

Minutes

The Town Commissioners of Barnesville

January 6, 2020, 7:30PM

Barnesville Town Hall

Call to Order

10 residents and all 3 commissioners present

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes—November 2019 minutes approved and will be on website

Reports:

Financial Report-

Tax Revenue is starting to come in for November 2019 and budget is on target for revenue

The greatest expense recently is the Streethawk service. They stopped 11 people within one month for not stopping at the posted signs in Barnesville.

Beautification-

January 23rd will have a presentation on Well and Septic systems.

Sustainable Barnesville-

The free meditation at town hall has been well attended. The next sessions will be January 31 and February 28.

Upcoming talks: Well and Septic (Jan. 23rd). Gardening (Spring), Community Hike (Feb. or Mar.)

Board of Appeals

Nothing to Report

Capital Improvements

Maryland State Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo visited Barnesville on December 20. He was given a tour of the new park, main intersection, and areas in need of crosswalks and sidewalks. The Commissioners, Planning Commission and residents discussed safety for pedestrians, traffic speed and volume and crowded conditions at the MARC station parking lot. The Commissioners explained the need for sidewalk access to the Post Office and the fact that the County had originally agreed to construct the sidewalk but is now indicating that there are budget concerns and that the State Highway Administration should be responsible for sidewalks on a state highway. MARC indicated support for traffic cameras near the Station. One idea to improve parking crowding at the Station is to connect the Poolesville Ride-On bus service to the Barnesville MARC station for morning and evening rush hour. Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo noted that funding for issues of this type is limited but pledged to work with the Town as much as possible.

Storm water issues at West Harris—Chesapeake Bay Trust visited December 10 to see the runoff area of concern that starts above West Harris and Barnesville Road and accelerates through the large drainage pipe, causing extensive damage to West Harris Road and creek

overflow that has damaged residents' property. There is a grant that could help provide initial funding, with a deadline of March 19th. The idea behind the grant would be to identify solutions such as rain gardens and permeable pavement that might help with water run-off from St. Mary's and Barnesville Road. A part of the grant process is community engagement.

Streetlights—Streetlights—Due to a credit of approximately \$25,000 from Potomac Edison, the town is not currently paying for streetlights. The town had been overcharged for many years, which was discovered by the Commissioners recently. The town attorney will ask for a cash-out payment instead of reduction in the monthly bill. There is still the community concern to be dark sky compliant, and there is a concern about the harshness of LED street lights, so the town will take the LED conversion project slowly.

Park Development

There was a Public Forum with the Design Consultant on Jan. 11 following the Planning Commission meeting.

Traffic Calming

Street Hawk is continuing to patrol twice per week. They have continued to patrol for speed and for stop sign compliance

Planning and Zoning

Permits New driveway has been installed for currently undeveloped parcel on Beallsville Road; the state inspector moved it 8 feet to the south. The Planning Commission had a discussion with the owner regarding the building permit requirements. Although the Pole Barn Accessory Building is being built prior to construction of the primary residence, the permit application needs to show all of the structures that will be built on the property. The owner will submit the application once completed.

Commissioners discussed the current top rate of \$100 for a building permit regardless of complexity or whether it involves new construction or remodeling of an existing home with little change to the footprint from a zoning perspective. The concern is that the town may need to retain a planning engineer, attorney or other expert to advise the Planning Commission and Commissioners on technical or legal matters and there is no current policy in place to reimburse the Town for these costs. Commissioners expressed their view that the Town should not be expected to bear the costs related to an individual resident's application. It was noted that in addition to an administrative fee for building permits, reimbursement mechanisms are standard in most jurisdictions. Resolution No. 2020-1 was proposed to authorize the Commissioners to revise building permit fees from time to time and to amend the building permit form to include a notice to applicants that the Town may, in its discretion, seek to recover additional costs from the applicant. A Motion to adopt the resolution was made and seconded and the Resolution 2020-1 was unanimously approved. The resolution is attached to the minutes.

Events

Past events in November and December were well-attended—Steve Vogel’s book talk, Bonnie Brown’s story time, and the holiday party

Town Hall

The septic storage tank was pumped and will need to be pumped approximately every 6 months as the town hall is used more frequently. The town hall does not have a septic field and the storage tank needs pumped periodically.

Communications

Commissioner Holly Larisch has been preparing the next edition of the Tidbit Newsletter.

New Business

Suggestion was made for the town to send notifications to the Monocle for announcement of town events.

The Tolbert family found an official record book for the Town of Barnesville from 1888-1947. A representative from the State Archives will examine it. The first ordinance in the records concerned people driving recklessly through town.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16pm