

Minutes

The Town Commissioners of Barnesville

May 17, 2021, 7:30PM

Meeting was held virtually due to Covid-19 restrictions

Call to Order

19 residents and all 3 commissioners present

Approval of Minutes from April

Reports:

Financial Report:

The Fiscal Year 2022 Budget meeting will be held on June 7th at 7pm.

Funds from the American Rescue Plan will be disbursed in the next several months. There is an ongoing discussion with no final guidance from the US Treasury on what the funds may be used for by municipalities. Implementing regulations are expected soon.

Beautification

The Beautification committee and the Monocacy Garden Club weeded and mulched the flower beds at Town Hall and Town Signs as well as the garden at the entrance to the Train Station.

Sustainable Barnesville

The committee is on summer recess and will begin meeting again in the Fall. Sustainable Maryland is offering summer training programs to those interested.

Fall initiatives of Sustainable Barnesville included presentations on converting large lawns to sustainable plants, dark sky initiative, and nature walks.

Plant an Extra Row project is encouraging gardeners to plant extra vegetable or fruit plants to give produce back to the community. The Locals market and WUMCO in Poolesville are accepting donated produce.

Board of Appeals

Received a Special Exception application from Robin Snider for Rustic Routes Coffee Roasting business. The Public Hearing was held on May 4, 2021 On-line. The Deliberation meeting was held on May 27th On-line. The Board approved the Special Exception and a written opinion with conditions will be issued.

Capital Improvements

Sidewalks

State and County are working on finalizing the plans for a sidewalk to the post office from the corner of Barnesville and Beallsville Roads. The Tolbert family has indicated their willingness to donate the land for the sidewalks. The county will fund the construction of the sidewalks and the town will be responsible for maintenance.

Stormwater

A final Report from the contractor for the DNR, EPA, and Chesapeake Bay Trust was submitted as a condition of the concept plan grant received. The concept plan received includes recommendations for modifications at the church parking lot and along Barnesville and West Harris Roads. The county would be responsible for work done along the roads. Grants may be available for the church to apply for to install rain gardens. The Town Engineer can work with the county in the engineering and implementation stage.

Park

Sustainable Barnesville and the Beautification committee plan to weed and water throughout the growing season. If residents have plants that they no longer wish in their flower beds, they may contact the committee for possible donation to the park. The blank areas near the patio will have five additional redbuds planted in the Fall, after the cicadas and summer season. Additional discussion took place regarding a fence along Beallsville Road or additional plantings. After the sidewalks are installed, there will be further discussion and planning for more natural plantings. Although additional funds will accumulate over time for the town as part of Project Open Space, the Town may want to look for other funding sources for near-term expansion projects. The initial design goal for the park was an open meadow-like greenspace. There are several additional phases that the town can pursue if funding is identified.

The Town is ready to close out the grant with Project Open Space. Once all the payments to the contractor are cleared, then the final submission for reimbursement to the granting agency will be sent. Funding is expected 30-60 days after submission.

Traffic Calming

In April, 61 citations were issued during 6 patrols. Beallsville Rd continues to have the fastest traffic. Bicycle patrol stops have been suspended since November, and this practice will continue unless increased bicycle traffic and violations are noted during patrols. The speed cameras will not likely generate sufficient revenue for Barnesville to receive payment this year. Jim Brown offered to follow up with the county to obtain clarification about the revenue and whether the town can have more cameras (even if mobile). There was discussion about whether the American Rescue Plan funds can replace the speed camera revenue in the town's budget and expenditures for safety. The Commissioners will investigate this option as it would provide the most flexibility for the use of the ARP funds.

Planning and Zoning

The committee is on summer recess until meetings resume in Fall. The commissioners will discuss the priority status of ZTAs in the revised master plan. The Town Attorney may be consulted to draft any ZTAs required.

The committee received one building permit for approval.

Community Events

Holly thanked the recent Speakers for their Zoom presentations in May. The Growing Up in Barnesville presentation was very popular with 34 attendees logged in.

Welcome packets are available at Town Hall for newer residents. There may be a Welcome Event in the future.

Town Hall

Use of Town Hall

A revised usage agreement for Town Hall was approved. The Commissioners will always have the option to amend the usage agreement in the future if necessary or desirable.

In the future, if large groups are renting Town Hall, it may be advisable to collect a fee that can be provided to Barnesville Baptist Church for the renter's use of their lot; however, there was no decision to require a fee for the types of small functions that have been held to date.

Communication

The Tidbit was published at the end of April. Holly Larisch is willing to continue working on the Tidbit; if anyone wishes to contribute a story or article, please let Holly know. The Commissioners expressed their appreciation for her willingness to continue producing this valuable resource for the town.

New Business

A motion was passed to appoint Holly Larisch as Barnesville's representative to the Maryland Municipal League-Montgomery County in order for her to remain the secretary for the organization. They appreciate the work she does in this role and had been unable to find a replacement. The Town will benefit from receiving prompt notice of topics being addressed by other municipalities.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was approved.