Shepherdstown Finance Committee Agenda
Wednesday, October 7, 2026
6:30 p.m.
Town Hall – 104 North King Street

Join online by Zoom:
https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86067120451?pwd=fWNLscmYpiOmof8Pknlig4oZKNXa8i.1

Or join by telephone:
Dial: (301) 715-8592
Meeting ID: 860 6712 0451
Passcode: 818383

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes of August 5 and September 2
3. Public Comment
4. Review and Make Recommendations of Expenditure Requests
5. New Financial Management System Implementation Status - Update
6. Prioritizing Development of Policies for the Following Actions:
7. Prioritizing Development of Policies for the Following Actions:
   • Establishing a Target Carryover/Contingency Policy for the General Fund - Discussion
   • Establishing Capital Budgets - Discussion
   • Approving Transfer of Funds in a Current Year Budget (without authorizing additional funds) - Discussion
   • Amending a Current Year Budget - Discussion
   • Approving Expenditures of Budgeted Funds - Discussion
   • Developing and Approving Changes to Current Year Budgets and Capital Budgets - Discussion
   • Developing, Approving, and Submitting Current Year Budget Amendments to the State - Discussion
   • Process and Timeline for Developing the FY28 Budget and FY28 Capital Budget

8. Adjournment

CORPORATION OF SHEPHERDSTOWN

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Date: 8/5/2026
Time: 6:30 PM
Location: Town Hall – 104 N King St.

1. Call to Order

The Finance Committee meeting was called to order.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the **July 1 meeting**.

A few spelling errors and a reference concerning a prior set of minutes were discussed. The Committee clarified that the reference to "page 7" related to the previous minutes and was included as part of the record of the prior discussion.

Motion: A motion was made to approve the July 1 minutes.
Vote: The motion was approved unanimously, with no objections.

3. Public Comments

A community member residing on German Street addressed the Committee regarding the long-term financial and maintenance impacts of grant-funded projects.

The resident expressed concern that grant applications generally focus on community benefits but may not adequately address the Town's future costs after the grant funding ends. The resident referenced the streetscape improvements and expressed concern about the current condition and maintenance of the landscaping and other improvements.

The resident emphasized that the Town should consider:

- Long-term maintenance costs associated with grant-funded projects.
- Who will be responsible for maintaining improvements after grant funding ends.
- Whether the Town has sufficient resources to maintain existing projects before undertaking additional projects.
- The financial impact of accepting future grant-funded improvements.

The Committee thanked the resident for the comments.

4. Community Grant Applications

The Committee reviewed three community grant applications. Discussion was held on the applications that had representatives present.

A. Wall Native Garden / Ecological Restoration Project

Applicant: Jamie Byron

The applicant presented a proposal to establish a low-maintenance native garden and ecological restoration project in the area along the wall near the Town Run and German Street.

Project Overview

The applicant explained that the proposed project would restore an area that previously contained a large sycamore tree and provided a gathering and shaded area for residents and visitors.

The applicant explained that the area is currently covered primarily with landscape fabric and dyed mulch and has limited ecological value. The proposed project would replace the existing landscaping with a native, low-maintenance garden designed to provide ecological benefits while improving the appearance of the area.

The proposed design would include:

- Native wildflowers.
- Ferns and other shade-tolerant plants.
- Low-maintenance ornamental grasses.
- Native shrubs.
- A centrally located medium-sized tree.
- Plants selected to provide visual interest throughout the year.
- A design intended to discourage people from walking through or sitting within the garden.

The applicant stated that the project would be designed to mature over several years and would require the most attention during the initial establishment period.

Funding Request

The applicant estimated that approximately **$3,000** would be needed for the project over approximately two years, with the majority of the expense occurring during the initial planting phase.

The applicant offered to donate personal labor and indicated that additional community volunteers have expressed interest in helping with the installation and maintenance.

