

SHEPHERDSTOWN TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 10, 2026 – 6:30pm

Town Hall – 104 North King Street and Zoom

1. Call to Order - Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Attendance

- a. **Members Present:** James Gatz (J Gatz), Marcy Bartlett (M Bartlett), Marty Amerikaner (M Amerikaner), Shannon Thomas (S Thomas), Cheryl Roberts (C Roberts) and Carrie Blessing (C Blessing).
- b. **Staff Present:** Amy Boyd (A Boyd), Gino Sisco (G Sisco), Maged Kirollos (M Kirollos), Woody Coe (W Coe) , Karl Musser (K Musser), Mike King (M King), Hunter Wetzel (H Wetzel).
- c. **Visitors Present:** List of those who signed in is available from Town Clerk

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. Special Town Council Minutes of April 21, 2026
 - i. Motion to approve April 21, 2026, Special Town Council minutes. The motion made by M Amerikaner was seconded by M Bartlett and approved unanimously.
- b. Regular Town Council Minutes of May 13, 2026
 - i. A correction was requested to reflect that proposed edits were substantive changes rather than wording-only changes. Motion to approve May 13, 2026, Regular Town Council minutes approved unanimously (motion by M. Amerikaner, second by M. Bartlett) after correction to p.2 requested by M. Bartlett was accepted.
- c. Special Town Council Meeting of June 8, 2026
 - i. The June 8, 2026, minutes were not yet available.
- d. Amendment to April 8, 2026, Minutes
 - i. M Amerikaner moved and C. Roberts seconded motion to amend the previously approved April 8 minutes concerning the Market House Plaza 90-day pilot item to accurately record the full motion that was made by S. Thomas. The corrected minutes should say that “after extensive discussion, S Thomas moved and M Bartlett seconded a motion to accept L Bicker’s 90-day timeline with inclusion of the HLC and to proceed with the pilot, with or without the grant”. The motion to amend the April 8 minutes was approved unanimously.

4. Public Comment

- a. Maria Allen, owner of Maria's Taqueria spoke on behalf of several business owners and residents regarding the Market House Plaza proposal.
 - i. Concerns included emergency access, delivery truck access, traffic circulation, parking loss, handicap parking, lack of a traffic study, and the need for more input from business owners, residents, West Virginia DOH, emergency responders, and commercial drivers before commencing any pilot. Alternatives suggested included removable bollards for events, non-permanent community features, shade structures, and a micro-park or garden limited to the width of the Market House.
- Residents thanked Council for its service and acknowledged the work involved in public service and the transition to a new Council term.

5. Public Hearing

- a. Second Reading of Planned Unit Development Ordinance Amendment
 - i. Council opened the public hearing for the second reading of the Planned Unit Development ordinance amendment.
 - ii. M Bartlett raised four proposed edits for further review: creating or identifying a public list of adopted town policies; revising open-space requirements to focus on natural open space; making traffic impact analysis a required submission unless waived; and clarifying Planning Commission authority and Town Council review in the PUD process.
 - iii. C Blessing requested that affordable-housing language in the review criteria be strengthened so that affordable housing is not merely discretionary for certain residential developments.
 - iv. Council agreed to seek clarification from the consultant and further review the identified issues before continuing the second reading at a future meeting.

6. Mayoral Proclamations

- a. J Gatz presented proclamations of appreciation recognizing Dr. Mary J.C. Hendricks for her service as President of Shepherd University;
- b. Brian and Darlene Truman for their work organizing the July 4 parade;
- c. and M Amerikaner, L Bicker, S Thomas, and C Blessing for their service to the Town Council and the Shepherdstown community.
- d. J Gatz also thanked all residents serving on boards, commissions, and committees.

7. Ongoing Business

- a. Certification of June 2 Municipal Election Results
 - i. Town Recorder M Amerikaner reported that in the June 2 town election there were no spoiled, challenged, provisional, or mail-in ballots. Council

completed the required canvass had been completed, and the 48-hour period for a recount had passed with no recount request received.

