



Stephens City Newsletter

Volume 33 Issue 1

January and February 2014

The Town Newsletter is published by the Town Government of Stephens City for its citizens; to inform, to apprise and to clarify the issues and undertakings before the Town Government. Citizen feedback is encouraged. Contact the Town Office at 1033 Locust Street weekdays between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:00 pm or by mail: PO Box 250, Stephens City, VA 22655

Phone: 869-3087

Fax: 869-6166

Police: 868-1012

Website:

www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov

From the Mayor's Office

At the last Council meeting, Councilman James Harter tendered his resignation effective the end of December since he has bought a home outside of Stephens City. I want to express a special "thank you" to Jim for his dedication and service to the Town and its citizens. We wish him the very best in the future.

As the year comes to a close, it is important that we take a look at the accomplishments of the past year. A project that I feel is going to be extremely important to the Town in the future is the school site. Since we bought it from the county, considerable effort has been spent to clean up the site and stabilize the buildings. A study has been made to determine how to make it a useable site in the future. The Newtown Festival used the school during our celebration this past year.

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The Christmas on the Commons was another huge success. The Town would like to thank the Stephens City Business Association for making this event possible. It was great having Aylor Band performing a Christmas concert. Between the decorating of ornaments, getting some fresh baked goodies, the warming by the fire, and with the magic of a certain special guest, a good time was had by all. We can't wait until the 7th annual event next year!

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Newtown Heritage Festival

presents:

Calendars of Quilts

\$5.00 each

Get yours while supplies last at surrounding businesses and the

Town Office



SNOW REMOVAL

It's hard to tell what lies ahead for this winter. We have already had two significant snow events but only time will tell. With that in mind, we thought it might be a good time again to remind all citizens about their responsibilities with regard to snow removal.

Property owners or occupants must clear all public sidewalks of snow where sidewalks front their property. This must be done within 6 hours after snow has ceased to fall or no later than noon the next day if snowfall stops overnight. Please contact the Town Office if you have any questions.

The Town is also suggesting that residents who are willing to volunteer to "adopt" a neighborhood fire hydrant for snow removal. If you are interested in helping in this venture, please contact the Town Office or e-mail us to let us know which hydrant you are willing to keep clear in snow related events. Together we can make a difference.



BUSINESS LICENSES

Business licenses are to be renewed after January 1, 2014 through March 1, 2014. Renewal forms will be mailed to existing license holders. The cost of the business license is based on gross receipts or a minimum of \$15. **Please be sure to have your gross receipt records** available when applying for your license. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please call our office at 869-3087. Business and equipment taxes must be paid in full prior to licenses being renewed.

Town Clerk,
Dianne L. MacMillan



Frozen Water Lines

Most of the time the first place to check for a frozen water line is an exposed drafty area beneath or within your home or business. Find and be aware of where the cutoff valve is within your home. **Do not open a water meter box** unless you have contacted the Town. Town water meters are insulated and not prone to freezing.

If you have a problem with frozen water lines, during office hours you may call 540-869-3087; after hours contact 540-662-6162.



Recycled Christmas Trees will be picked up on Monday, December 30th and Tuesday, January 7th

From all of the Town Council, Appointed Officials and Staff of Stephens City, we wish you and yours a joyous and prosperous New



Water and Sewer Billing

Water and sewer bills for the bi-monthly billing end **Tuesday, December 31, 2013** and are due upon receipt.

After **Tuesday, February 4, 2014** a **10% penalty** will be added. On **Tuesday, February 11, 2014** service will be discontinued for delinquency. An administrative fee of **\$25** plus the full amount of the bill must be paid before service can be restored.

Just a reminder that for your convenience a night drop is available at the Town Office for dropping off check or money order payments and payments can now be made online at the Town's website. ***It is important to note that, if you pay your bill online after midnight the day it is due, it will not be posted until two business days after the due date and will be subject to additional penalties.***

Water/Sewer bills can be paid using a Visa or MasterCard or Discover. If you pay a bill online after the due date, you will still be responsible for the 10% penalty and if the bill is paid after the shut off date, the \$25 administrative fee will need to be paid as well, prior to reconnection.

DO NOT PUT CASH IN THE DROP BOX!

From the Town Manager's Desk...

Capitol Improvement Projects

2013 is Past! Looking ahead into the coming year, there are a number of large Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) to proceed with as follows:

*North Main Street Enhancement Project. This past October the Town Council made a decision to eliminate the proposed stamped asphalt median. It was estimated that by just having the regular median would save about \$100,000 in construction costs, and future maintenance expenses. The project is still estimated to cost over \$250,000 with the installation of new curbs, sidewalks and pathways along with landscaping improvements on both sides of the road. This project is being funded by the Virginia Department of Transportation at 80% of the cost through a Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA-21) Grant. The locality must still pay 100% of the associated costs up front and submit paper-work to VDOT for reimbursement. Sometimes the turn around can take awhile. The Town is now awaiting approval from VDOT on the revisions submitted as a result of the Town Council decision. Once this approval is obtained, the project may begin as early as this coming spring.

provided financing has been arranged by then.