Ownership and Maintenance

The Committee discussed the ownership of the property.

The applicant explained that, based on information received from Shepherd University, the property is owned by the **McMurran Trust**, while Shepherd University has a long-term lease and responsibility for maintenance of the area.

Committee members recommended confirming the ownership and obtaining appropriate authorization from the trustees before the project proceeds.

It was discussed that **Chris Luttrell** may be able to assist in identifying or contacting the trustees.

Herbicide Use

The Committee asked about previous herbicide applications in the area.

The applicant stated that the specific chemical used previously was unknown but that the applicant personally intends for the proposed project to be maintained without herbicides. Maintenance would primarily involve hand weeding.

Watering and Establishment

The Committee discussed how the garden would be watered, particularly during periods of drought.

The applicant explained that the location is relatively protected and has access to the Town Run, making spot watering feasible. The applicant also noted that Town water spigots used for flower-bed maintenance may provide another possible water source during periods of significant drought.

The applicant estimated that the garden would require approximately **two years of establishment**, including watering during drought conditions and periodic weeding. By approximately the fourth or fifth year, the garden should reach a more established maintenance phase requiring substantially less intervention.

Long-Term Maintenance

The Committee discussed who would be responsible for long-term maintenance.

The applicant stated that:

- Community members have volunteered to assist.
- Members of the local Garden Club have expressed interest.
- The Town Run Watershed group has indicated that it could assist with recruiting and organizing volunteers but does not wish to serve as the lead organization for the project.
- A small group of volunteers could potentially conduct periodic maintenance and weeding after the garden becomes established.

The Committee emphasized the importance of identifying a sustainable maintenance arrangement before approving funding.

Safety Concerns

The Committee discussed safety concerns associated with the area, particularly the drop-off near the Town Run and the possibility of children or others accessing the area.

The applicant explained that the garden would be designed without pathways or open areas that would encourage people to enter the planting area.

The Committee also discussed a separate safety concern involving the wall and drop-off on the opposite side of the Town Run. The possibility of installing a fence or other safety barrier was discussed.

Coordination with Other Town Landscaping

The Committee discussed coordination between this project and the Town's existing landscaping projects.

The applicant stated that **James Dillon** has offered to provide design consultation on the native garden project on a pro bono basis. Committee members noted that Mr. Dillon is also involved in the Town's flower-bed projects and that coordination could help create a complementary landscaping approach throughout the Town.

The possibility of incorporating educational signage explaining native plants and ecological restoration was also discussed.

Project Timeline

The applicant explained that the project is likely to be installed primarily in **spring 2027**, rather than fall 2026, because additional time is needed to source native plants from wholesale nurseries.

The anticipated timeline includes:

- **Fall/Winter 2026:** Site preparation, removal of landscape fabric, possible soil preparation, design refinement, and plant sourcing.
- **Winter 2026/2027:** Ordering plants and materials.
- **Spring 2027:** Primary planting and installation.
- **Summer 2027:** Watering, monitoring, and maintenance.
- **Fall 2027:** Potential replacement planting based on first-year results.
- **2028:** Continued establishment and evaluation.

The applicant indicated that a group of approximately six volunteers could complete the initial planting in several days.

Committee Action

The Finance Committee will consider the application and make a recommendation to the **Town Council** at its upcoming meeting.

The applicant was encouraged to attend the Town Council meeting in case Council members have additional questions.

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5. Boots on the Ground Youth Leadership Academy

The Committee noted that no representative was present for the **Boots on the Ground Youth Leadership Academy** application.

No substantive discussion or recommendation was made.

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6. Shepherdstown Chess Club Grant Application

Presenter: Anya [Last Name]

The Committee reviewed the Shepherdstown Chess Club's request for support for a larger chess tournament in Shepherdstown.

The presenter explained that she is a certified tournament director and that the Club is interested in hosting a **Grand Prix chess tournament** in Shepherdstown.