- ii. Motion made by S Thomas and seconded by C Roberts to certify the June 2 Municipal Election results was approved unanimously.
- b. Winning Design – Town Welcome Banner – Announcement/Discussion
 - i. S Thomas announced that Danielle Corsetto’s design was selected for the new town welcome banners.
 - ii. The Town previously approved 24 of the winning banners; printing is expected to take approximately three weeks, with installation anticipated after CATF.
 - iii. Rena Barrender received an honorable mention for her submitted design, and Council discussed finding a way to display or recognize it.
- c. Market House Plaza – Update
 - i. J Gatz reported that public input from blue cards and other sources is being compiled.
 - ii. The Town is continuing discussions about a traffic study, now expected to include German, High, Washington, and Princess Streets.
 - iii. Council clarified that the previously discussed 90-day planning period would include due diligence and public input before any 90-day trial.
- d. Flower Bed Maintenance – Update
 - i. J Gatz reported that an RFP was completed and that the Town has received a proposal related to flower beds on German Street and King Street.
- e. Real Estate Matters: no discussion

8. New Business

- a. Equipment Purchase (Trash Truck) – Discussion
 - i. J Gatz reported that the Town’s trash truck has recurring repair issues and that staff are exploring the purchase of a replacement truck estimated at approximately \$250,000. No action was taken; the item will be reviewed by staff and by the Public Works and Finance Committees before being brought back to Council.
- b. Briefing on Water Line Replacement / Streetscape Planning – Discussion
 - i. W Coe briefed Council on the lead service line replacement project. A 2024 inventory identified 422 galvanized lines that must be replaced by 2037. The estimated cost for service line replacement is approximately \$7.3 million, with about 49% expected from a state grant and the remaining 51% through a low-interest loan.

- ii. Staff are exploring coordination with streetscape planning, including sidewalks, lighting, utility work, drainage, and possible other infrastructure improvements while streets are open.
 - iii. Council and members of the public asked questions about disruption to businesses, timing, customer-owned service lines, sidewalk restoration, tree impacts, Town Run and drainage, state permitting, and whether work could be phased street-by-street to reduce disruption.
- c. Town Council Priorities for Grant Funding – this item was deferred.
- d. Town Council Committee Structure – Discussion
 - i. M Amerikaner and M Bartlett reported that they are working on a draft document to clarify committee structure and processes, including shared document spaces, terms for committee members, chair selection, ad hoc committees, and the roles of Council members and residents.
 - ii. M Amerikaner also suggested that Council consider having the mayor serve as an ad hoc member of committees rather than chairing or serving as a voting member on multiple committees unless State Code requires something different for a particular committee or commission. No discussion or vote was taken.
- e. Age Friendly Shepherdstown 2026 Action Plan – Discussion
 - i. Draft of 2026 Age Friendly Shepherdstown Action Plan presented by Linda Spatig, Chair of the Age Friendly Shepherdstown committee. The plan builds on the prior action plan, updates background and demographic information, carries forward five existing themes, and adds a sixth theme related to health and medical services.
 - ii. The themes include communication, non-vehicular mobility and safety, public transportation, mixed-income and accessible housing, green spaces, and health/medical services. The plan is aligned with the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.
 - iii. C. Roberts moved and M Amerikaner seconded the motion to approve the Age Friendly Shepherdstown 2026 Action Plan. Motion was approved unanimously. Mayor Gatz will provide a letter for inclusion in the final document indicating Town Council approval.
- f. Volunteer Applications
 - i. Age Friendly Shepherdstown: Motion Made by S Thomas and seconded by M Amerikaner to approve Lois Spreen as a member of the Age Friendly Shepherdstown Committee. Motion approved unanimously.

- ii. The Planning Commission application listed on the agenda was not ready for action.
- g. Shepherdstown Community Grant Applications
 - i. Roving Peregrine Theatre Company:
 - 1. J Quigley presented a request for \$1,250 to support the fall season, including rights for “Gutenberg! The Musical!” Council discussed the company’s nonprofit status, community partnerships, and funding. Request had been reviewed by Finance Committee, which recommended approval. Motion made by M Bartlett and seconded by S Thomas to approve the \$1,250 grant request. Motion approved unanimously.
 - ii. Rose Hill Cemetery:
 - 1. A Reese presented a \$2,000 request for tree removal and maintenance to support clearing invasive growth and preparing for ground-penetrating radar work to identify unmarked burials. The Finance Committee had reviewed the request and recommended approval. Motion made by C Roberts and seconded by Marty Amerikaner to approve the \$2,000 grant request. Motion was approved unanimously.
 - iii. 2026 Contemporary American Theater Festival:
 - 1. Amy Wratchford, CATF Managing Director, presented a \$25,000 request for a joint CATF/Shepherdstown digital marketing campaign, a user-generated content campaign, and box office support at the Welcome Center.
 - 2. Council discussed the economic benefit of CATF and related community activities.
 - 3. Request had been reviewed by Finance Committee, and recommended approval of the request. Motion made by S Thomas and seconded by C Roberts to approve the \$25,000 grant request. The motion was approved unanimously.
- h. Donations to the Town
 - i. Council discussed a potential donation of an interpretive sign for Rumsey Park from Doug Perks and Keith Alexander. The item did not make the packet and will be placed on a future agenda, along with information concerning the proposed replacement James Rumsey monument marker.
- i. Town Applications for Grants – Status/Discussion

