

SHEPHERDSTOWN SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 26, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

Town Hall – 104 North King Street and via Zoom

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:37 p.m. All members of Town Council were present. There were no public comments.

2. Attendance

Members Present: James Gatz (Gatz), Marcy Bartlett (Bartlett), Cheryl Roberts (Roberts), Ashleigh Sanders (Sanders), and Jim Auxer (Auxer) — all in person; Joe Yates (Yates) and Harriet Pearson (Pearson) — via Zoom.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Gino Sisco (Sisco), Maged Kirollos (Kirollos), Amy Boyd (Boyd), Karl Musser (Musser), Hunter Wetzel (Wetzel).

Visitors Present: List of those who signed in is available from the Town Clerk. There were no visitors who spoke.

3. FY27 Budget Revision #1

Mayor Gatz introduced the resolution authorizing FY2027 Budget Amendment #1, which incorporates a table of proposed expenditures for both new and ongoing projects, and asked for a motion to consider it. Bartlett moved, Roberts seconded. Finance Director Kirollos then presented the items in the table by category for discussion and questions:

Traffic Enforcement/Pedestrian Safety: includes up to \$25,000 for traffic-calming equipment; Council clarified the equipment will be purchased, not rented, and will be solar powered. The “See Me” flag pedestrian safety system, still under evaluation, was noted to contain a clerical error in the table (the second column should match the first column which noted that the expense is \$3,251), which Council agreed to correct by hand. The increased traffic enforcement line adds \$10,000 funding for the first quarter of the fiscal year; it was clarified this funding may be used for overtime if needed.

Downtown Enhancements: includes \$20,000 for holiday decorations (October–December) and a landscaping contract for which the Town has already paid \$11,000 in FY26, with this amendment adding \$22,000 more for a total of \$33,000.

Market House Plaza Pilot: is covered mostly by grant funding, with approximately \$5,000 in additional Town funds. This category also includes a \$33,000 traffic and parking study, which began two weeks earlier using traffic cameras and will continue through the pilot period, with a final report expected in early December. The table's description in the first column was corrected to read “closing King St.”

Professional services: This category includes funding for planning related to future use of the Shepherdstown Elementary School property; grant development and advocacy; an audit of, and development of procedures for, the Town's management of Town-owned property; and planning and zoning administration.

In the category of ongoing projects, the Council also discussed funding for a historic preservation intern, town property management and maintenance, and procurement of a new trash truck.

The Mayor described a tentative item not included in the resolution: a property owner has offered a donated building that could be used as office space for Public Works employees. Relocating and preparing the building, including site preparation and wiring, is estimated at approximately \$80,000; the building is a modular structure built in the early 2000s, and only a limited number of providers can perform the move. The Mayor raised this item because a decision on whether to accept the offer is time-sensitive; no vote was taken.

Council also discussed the nature of the budget amendment process generally, with several members noting the need to clarify terminology and provide an annualized view of the budget going forward. It was also discussed that the Finance Committee will develop recommendations for allocating the Town's general funds consistent with state-recommended best practices.

Roberts moved, Auxer seconded, to increase the trash truck line to \$300,000; motion passed, all ayes.

Pearson moved, Yates seconded, approval of the amended budget resolution, including the trash truck increase and the clerical corrections noted during discussion. Motion passed, 6 to 1, with Bartlett opposed.

4. Arrangement to Serve as Recipient of CATF Grant – Update

Musser presented an update on the Town's role serving as the official recipient and pass-through for a \$45,500 Survey & Planning Grant from the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office, awarded on a 70/30 matching basis to the Shepherdstown Historic Landmarks Commission to support the Contemporary American Theater Festival's (CATF) evaluation of, and planning to adapt, the former Christ Reformed United Church of Christ building into a theater space. Musser is the Town's point of contact, and Amy Wratchford, CATF's Managing Director, will serve as Project Coordinator. Town Hall is working with legal counsel to finalize the arrangement. This item was for informational update only; no vote was needed or taken.

5. Town Council Planning Session – Update

Boyd reported that she is seeking meeting space and finalizing dates for a planning session, which is proposed to run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

6. Planning for Purchase of Shepherdstown Elementary School Property

Bartlett moved, Roberts seconded, to enter executive session under the exception for real estate matters. Motion passed, all ayes. Auxer moved, Sanders seconded, to return from executive session. No action was taken in open session.

7. Adjournment

Bartlett moved, Roberts seconded, to adjourn the meeting; all voted aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Prepared and respectfully submitted by Harriet Pearson, Recorder