



Stephens City Newsletter

VOLUME 30, ISSUE 3

MAY AND JUNE 2011

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Stephens City Newsletter is proud to enter its 30th year of publication. Throughout the year we will highlight the significance of this Town Newsletter. 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 8:30a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or by mail: P.O. Box 250, Stephens City, VA 22655

Phone: 869-3087 **Fax:** 869-6166 **Police:** 868-1012 **Website:** www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov

Newtown Heritage Festival Commemorative...

In the past the Newtown Heritage has always featured the Newtown Wagon as the focal point of the Memorial Day's Celebration of heritage. This year the committee is turning our attention to another important time in our Town's history. During the Civil War, which is approaching it's sesquicentennial, there were a series of lookout posts up and down the valley. In Stephens City, there still stands a tree which has been acknowledged as one such post. The Lookout Tree is featured in this year's commemorative, a wood-grained ornament. The same tree and logo will be featured in other prominent festival keepsakes, such as t-shirts and future commemoratives.



Newtown Heritage Festival. 2011

This year marks the 19th year for the Newtown Heritage Festival.

The festival kicks off Thursday, May 26th with the Sherando High School band in concert at the Newtown Commons beginning at 7:00pm.



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NEWTOWN HERITAGE Schedule of Events

Thursday, May 26th:

Sherando High School Band Concert at the Newtown Commons at the Lions Club Shelter 7:00pm

Friday, May 27th:

BATTLE OF THE BANDS Commons Stage 6:00pm to 9:00pm

Saturday, May 28th:

10:00am- 9:00pm Craft and Food Vendors

2:00pm Parade on Main Street

Live music all from the Sherando HS Jazz Band, Explicit Faith, Dixie Moon Band, Back Creek Valley Boys and Canyon River Band

9:00pm Fireworks (Pending)

YARD SALE PERMITS

This is a reminder that you are required to obtain a Yard Sale permit prior to holding a Yard Sale within the Town.

A permit application is free and each resident is allowed up to two (2) yard sales in a calendar year and each sale cannot last longer than three (3) consecutive days.

If you have any questions, please contact the Town Office.



Newtown Heritage Festival Pageant Winners:

- Wee Baby – Alexis Miller
- Baby – Sadie Lowery
- Tiny Miss – Sadie Sager
- Petite Miss– Sarah Street
- Pre-Teen Miss– Natalie Loving
- People’s Choice– Megan Montgomery
- Miss Newtown 2011- Casey Wakeman

The Planners Corner...

Sherando Communications Study Results and Recommendations

In the last Town Newsletter, Sherando High School Seniors as part of their Service Learning project through their 12th Grade Government class released a survey to the citizens of the Town of Stephens City. Although the students did not receive the amount of input they had hoped for, they still received lots of good information with regard to findings.

In general, the students found that the Town communicates well with its citizens and for the most part the citizens feel like they do have ways to share input with the Town officials. However, the one area the survey found that the Town was lacking in our communication was with the age demographic of the 18- 45 years olds. This was determined by the sheer lack of survey responses. The survey told the students that utilizing messaging in billings, through this newsletter or general advertising within the Newspaper the Town normally reaches an older demographic, which is a positive, but we typically do not reach the 18-45 year old demographic. We also found that many residents have started routinely watching TV-3 Winchester for local news. There were very few other findings that raised any concerns for the Town to address.

At the May Council meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2011 at 7:30pm,

the students will be making a presentation with regard to their project, their findings and be making recommendations. One area that the students explored as part of their project, was the role of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. Although the students would not recommend the Town creating a Twitter page, they are inclined to recommend the Town or some of the organizations associated with the Town, such as the Newtown Heritage Festival or the Stephens City Business Association to create Facebook Fan pages as a better means to broaden the appeal of important Stephens City news and events. Furthermore, the students are expected to recommend to Town officials better ways to appeal to TV-3 Winchester along with other general recommendations

If you are interested in seeing their presentation, please plan on attending the Town Council meeting on Tuesday, May 3, 2011 at 7:30pm. The students will also be presenting their project to the Frederick County Board of Supervisors at the end of May to wrap up their class project. For any questions with regard to this project or Town’s involvement with Sherando High School’s Service Learning Government Class, please contact Town Planner, Brian Henshaw.

Town Planner, Brian Henshaw

Newtown Heritage Festival 2011 continued...



Friday night, May 27th features the “Battle of the Bands” at the Newtown Commons stage at 6:00pm. Local bands will compete against each other for the right to be a featured band during Saturday’s events.

Saturday, May 28th provides a full day of entertainment and activities which include the parade, crafts, exhibits, great food and fireworks (pending) at dark.



2011 –2012 Stephens City Budget

The budget process has been difficult this year as the Town is attempting to balance next year’s budget in a still weak economy with dwindling reserves.