* Another Capitol Improvement Project is the long standing plan to finish renovating the Old Stephens City School building. The Town has completed replacing the roof and restoring the windows, but there is still much work to do. An elevator for handicap access is necessary and new mechanical, electric and plumbing systems must be installed. The estimate to bring this building into use is one million dollars.

In 2012, the Town was able to acquire the remaining buildings and grounds at the Old School complex from Frederick County. The total acreage now owned by the Town at the school is 4.5 acres along with three additional buildings. These buildings are in need of repair but are in much better condition than the largest and oldest building. The Town crew has been working on the buildings throughout the year; painting, replacing broken windows and fixing leaks. These buildings may soon be brought up to code where they can be put into use in the near future.

* The last major CIP project is the largest and most expensive. For several years the Town Engineer has been working on plans and specifications to replace the entire sewer line that serves the east side of Town.

The project will involve replacing old sewer service lines on private property, obtaining new easements and installing new equipment for screening of material harmful to the pump station. This project is estimated to be one and a half to two million dollars.

* Sidewalk replacement is also on the CIP program, but we do not have current estimates for repairing sidewalks or adding new sections where necessary.

Together these projects will cost between three to four million dollars, a seemingly huge amount for a community of 1,800 persons. However, interest rates remain at historically low rates and the total is much less than other communities are having to pay for upgrades for water and sewer systems which can exceed twenty million dollars.

The Town Finance Committee will be looking closely at prioritizing the projects and the means to financing them. You will be kept informed in the next newsletter of any progress that has been made in the intervening months.

Michael R. Kehoe
Town Manager

POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT FOR 2013

The Stephens City Police Department consists of four full time officers and one part time volunteer officer. For the year 2013, the Stephens City police Department had a total of 4,143 calls for service through December 15th. This number does not include citations or tickets. During this period there were 426 citations and 32 parking tickets issued. There were also 61 arrests, 198 incident reports and 6 accident reports.

Also in the year 2013 a new 2014 Ford Police Interceptor, fully marked, was put into service.

Charles E. Bockey, Chief of Police

TRASH AND RECYCLING SERVICES

A Message From American Disposal Service

Inclement Weather Policy

“Safety in your community is our primary concern. Roads and/or areas which are deemed unsafe due to snow or ice will be suspended for collection. If suspension occurs, services will resume on the next regularly scheduled collection day.”



From the Mayor's Desk cont.

The Council has decided to move the Veterans' Memorial to the school site. It was felt that this site is more appropriate.

We purchased a new police car and our officers continue to do a fine job for the town. We thank them for their service.

At this time we are negotiating contracts with the Frederick County Sanitation Authority. These contracts will determine future water and sewer rates for our citizens.

Plans for the renovation and expansion of Sheetz have been approved by the Planning Commission and Town Council. These plans included improvements to the traffic patterns at the intersection of Fairfax and Mulberry Streets and entrances to the store.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday season.

Joy Shull-Gellner, Mayor

Town Calendar of Events

January 2014

Jan. 1	Town Office Closed- New Years Day
Jan. 7	Town Council at 7:30pm
Jan. 14	Personnel Committee meeting at 5:00pm
Jan. 15	Water/Sewer Committee at 5:30 pm Public Works Committee at 6:00 pm
Jan. 16	NHP Comm. 7:00 pm
Jan. 20	Town Office Closed - Martin Luther King Day
Jan. 21	Historic Preservation Commission
Jan. 22	Finance Committee at 4:00 pm
Jan. 23	Public Safety Committee at 5:00 pm
Jan. 27	Parks and Recreation Committee at 5:00pm
Jan. 28	Planning Commission at 7:30pm

February 2014

Feb. 4	Water/Sewer Bills Due without penalty.
Feb. 4	Town Council Meeting at 7:30pm.
Feb. 5	Penalties added to Water/Sewer Bills
Feb. 11	Water Shut Off Date
Feb. 11	Personnel Committee at 5:00pm
Feb. 17	Town Office Closed-Presidents Day
Feb. 19	Water/ Sewer Meeting at 5:30pm Public Works Meeting at 6:00pm Newtown Heritage Festival at 7:00pm
Feb. 24	Parks & Recreation Comm. at 5:00pm
Feb. 25	Planning Commission at 5:00pm
Feb. 26	Finance Committee at 4:00pm

*** All meetings subject to change without notice w/
the exception of the Town Council meeting.**