Tournament Overview

The proposed tournament would:

- Be a nationally rated event.
- Potentially attract players from throughout West Virginia and surrounding states.
- Include approximately five rounds.
- Require games of approximately two hours each.
- Require a facility capable of accommodating players for an extended period.
- Potentially attract visitors who would stay in Shepherdstown and patronize local restaurants and businesses.

The Club has previously hosted approximately five tournaments in Shepherdstown.

Potential Locations

Potential venues discussed included:

- Shepherd University.
- The War Memorial Building.
- The Town Train Station.
- The Wellness Center.

The Train Station was identified as a possible option because of its size and available parking. The Committee recommended confirming the availability of tables, chairs, and other necessary facilities.

Timing

The Club is considering holding the tournament in **November or December 2026**, although scheduling will need to account for venue availability, Shepherd University's academic calendar, and potential winter weather.

The presenter noted that a previous January tournament was affected by snow, resulting in some players cancelling their attendance.

Use of Grant Funds

The presenter explained that grant funding would primarily be used for:

- Facility rental.
- A required guaranteed prize fund of approximately **$300**.
- National chess organization fees.
- Fees for submitting nationally rated games.
- Required publications/materials.
- Email marketing and tournament advertising.

The Club estimated approximately **$30** for email marketing to approximately 600 active chess players within a 34-mile radius. A larger marketing radius may also be considered.

Community Benefits

The Committee discussed the potential economic and community benefits of the event, including:

- Bringing visitors into Shepherdstown.
- Increasing local restaurant and business activity.
- Providing an opportunity for local youth and adults to participate.
- Increasing chess opportunities for Shepherd University students and local residents.

The Club also provides free or reduced-cost memberships to Shepherd University students in certain circumstances.

Additional Discussion

The Committee discussed coordinating with other regional chess clubs and potentially having an additional certified tournament director available for the event.

The presenter also indicated that the Club could work with the Town on advertising the event.

The Committee thanked the presenter for the information.

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7. FY 2028 Budget Planning

The Committee discussed beginning the **FY 2028 budget process earlier** than in prior years.

The goal is to begin budget preparation by **late October or early November** rather than waiting until later in the fiscal year.

Budget Planning Goals

The Committee discussed creating a more comprehensive and consistent budget process that would require each department to identify:

- Operating expenses.
- Major purchases.

- Capital projects.
- Capital equipment.
- Anticipated replacements.
- Funding sources.
- Expected revenues.
- Grant-funded projects.
- Other significant financial commitments.

The Committee discussed using a consistent template for all departments.

Capital Purchases and Projects

The Committee agreed that additional time should be provided for reviewing capital requests.

Departments would be expected to provide explanations for major purchases, including:

- Why the item is needed.
- Whether it is a replacement or a new purchase.
- The expected cost.
- The anticipated useful life.
- The proposed funding source.

The Committee discussed the importance of better documenting depreciation assumptions and replacement schedules.

FY 2028 Capital Reserve

The Committee discussed establishing an **internal Capital Projects Reserve** for the Corporation.

The purpose would be to set aside funds for future major capital expenditures rather than having to identify funding each time a major purchase or project arises.

Potential uses could include:

- Major equipment purchases.
- Vehicle replacements.
- HVAC replacements.
- Infrastructure projects.
- Other significant capital expenditures.

The Committee discussed establishing a regular funding mechanism, potentially through:

- A fixed monthly amount; or
- A percentage of monthly revenue.

The Committee also discussed determining what funds are already available and how existing funds might be allocated toward the reserve.

It was clarified that the reserve would be an **internal accounting designation rather than legally restricted funds**. The Town would retain the ability to move funds when necessary, subject to appropriate financial controls.

The Committee discussed establishing strong internal controls around the use of the reserve to prevent funds from being routinely redirected for unrelated purposes.

Accounting System

The Committee discussed the implementation of the new financial system and noted that the major implementation activities are anticipated to occur in the spring or summer.

