



MIDDLEBURG TOWN COUNCIL
Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 12, 2014



PRESENT: Mayor Betsy A. Davis
Councilmember Kevin Hazard
Councilmember Trowbridge Littleton
Councilmember Kathy Jo Shea
Councilmember Mark T. Snyder
Councilmember David B. Stewart

STAFF: Martha Mason Semmes, Town Administrator
Angela K. Plowman, Town Attorney
Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk
Cindy C. Pearson, Economic Development Coordinator
Debbie J. Wheeler, Town Treasurer
A.J. Panebianco, Chief of Police

ABSENT: Vice Mayor C. Darlene Kirk
Councilmember Catherine "Bundles" Murdock

The Town Council of the Town of Middleburg, Virginia held their regular monthly meeting, beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 12, 2014 in the Town Hall Council Chambers, located at 10 W. Marshall Street. Mayor Davis led Council and those attending in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Public Hearing

Ordinance to Amend Schedule of Water and Wastewater Charges to Revise Sewer Charges

No one spoke and the public hearing was closed.

Action Items related to Public Hearings

Ordinance to Amend Schedule of Water and Wastewater Charges to Revise Sewer Charges

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Shea, that Council adopt an ordinance to amend the "Schedule of Water and Wastewater Charges", which increases the wastewater fees by 5% and overall by 2.4%.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Hazard, Littleton, Shea, Snyder and Stewart

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Councilmembers Kirk and Murdock

(Mayor Davis did not vote as there was no tie to require her vote)

Adoption of Appropriations Ordinance and Setting of Real Estate Tax Rate – FY ‘15

Town Administrator Semmes advised the Council that she thought they may have to amend the budget to include the VDOT street lights grant; however, she has received conflicting information on the grant amount. She explained that she heard in April that the Town received half of what it requested; however, the May VDOT newsletter showed the Town would receive the full amount. Ms. Semmes advised that she was reluctant to put anything in the budget until the Town received the official word, which would not occur until the Commonwealth Transportation Board voted on it. She noted the need to hold a public hearing to amend the budget if the Town received the full grant amount. Ms. Semmes advised Council that they would be voting on the budget as advertised for the public hearing, with the exception that the real estate tax increase would be one cent as opposed to two.

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Shea, that Council adopt an ordinance to Approve the Budget, Adopt Tax Rates and Make Appropriations for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2015.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Hazard, Littleton, Shea, Snyder and Stewart

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Councilmembers Kirk and Murdock

(Mayor Davis did not vote as there was no tie to require her vote)

Special Recognitions by Mayor and Council

Resolution of Appreciation – David B. Stewart

Councilmember Shea moved, seconded by Councilmember Snyder, that Council adopt a resolution extending its appreciation to David B. Stewart for his service to the Town from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2014 as a member of the Town Council.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Hazard, Littleton, Shea, Snyder and Stewart

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Councilmembers Kirk and Murdock

(Mayor Davis did not vote as there was no tie to require her vote)

Mayor Davis read the resolution aloud. She presented a Middleburg paperweight and a copy of the signed resolution to Mr. Stewart. Ms. Davis thanked him for his service. She noted that Councilmember-Elect Erik Scheps was present. She thanked him for his willingness to serve in this capacity.

Public Presentations

Economic Study

Kennedy Smith, of The Clue Group, reminded Council that the Salamander Resort was in their first year of operation and suggested it was a good time to look at how the downtown businesses were doing and how they were impacted by the resort, as well as what opportunities were available and what nudging was needed. She reported that she looked at business development, business strategies and a marketing strategy for the town.

Ms. Smith noted that she read a lot of studies and reports that were done in recent years to determine the ground work and issues that were important. She advised that she also inventoried the businesses in this area of the County and did an analysis of the balance of businesses in order to get a sense of whether the area was high on restaurants and low on grocery stores versus the population. Ms. Smith further advised that she looked at the area's demographics and performed a sales void analysis to determine the amount of money that local businesses were capturing versus the amount of money the residents were spending. She reported that she calculated an estimate of the area's retail buying power based upon the characteristics of residents and determined how much was likely to be spent by residents and visitors. Ms. Smith reported that she interviewed fifteen people and learned many things about Middleburg, including things that helped put things into perspective. She reported that she did blind visits to businesses to get a sense of how they were laid out and who was shopping there.