- i. Council learned of a submitted Safe Streets and Roads for All federal grant application for a comprehensive traffic safety plan covering all modes of transportation. The application amount was discussed as approximately \$400,000; the Town has not yet received notice of award.
 - ii. Council also learned of a submitted application to the Mills Group for pro bono services related to studying reuse options for the tobacco warehouse near the riverfront. Council note that prior studies or materials may be useful if the Town is selected.
 - iii. Council announced that the Chesapeake Bay Trust awarded the Town grant funding for the community compost program, including household compost bins and larger transfer bins. The amount was discussed as approximately \$4,000 to \$5,000.
- j. Special Events Request – Slonaker/Hamilton Wedding at Rumsey Monument
 - i. S Hamilton requested approval to use Rumsey Park for a small wedding ceremony on Monday, June 29, for approximately one and a half hours. S Thomas moved and M Bartlett seconded motion to approve; motion passed unanimously.
 - ii. S Hamilton also reported receiving fraudulent emails using a fake Shepherdstown-related address and requesting a \$2,750 wire payment to process the event request. Council acknowledged the scam concern and discussed the need to be aware of public information being harvested for fraudulent invoices.

9. Town Staff/Department Reports

- a. Department Reports
 - i. Police Department:
 - 1. The department reported a normal month for May, including 430 calls for service, assistance with two threatening calls outside Town limits, and traffic enforcement comprising approximately 25% of the department workload with more than 100 traffic stops.
 - ii. Town Financial Status
 - 1. Finance staff reported that, through April 2026, total revenues were approximately \$2.4 million against a \$2.3 million budget, and total expenses were approximately \$2.1 million against a \$2.3 million budget.
 - 2. The Town is in a strong financial position with an approximate \$365,000 surplus. Council discussed hotel/motel tax timing, under-budget revenue categories, City Hall expense structure, and supplemental property tax timing.

iii. Approval of Town Expenditures

1. Council reviewed expenditures. Questions included whether year-to-date totals could be provided for large vendors and clarification was requested of naming for Shepherdstown Welcome Center versus Experience Shepherdstown. Motion made by M Amerikaner to approve town expenditures. The motion was seconded by M Bartlett and approved unanimously.

10. Reports by Committees, Commissions, and Boards

a. Parks and Recreation Committee

- i. C Roberts reported that the regular parks are operating appropriately.
- ii. Rumsey Park improvements include gravel for two parking spaces, a pad for a bike rack, receipt of the bike rack, removal of forsythia, topsoil and seeding in cleared areas, and installation of a water source.
- iii. Parks and Recreation is also working on replacement interpretive panels for James Rumsey Park and future bridge history panels.

b. Age Friendly Shepherdstown

- i. M Amerikaner noted no additional report beyond the earlier action plan discussion and acknowledged Lois Spreen's upcoming leadership role with Age Friendly Shepherdstown.

c. Grants Committee

- i. No separate report was given beyond the earlier grant application and grant-status discussions.

d. Water Board and Sanitary Board

- i. M Bartlett reported that water and sewer operations continue to run smoothly.
- ii. PFAS testing for biosolids is underway, budget discussions are continuing, a follow-up meeting will address the budget and possibly the capital improvement plan, the Water Board will begin work on updating the water tariff, the Consumer Confidence Report has been posted, and emergency and hazardous chemical inventory forms are being prepared.

11. Adjourn Motion to adjourn made by M Amerikaner. The Motion was seconded by M Bartlett and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.