Beginning the FY 2028 budget process early will allow the Town to better manage the overlap between:

- Budget preparation.
- Financial system implementation.
- Public education concerning the new system.
- Year-end accounting activities.

Action

The Committee intends to present a **resolution to the Town Council** addressing the establishment of the Capital Projects Reserve and the process for beginning FY 2028 budget planning earlier.

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8. Grant Funding and Budget Integration

The Committee discussed how current and anticipated grants should be incorporated into the Town's budget.

The Committee noted that the Town has several grant applications either pending or in development, including a potential larger grant opportunity of approximately **$100,000** and larger infrastructure projects that could potentially involve millions of dollars in grant funding.

Grant Revenue and Expenses

The Committee discussed the difficulty of accurately budgeting grants because:

- Grants are not guaranteed.
- Some grants require the Town to provide matching funds.
- Some grants reimburse expenses only after a project is completed.
- Reimbursement may occur several months after the expense.
- Grant-funded projects may cross fiscal years.

The Committee agreed that grant revenue and related expenses need to be considered carefully during the annual budget process.

Grant Probability

The Committee discussed developing a reasonable methodology for estimating the probability of receiving grant funding.

Members noted that grant applicants and project sponsors may naturally have optimistic expectations concerning grant awards. Therefore, the Finance Committee should use an independent and more conservative assessment when incorporating anticipated grant revenue into the budget.

The Committee discussed considering:

- Historical success rates.
- The status of each grant application.
- The funding source.
- Matching requirements.
- The expected timing of reimbursement.
- The probability of award.
- The anticipated project expense.

The Committee agreed that additional work is needed to establish a consistent process.

Grant-Writing Support

The Committee noted that the Town is planning to hire outside assistance for grant writing and development, with an initial goal of pursuing approximately **$1 million in grant funding during the first year**.

The Committee also noted that larger infrastructure projects could involve approximately **$7 million** in potential project costs, with a significant portion potentially funded through grants.

Action Item

Staff will continue developing a process for estimating anticipated grant revenue and associated expenses.

The topic will be placed on the agenda for a future Finance Committee meeting, with the goal of developing a clearer grant-budgeting process.

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9. Other Business

The Committee briefly discussed the Town's ongoing financial and investment matters.

No additional substantive action was taken.

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10. Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: To adjourn.
Time: 7:35 p.m.
Vote: Approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

SHEPHERDSTOWN FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

September 02, 2026 – 6:30 P.M.

Town Hall – 104 North King Street

1. **Call to Order & Roll Call 6:30 pm**
2. **Attendance**
    a. Attendance: James Gatz (J Gatz), Marcy Bartlett (M Bartlett), Harriet Pearson (H Pearson)
    b. Staff/Guests Present: Maged Kirollos (M Kirollos)
    c. Errors noted in previous attendance logs: Correction requested regarding spelling of Harriet's name on past documentation.
3. **Approval of Minutes**
    a. August 5th Minutes: Missing from the meeting packet; to be presented at next month's meeting.
    b. August 20th Minutes: Reviewed with corrections:
        i. Correction of Harriet's name spelling.
        ii. Addition of explicit motion and second notation when returning from Executive Session.
    c. Action:
        i. Motion: Approved the August 20th meeting minutes subject to the noted corrections.
        ii. Outcome: Motion carried unanimously.
4. **Grant Application Reviews**
    a. Boots on the Ground Youth Leadership Academy (Multicultural Festival)
        i. Amount Requested: $2,500
        ii. Discussion Points:
            1. Application felt incomplete; lacks detailed project descriptions, event dates, and an expectation of external fundraising.
            2. Clarified that while the organization noted intent to offset costs via fundraising, the current request appears to ask the town to cover the majority of initial costs.
            3. Standard committee practice/expectation established: Applicants or staff representatives should be present at meetings to present applications and answer questions.
        iii. Action/Follow-up:
            1. Application deferred/tabled.
            2. Staff/Committee to gather more data, contact the applicant, and request representation at an upcoming meeting.
    b. Constitution Day Parade
        i. Amount Requested: Up to $1,000 (Estimated food expenses: $500; reimbursement for prior flyer/sign costs, postage, and petty expenditures).

