

Town of Barnesville
Minutes of Town Meeting
March 15, 2021

7:32pm Meeting Called to Order
Zoom meeting, until otherwise directed by the county

Approval of the Minutes

Financial Report

Reimbursable expenses category includes contractors doing work on park or stormwater where grant money is funding.

Tax revenue is much greater than expected. The Town is monitoring this category for FY 22 property tax and income tax projections.

Grounds maintenance currently exceeds budget due to entrance signs, snow plowing, and increased lawn care for park.

The Audit category reflects the annual expense and the audit is completed during the late summer.

The Town may potentially be receiving funds under the American Recovery Act, but there will be guidelines on approved expenses. The current expense categories listed in the Act are not for services that the town of Barnesville provides.

Beautification

March 24th Sustainable Barnesville Speaker Series: Erica Smith, Beginning Vegetable Gardening.

April 15th Monocacy Garden Club will take care of flower beds around the town entrance signs and Town Hall.

April 17th Lions Club and Barnesville Beautification committee will meet at St. Mary's to pick up trash along Barnesville Road. Snacks will be provided.

Anne Sturm and her team have installed 3 bluebird boxes at the park and a purple martin box near the fence line on the neighboring property.

Board of Appeals

There still is an open position for a third member.

Special Exception application expected for the new Coffee Roasting business. It is unclear if this will be a mail-order only operation, or if it will be open to customers on select weekends.

Concerns were raised if coffee clients would use the park nearby and leave trash.

Capital Improvements

Sidewalks

County revised drawing plans and sent to state for approval

Plan includes: more formalized crosswalks, walkway hugs the street line then dips inland following the topography contour, removal of weedy shrubs & trees, connects the Post office Parking lot to the park and to the Hilton Funeral Home lot.

Concern raised that the crosswalks may encourage parking at private residences near the park. Signage may be needed to direct traffic for parking areas.

Stormwater

St. Mary's Church commented on the Preliminary Plan and CPJ will need to modify plans to accommodate. County will be responsible for a significant portion of the work, according to the town engineer.

Storm water drainage near Town Hall. Budget for \$8,000 to address the problem. Town engineer suggested landscape/grade and drain piping changes. Still have the problem at Carol Perlmeter's property and Glenn Beagle's property.

Park

The tables were assembled by William Price and the Parsley family and installed. The contractor will put in the wildflower beds at the south end as proposed. Community Suggestion to create a walkway from the green lawn area through the flower beds. There currently is no access to the patio from the lawn unless you walk to the street access.

Traffic Report

There were 44 tickets issued in February. Currently suspending bicycle violations until later in the year. Complete blow-throughs of the stop signs and speeding, especially on Beallsville Road, are the greatest violations. As the quarantine restrictions lift, additional patrols on weeknight rush-hour were suggested. For now, the same number per month of patrols will continue.

Planning and Zoning

Meeting was held in February. Town attorney sent language for the approval of the master plan. The 90 day clock started on March 13th, the day of the Planning Board meeting. The Public Hearing through the Town Commissioners will be held on March 29th at 7pm. After the Public Hearing, the commissioners will hold a vote to approve and enact the Master Plan. If the proposal is adopted, then there may need to be code or ordinance changes.

Community Events

The community outreach committee met on March 8th. Dalis will host through Zoom a Spring Craft event on April 20th at 4pm. Cherry and Carol are putting together a welcome packet for new residents and will include an area phonebook, well and septic information, a small bag, as well as other items. Entries for the Barnesville Area Cookbook are requested and especially those that may have a local or historic aspect. The committee is working with Abby and Veronica to brainstorm for additional children's events for the warmer months ahead. The Growing up in Barnesville speaker series will be arranged by decade and held via Zoom.

Town Hall

Town Hall is currently closed to the public due to the pandemic. The status about reopening will depend upon guidance from the county and state. Once the building is re-opened for events, additional cleaning supplies may need to be purchased, or an additional cleaning fee charged.

The cleaning service currently cleans on alternate Mondays and may not be available after events. Additional hand sanitizer stations and signs for capacity limits and mask wearing may need to be purchased and added.

Communications

The next issue of the Tidbit is expected in April.

New Business

All three Commissioner terms will expire in May. Only one of the current commissioners is running for re-election and interested candidates are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk to put their name in nomination so that all three positions can be filled in the May 3 election. The format of the election of in-person, mail-in, or combination will be determined and notification sent out in mid-April. Community Member Suggestion would be a list of volunteer opportunities in Barnesville and a brief job description for these. This would be helpful for newer residents to Barnesville and for those looking to volunteer.

Role of the County vs. the Town in enforcing Zoning and Health ordinances. How should complaints about properties be handled? The county is limited by the access granted by the property owner to determine if a violation is taking place. The county has been responsive to community complaints around a property on Old Hundred Rd. that appears to have a commercial vehicle repair business. Commissioner Holly Larisch has been communicating with the county regarding the situation. It is difficult to obtain evidence for enforcement and citations when "No trespassing" is posted. The Town Ordinance does include citation fines of \$200 for the first offense and \$200 per day until the violation is resolved. Until substantiated evidence is obtained, no citations are issued.

Thrive Montgomery 2050. This is an update to the county's general plan through the County Planning Board. The Board prepared a draft and held a public hearing, however the plan has had significant revisions since then and the revised full plan has not been published and no additional public hearing has taken place. However, the board is preparing to vote to adopt the plan. This is outside of the normal process for preparing and adopting a revised general plan and has bypassed community input. The Thrive Montgomery 2050 plan dismisses the unique and historic nature of the Agricultural Reserve. The Montgomery Countryside Alliance (MCA) and the Sugarloaf Citizens Association (SCA) met to discuss Thrive Montgomery 2050. Several municipalities and groups are sending letters of complaint to the County Planning Board regarding the process and requesting a public hearing on the full revised plan prior to its adoption. After discussion with Jim Brown based on his conversations with MCA and SCA, the Commissioners voted to sign on to the letter drafted by several municipalities and community groups.

Mildred Callear recorded a video presentation on how Municipal Government Works for the 4th grade class at Monocacy Elementary as part of an essay contest for the grade.

Adjourned at 8:51pm.