

MARCH 2026

Shepherdstown  
WEST VIRGINIA

# TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER



## Hello neighbors,

February was another busy but productive month in town and at Town Hall. Please read on for more information covering some of the most important happenings in Shepherdstown!

Of particular note:

- Please enjoy the Frosty Fest temporary ice rink behind the Market House this weekend (March 6-8) where you can strap on some skates, do some jumps, and also score some goals like an Olympic athlete!
- Plus, take time to join in the unveiling of another new artistic bench at noon tomorrow (Saturday, March 7) at The Wall near German and King Streets.

Finally, as you might recall (but might be trying to forget), we weathered a significant winter storm just a few weeks ago.

Thanks to the help of many residents and the excellent work of our Town staff, disruptions were kept to a minimum.

We extend a huge thanks to everyone who pitched in to help.

Have a great month!

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



## Outdoor Farmers Market Returns Sunday, March 29

With the arrival of spring, the Shepherdstown Farmers Market will return to its outdoor location on South King Street near the Market House beginning Sunday, March 29.

The Market will be open every Sunday from 9am-1pm, continuing a long-standing community tradition that connects residents with local farmers, producers, and artisans.

Over the winter months, the market successfully transitioned indoors on Sundays, comprising the first floor of the Community Club/War Memorial Building —allowing vendors and customers to continue gathering and supporting the local food economy even during the colder season.

That momentum now carries forward as the market moves back outdoors, where folks can once again enjoy fresh seasonal produce, baked goods, handcrafted items, and the lively atmosphere that has made the Market a cornerstone of the community.

Residents and visitors alike are encouraged to stop by, support local vendors, and welcome the return of one of Shepherdstown's favorite spring traditions.

## Shepherdstown Joins the Conversation at ACFF 2026

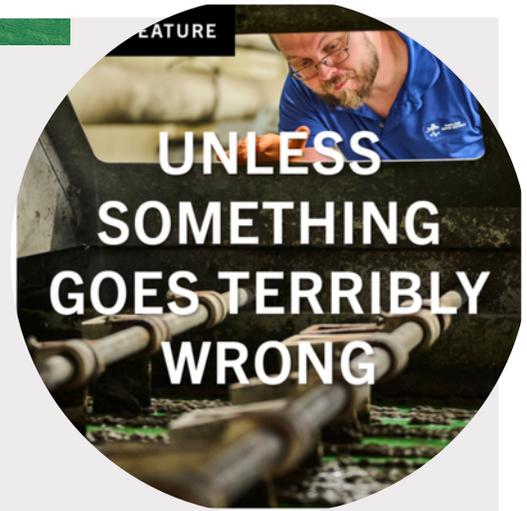
The [American Conservation Film Festival \(ACFF\)](#) returns to Shepherdstown on March 13-15, at the Shepherd University Frank Center, bringing filmmakers, scientists, and environmental leaders together to explore the most pressing conservation issues of our time. The 2026 festival lineup features powerful storytelling focused on water, land, climate, and community resilience.

One of this year's featured films, [Unless Something Goes Terribly Wrong](#), examines the challenges facing many aging municipal wastewater systems and the negative environmental consequences that can follow when systems fail.

Following the screening on Friday, March 13, at 6pm, Mayor James Gatz and members of Shepherdstown's water and wastewater team will provide an overview of our Town's wastewater plan and participate in a live Q&A discussion with festival attendees.

The conversation will provide an opportunity to reflect on the themes presented in the film and to share how Shepherdstown's own wastewater treatment facility operates—including the Town's ongoing investment in modern membrane filtration technology, Chesapeake Bay compliance, and long-term infrastructure planning.

While the film highlights the challenges one community faced, we are proud of Shepherdstown's wastewater facility, which is an example of a well-maintained local system for which the Town provides ongoing attention, proactive upgrades, professional staffing, and responsible environmental stewardship.



# TOWN HALL NEWS



- The Town received a \$22,000 grant from the State of West Virginia to install new electrical upgrades and energy-efficient doors at Town Hall. The project, originally recommended by the Town Hall Age Friendly Shepherdstown Committee, will improve accessibility and long-term energy performance at the facility.
- As part of ongoing modernization efforts, the Town has also purchased new, updated financial management software to strengthen oversight and streamline operations across municipal services, including water, wastewater, and trash collection billing. This investment supports continued improvements in efficiency, transparency, and service delivery.
- Mayor Gatz recently met with the Deputy Director of the West Virginia Division of Highways to discuss next steps for the pathway project along Route 480, connecting Shepherdstown Middle School to Morgan's Grove Park. As discussed at the meeting, the State plans to finalize the construction contract completed by the end of March, and has committed to completing the project no later than November 30, 2026.