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ii. Discussion Points:
    1. Recognized as a positive civic engagement event based on successful participation in previous years.
    2. Noted that any unspent funds from the grant will be returned, as done previously.
iii. Action:
    1. Motion: M Bartlett Recommend approval of the $1,000 grant request. H Pearson Seconded.
    2. Outcome: Motion passed unanimously.
    3. Recommendation: Encourage applicant representation at the Town Council meeting.

5. Policy Discussion: Community Grant Program & Process Improvement

a. Evaluation Criteria: Noted that formal criteria exist and should be consistently applied to grant evaluations going forward.
b. Program Structure Issues Identified:
    i. Current process handles requests on a ad-hoc, month-by-month basis, forcing on-the-spot decisions in front of applicants.
    ii. Total available grant budget line-item pool remains unclear to committee members during evaluation turns.
c. Proposed Process Improvements:
    i. Establish set grant cycles (e.g., quarterly or open period calls for applications with fixed submission deadlines) rather than ongoing ad-hoc submissions.
    ii. Establish a clear total funding budget pool and maximum award caps per application.
    iii. Committee to evaluate all submitted applications in totality against set criteria before issuing recommendations to Town Council.

6. Review of Capital & Expenditure Requests

a. Water Board & Sanitary Sewer Board Capital Equipment Requests
    i. Items Requested: Excavator (Sewer), Lift/Platforms (Wastewater), and related capital equipment approved previously by the Water and Sanitary Sewer Boards.
    ii. Governance & Oversight Discussion:
        1. Questions raised over whether utility capital requests need full Finance Committee and Town Council approval or if Water/Sewer Board approvals suffice.
        2. Consensus reached that Town Council retains ultimate financial liability and oversight responsibility, requiring Council/Finance oversight across all town entities (Water, Sanitary Sewer, Parks, Tree Commission, etc.).
        3. Committee requested full budget documentation packets (Town Hall, Water, and Sanitary Sewer budgets) to properly evaluate cross-departmental debt levels and reserve balances.

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iii. Follow-up: Consult town legal counsel (Corey/Roy Shingleton) and administrative leadership regarding proper statutory governance procedures and approval workflows for utility budgets and rate increases.

b. Departmental Expenditure Oversight
    i. Discussion:
        1. Reviewed procedure for major budgeted capital purchases (e.g., garbage truck, police enforcement equipment).
        2. Clarified distinction between daily operational spend authority of department managers vs. major capital line-item execution.
        3. Highlighted the need for clearer transparency and formal project plan reviews before departments commit substantial funds across all town committees (e.g., Parks Commission, Tree Commission).

7. Next Steps & Action Items

a. Minutes: Correct August 20th minutes spelling/Executive Session entries; obtain and present missing August 5th minutes for the next meeting.
b. Boots on the Ground Grant: Staff/Committee to contact applicant for additional details and invite them to present at the next meeting.
c. Budget Documentation: Ensure members receive comprehensive budget documentation covering Town General Fund, Water, and Sanitary Sewer funds ahead of upcoming review sessions.
d. Legal Counsel Consultation: Clarify advisory vs. decision-making roles regarding Water/Sewer board approvals with the town attorney.

8. Motion to move into an executive session under West Virginia law (West Virginia Code § 6-9A-4),

a. M Bartlett moved for an executive session; H Pearson seconded.

9. Adjournment

a. H Pearson moved to adjourn; M Bartlett seconded.
b. Motion to adjourn was unanimous.
c. The meeting adjourned at 9 pm.

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