urban development, and nearby rail activity.

The results of this work will be compiled into a final report that includes detailed GIS maps, data visualizations, and practical recommendations. These recommendations will help Shepherdstown strengthen long-term protections for Town Run, address identified hazards, and prioritize strategies that preserve both the quality and reliability of our community's water supply.



## **Did You Know?**

Town is processing annual business licenses. Business licenses are renewed annually, beginning each July. We give the month of July as a grace period to renew. This includes brick-and-mortar businesses along with businesses that come in town to perform work.

Fees vary from \$21 to \$100 and depend on the businesses licensing with the WV Secretary of State. In-town licenses total approximately 130 at present. For out-of-town businesses, renewal is only required when they are actively performing work in Shepherdstown.

## **Event Ordinance Amendment**

Shepherdstown Town Council recently approved a change to the event application process, reducing the required submission deadline from 30 days to just 14.

This adjustment is designed to cut through unnecessary red tape and make it easier for residents and organizations to bring community events to life. The change reinforces Shepherdstown's ongoing commitment to being a vibrant, welcoming town where events and gatherings can thrive.

## Upcoming Events to Keep an Eye Out For



\* **Experience** the ever-popular First Friday event this Friday, October 3, with a live outdoor performance from Lisa Lafferty on the lawn of McMurran Hall. Bring a chair or blanket, grab some picnic treats from a local business, and stay to dine, shop, or stroll after the music ends.

Several shops will remain open until at least 8pm, making it the perfect chance to explore our downtown, support local creatives, and soak up the energy of the fall season.

Additionally, this month, in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, First Friday will also feature a Mrs. Roper Romp—a lively celebration inspired by the beloved character from the 1970s sitcom *Three's Company*. Attendees are encouraged to don their brightest caftans, chunky jewelry, and curly wigs to channel Mrs. Helen Roper's free-spirited style.

After the music, the romp continues with a bar crawl through Shepherdstown, raising awareness and support for breast cancer causes while adding an extra dose of fun to the evening.

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\* **Freedoms Run** – October 4: Dust off your running shoes: Freedom's Run returns to Shepherdstown this Saturday, October 4. The community-centered race welcomes walkers and runners of all levels, offers scenic views, and supports local causes. Whether you're participating or cheering people on, it's a great way to get into the fall spirit and celebrate health, community, and local pride.

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\* **October in Shepherdstown** means it's BooFest time—a month-long celebration of all things spooky and seasonal. German Street transforms with decorations, downtown restaurants and merchants host themed events and specials, and community organizations offer activities throughout the month.

On Halloween night, Trick-or-Treat hours run from 6–8pm (with extra caution urged as vehicles and pedestrians share the streets). Find the full October BooFest calendar of events [right here](#).

**Additionally**, this year, Shepherdstown is excited to host its first Residential Halloween Decorating Contest.

Residents within the contest zone should have their decorations up by October 22. Cash prizes will be awarded, with winners announced at the Shepherdstown Community Club Vampire Ball on Friday, October 24. (Of note: there are two separate contests for businesses and residents.)

## Upcoming Events cont...

\* **A town-wide yard sale** is set for Saturday, October 18, from 9am–6pm. Participants can set up their items in front of houses, but are asked to be mindful of sidewalk space so people can safely pass.

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### \* **SU Homecoming and Parade** – October 25

From 10-11am on Saturday, October 25, Shepherd University's annual Homecoming Parade will march down German Street, featuring the Shepherd marching band, student floats, outstanding alums, and the Royal Ram Homecoming Court.

The parade represents just one highlight of the weekend-long celebration. Find out [more here](#).

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### \* **Annual Shepherdstown Day Care Halloween Parade** – October 30

Youth from [Shepherdstown Day Care](#) (and many parents) will kick off their Halloween festivities by parading in full costume from the Day Care to Town Hall on Thursday, October 30, around 10am. Join us in cheering them on and welcoming them for some Halloween treats at Town Hall.



**SHEPHERD**  
UNIVERSITY



## 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)**



# 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, October 8, 6:30pm.
  - Age-Friendly Shepherdstown: Wednesday, October 16, 1:30pm.
  - Finance Committee: Wednesday, October 1, 6:30pm.
  - Parks and Recreation Committee: Tuesday, October 28, 6pm.
  - Planning Commission: Monday, October 20, 6pm.
  - Public Works Committee: Monday, October 27, 6pm.
  - Tree Commission: Friday, October 10, 6pm.
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## 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.