Additionally, the Mayor and Town staff are working with the WV Division of Highways to address several other roadway issues including deteriorating asphalt at the four-way stop at High Street and Duke Street, and standing water on roadways near the intersection of Back Alley and Princess Street, and on Duke Street south of German Street.

- Town Council is currently developing the FY27 budget, with completion expected by March 31, 2026. Residents are encouraged to attend upcoming Finance Committee and Town Council meetings to stay informed and participate in this important process.

# New Artistic Bench Unveiling Set for Saturday, March 7, 12pm



Mayor Gatz and the Town Public Works Committee will unveil another new artistic bench on Saturday, March 7, at 12pm, at The Wall downtown.

This is the second new bench to be installed as part of the Town's updated Artistic Bench initiative. The beautiful new bench is the creation of local artist Brendan Nicklas.

While the theme of the bench is under wraps until the unveiling, let's just say it's a special piece of art that will bring a bit of unexpected whimsy and wonder to our downtown. Please plan to attend the unveiling and enjoy!

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## 2026 Town Hall Closures Calendar

Residents are encouraged to review the full [2026 Shepherdstown Holiday Schedule](#) for Trash, Recycling, and Yard Waste Services to stay informed about any changes to collection days and Town Hall closures throughout the year.

The schedule clearly outlines when municipal offices will be closed for holidays and whether trash, recycling, or yard waste services will operate on those dates.

View the complete 2026 holiday schedule at the link provided above.

## Shepherdstown Community Grants Now Available

The new Shepherdstown Community Grants Program provides a streamlined way for residents, local organizations, businesses, and civic groups to access funds to support projects aligned with the Town's priorities.

The program offers matching grants to help offset costs for initiatives that enhance public spaces, improve infrastructure, promote economic vibrancy, and strengthen community connections.

Eligible projects may include community events, streetscape improvements, historical preservation efforts, public art, and other efforts that reflect goals in the Shepherdstown Comprehensive Plan.

Applications are evaluated based on a clear set of criteria, including community impact, feasibility, and alignment with established Town objectives.

Funding is awarded in a transparent and competitive process managed by the Town's Finance Committee, which reviews proposals and makes funding recommendations to Town Council.

For residents and groups interested in applying or learning more about available funding opportunities, detailed program guidelines and application materials are available on the [Town's Community Grants page](#).

## Public Notice from the Shepherdstown Police Department

On multiple occasions in recent weeks, Shepherdstown-area residents have been contacted by scammers falsely claiming to be members of the

Shepherdstown Police Department. The callers stated they had a “federal” arrest warrant and instructed the resident to report immediately to the police department or face arrest. They also demanded payment of a large fine in advance—specifically requesting payment in Bitcoin—while keeping the resident on the phone and warning them not to disconnect. Unfortunately, in one case, the scammers were persuasive and the payment was made.

These types of scams can sound very convincing and may even display a police phone number on caller ID. Scammers can manipulate caller ID using computer software. Similar scams are also common during tax season, often involving threats of legal action or urgent payment demands.

**Please remember:** Law enforcement will never demand immediate payment over the phone or require payment in Bitcoin, gift cards, or other untraceable methods. Do not provide personal or financial information such as your driver’s license number, social security number, bank account details, or credit card information.

Regardless of where you live, if you receive a threatening or suspicious call, hang up and contact your local police department directly for assistance before making any payment.

These callers are not helping resolve a situation—they are attempting to steal your money. Staying informed and cautious is the best protection.

If you or someone you know receives a similar call in Shepherdstown, please report it to the [Shepherdstown Police Department](#).





## Opportunity to Donate to Shepherdstown



Shepherdstown now offers a simple and transparent way for residents and supporters to contribute funds to support Town projects, upkeep of public spaces, and administration of programs that enhance community life. The Donations are reviewed under a clear Donations Review and Acceptance Policy designed to ensure accountability and alignment with community goals.

Financial contributions can be made for general support or earmarked for specific initiatives such as funding for public art, beautification, historic preservation, or administration of public events, and more—and all approved donations are recorded in the public record unless anonymity is requested. To learn more about how to make a gift and view the full process, visit the Town's [Donate to Shepherdstown page here](#).