The good news is that Town Finance Committee is not recommending any new tax increases for the upcoming fiscal year, however the bad news is that water and sewer rates most likely will be going up. In April, the Town received notice from **Frederick County Sanitation Authority** that provides both water and sewer treatment to the town, that the Authority will be imposing a **31% increase** in treatment costs. Over most of the past decade the Town has absorbed the modest increases for treatment costs by FCSA, but it will not be possible to do so again with such a significant increase. The last time there was an actual rate increase by the Town was 2003 but there have been increases in connection fees and most recently in water and sewer deposits.

The proposed increases by the Town will just offset the Authority’s increase because of much higher flows of waste water that is treated because of groundwater entering the system from leaks and sump pumps. The annual waste water flows are double the water usage that is metered and has to be accounted for. Currently the base rate to Town

customers is \$50.65 for 3000 gallons of water and sewer used bimonthly. The base rate is proposed to go to **\$56.65** for the same amount of usage. Since the Town uses a flat rate system for each additional 1,000 gallons consumed a proposed increase of \$0.75 and a like amount for sewer treatment per 1,000 gallons. Sewer flow rates are calculated at 100% of the water metered amount. The Sanitation Authority does meter the overall sewer flows which as I mentioned are double water consumption.

Whereby these increases are necessary, they are based on higher costs for electricity, chemicals and manpower charged by FCSA. Manpower costs have increased in part by the continued disposal of cleaning towels made of synthetic materials into the Town’s sewer system which has caused a continual maintenance problem at the FCSA pump station.

Public hearings will be held on both the 2011-12 budget and water/ sewer rate changes at the June 7, 2011 Town Council meeting.

Mike Kehoe
Town Manager

Treasurer’s Notes...

Spring brings not only finer weather and greening of the Valley, but also the first installment of your tax bills. We have received the real estate and the personal property tax rolls from the Commissioner of Revenue’s office. The good news is that not only has the Town not raised your tax rates this year, but assessments seem to be lower this year.

You can do your bit by helping us control costs. The easiest way to help is to please pay your utility and tax bills on time. With the high cost of mailing, and the time involved to monitor and re-invoice, it is very costly to send out late notices.

In these uncertain times, we here in the Town Office are committed to doing more for you with less money. We will not see as much money from the state and other grants, but we are committed to keeping your municipal costs down as much as possible while still maintaining an efficient delivery of services.

Kim S. Uttenweiler,
TOWN TREASURER

Water and Sewer Billing

Water and sewer bills for the bi-monthly billing end **Monday, June 6, 2010** and are due upon receipt.

After **June 6, 2010** a **10% penalty** will be added. On **Monday, June 13, 2010** service will be discontinued for delinquency. A reconnect 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. Water/Sewer bills can be paid using a Visa or MasterCard. 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 reconnect fee will need to be paid as well, prior to reconnection.

DO NOT PUT CASH IN THE DROP BOX!

Town Calendar of Events

MAY

- May 3 **Town Council at 7:30p**
- May 10 Personnel Committee meeting at 5:00pm
Planning Commission at 7:30pm
- May 17 Historic Preservation Committee at 5:00pm
- May 19 Water/ Sewer meeting at 5:30 pm
Public Works meeting at 6:00 pm
Newtown Heritage Festival Mtg. at 7:00pm
- May 23 Parks & Recreation Commission at 5:00pm
- May 25 Finance Committee at 5:00pm
- May 27-28 **NEWTOWN HERITAGE FESTIVAL!**



JUNE

- June 4 **Water/Sewer Bills Due without penalty**
Penalties added to Water/Sewer Bills
- June 7 **Town Council Meeting at 7:30pm.**
- June 14 **Water Shut Off Date**
Personnel Committee at 5:00pm
- June 16 Water/ Sewer Meeting at 9:00am
Public Works Meeting at 9:30am
Newtown Heritage Festival at 7:00pm
- June 21 Historic Preservation Committee at 5:00pm
- June 22 Finance Committee at 5:00pm
- June 21 Parks & Recreation Commission at 5:00pm
- June 29 **Planning Commission at 7:30pm**



We're on the web!
www.stephenscity.vi.virginia.gov

The Business Spotlight!

The Town of Stephens City would like to thank the members of the Stephens City Business Association for the success of the "Hop In" on Sunday, April 17, 2011 at the Newtown Commons.

We would especially like to thank the following businesses that helped sponsor the event through their donations, time and effort.

Without these businesses giving back to the community, the Hop In would not be possible! We look forward to the 4th Annual Hop In next year!

Be sure to stop by these businesses and all of the great businesses in and around Stephens City!

Commercial Press
Artistically Framed
BB&T Bank
Capon Valley Bank
Lantz's Pharmacy
Waveland Farms
Holiday Inn Express
Sherando Leos
Aunt B's

Stephens City Insurance Agency
Remax Realty- Sheila Pack
Blue Ridge Hospice Thrift Store
Winchester Star- Pam Bell
Edward Jones- Janet Davidson
Allstate Insurance- Stephens City
Stephens City Lions Club
Jack's Auto Sales
Bridgett's Baking