## Volunteers Needed: Planning Commission & Tree Commission

[APPLY NOW](#)

The Town of Shepherdstown is seeking residents interested in serving on either the Shepherdstown Planning Commission or the Town's Tree Commission. Both volunteer bodies play an important role in supporting the long-term health, character, and thoughtful growth of our community.

The Planning Commission helps guide long-range planning, reviews development proposals, and assists in implementing the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Tree Commission focuses on maintaining a healthy, diverse, and beautiful tree canopy throughout Shepherdstown. Its work includes helping monitor trees on Town property, supporting planting and care efforts, and promoting the many benefits trees provide—from shade and storm-water management to habitat for birds and pollinators.

We encourage you to apply. For more information, call 304-876-2312 or email: [clerk@shepherdstown.us](mailto:clerk@shepherdstown.us).

# Community Spotlight: The Shepherdstown Wastewater Treatment Plant



Commissioned in 1978, the Shepherdstown Wastewater Treatment Plant is one of the Town's most essential public services, quietly working every day to protect public health, support the community's infrastructure, and safeguard the Potomac River and surrounding environment. While it often operates out of sight and out of mind for most residents, the facility plays a critical role in ensuring that wastewater generated throughout the community is treated safely and responsibly before being returned to the natural system.

In May 2012, improvements to the Plant and Main Pump Station were completed by Chapman Technical Group, which provided planning, design, and construction phase engineering services, including full-time construction observation services.

The primary purpose of the project was to increase the treatment capacity and meet NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit stringent nitrogen and phosphorous removal requirements, mandated to protect the Chesapeake Bay.

The project consisted of the construction of a Membrane Bioreactor (MBR) wastewater treatment system with an ultimate treatment capacity of 0.80 MGD (million gallons/day) and an initial treatment capacity of 0.667 MGD based on meeting lower nitrogen and phosphorus levels of 3.0 mg/l and 0.3 mg/l, respectively.

## Current Performance

Today, the Shepherdstown wastewater system serves nearly 1,300 households and businesses (an estimated 3,500 people), both within town limits and in select surrounding areas. While the service area is centered in Shepherdstown, portions of the system extend beyond municipal boundaries in several directions, reflecting gradual growth and infrastructure expansion over time.

The system currently treats roughly 180,000 to 200,000 gallons per day. As new housing and commercial development occurs near the Town's existing wastewater infrastructure, the Town system, like many other municipal water and wastewater systems, requires the developer to install and extend water and sewer main lines to serve the proposed projects.

These extensions are inspected during construction, and, once completed, are transferred to municipal ownership for long-term operation and maintenance. This approach allows the system to grow in a controlled and sustainable manner while ensuring consistent service standards across both existing neighborhoods and future development areas.

# At a Glance: Election 2026



The 2026 Shepherdstown municipal election will be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026. Only residents who live within Shepherdstown's corporate limits are eligible to vote, and all eligible neighbors are encouraged to participate in this important civic process. Local elections have a direct impact on the services, infrastructure, and leadership that shape daily life in our community.

Key dates and procedures for the election—including candidate filing deadlines, information about write-in candidates, absentee and emergency voting options, and other voter resources—are available on the [\*\*Town's Election 2026 page\*\*](#).

Whether you're planning to run for office, vote, or simply stay informed, detailed guidance and forms can be found online to assist you through every step of the election cycle.

The Town is also **seeking residents interested in serving as poll workers** for the 2026 municipal election. Poll workers play an important role in helping ensure that the voting process runs smoothly and efficiently on Election Day.

Anyone interested in volunteering or learning more is encouraged to contact the Town Clerk at [clerk@shepherdstown.us](mailto:clerk@shepherdstown.us) or 304-876-2312.

# 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 "2026"—and then the Video link within the "Resources" column that coincides with that date/time.

## Meetings:

- Town Council: Wednesday, March 11, 6:30pm.
- Age-Friendly Shepherdstown: Wednesday, March 18, 1:30pm.
- Finance Committee: Wednesday, March 4, 6:30pm.
- Grants Committee: Tuesday March 3, 6:15pm.
- Historic Landmarks Commission Monday, March 2, 6pm.
- Planning Committee: Monday March 16, 6pm.
- Public Works Committee Monday, March 23, 6:30pm.
- Parks & Rec Committee Tuesday, March 24, 6pm.
- Tree Commission: Thursday, March 12, 6pm.
- Water/Sanitary Board: Thursday, March 26, 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.

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