Observations – Ms. Smith observed that there was a rich level of civic engagement in Middleburg. She opined that the proposed streetscape improvement plans would help and opined that the town worked hard to minimize sprawl and was committed to a high quality of life. Ms. Smith observed that Middleburg had very few chains, which meant the town was retaining more retail sales dollars in the community, which provided a more solid financial base. She advised that the town had a sense of being a unique place, remarkable businesses and a deep appreciation for its history and culture.

Analysis - Ms. Smith reported that she looked at sales demand possibilities and performance. She advised that she found that Middleburg was becoming older and now had a median age of fifty (50). Ms. Smith reported that its households were becoming smaller and consisted of 1.86 people in 2012. She advised that Middleburg had a high percentage of home based workers (9.6%) compared to the State average (4.5%). Ms. Smith noted that it had very little business churn as businesses were coming in to replace those that were lost.

Ms. Smith advised that she looked at taxable sales and noted that while there were some surpluses, they were modest. She displayed the results of her sales void analysis within the town limits. Ms. Smith noted that supply was what the existing businesses were currently capturing and demand was how much money residents were spending, with the gap being the difference. She opined that the town would not recruit something like a car dealer. Ms. Smith noted that the categories that included furniture, clothing, sporting goods and miscellaneous stores all had good surpluses, which was unusual in a small town. She opined that Middleburg served as a magnet for things that were unusual for small towns to be a magnet for. Ms. Smith advised that the worrisome category was restaurants and opined that Middleburg could support more. She noted the need to determine how many more.

Councilmember Hazard inquired as to how the categories were broken out. Ms. Smith noted that Middleburg had a healthy surplus in the food and beverage stores category inside the Town limits. She noted the lack of general merchandise stores, which generally involved big box stores. Ms. Smith advised that the Fun Shop may fit into that category. She noted the overall surplus of \$12.2 million or more and advised that revenue could be boosted in some areas.

Ms. Smith advised Council that she used Middleburg and Upperville in her analysis because a previous consultant performed a sales void analysis using these categories and she wanted to compare how things have changed over ten years. She reported that in 2006, the Town experienced a leakage of \$2.8 million that was now \$60 million. Ms. Smith opined that the broader area had sales leakage, with the people who lived farther from Middleburg being the more likely they were to shop elsewhere such as Leesburg, Winchester and Warrenton.

Mayor Davis questioned whether sales losses due to the Internet were taken into consideration. Ms. Smith confirmed this would be shown in the demand side. She noted that any businesses that sold items online would be included in the supply side. Mayor Davis opined that a large amount of shopping was being lost to the Internet.

A member of the audience inquired as to whether the figures for the food services and drinking places category included the Salamander Resort. Ms. Smith confirmed it only included them “a tiny bit” in the 2014 column. She reiterated her opinion that Middleburg could support more restaurants.

Issues - Ms. Smith reported that she identified some issues, based on her interviews, which included a considerable sense of loss over community service businesses, such as the Coach Stop. She noted that concern was expressed about whether the market was tilting toward visitors and what that meant for the town’s identity. Ms. Smith opined that the town was at a place where it could go either way. She reported that there was skepticism in the community about broadening the downtown market reach, with some businesses saying they have hit their sales ceiling. Ms. Smith advised that another issue was rent levels versus retail sales and reported that she heard from a lot of people that the rents were too high. She noted that she looked at rental levels and advised that while some were high, some were reasonable. Ms. Smith advised that this came back to the issue that the market set the rent and that the amount of sales determined whether a business could afford it. She opined that if businesses increased their sales by 10%, the rent would be affordable. Ms. Smith advised that another issue was diminishing ground floor retail visibility. She noted that another issue was that the town had no formal process for choosing special events, which meant they were not aligned with economic development strategies. Ms. Smith advised that the community was not short of great ideas and when there was one, it was often being made to happen without thinking through what the community was trying to achieve. She noted that another concern was that young people were moving away.

Strategies - Ms. Smith reported that she had proposed some strategies for addressing the issues. She opined that one of the most important things to do was to build consensus on a business development strategy. Ms. Smith advised that as many property owners needed to be on board as possible who would agree that they would like to see the downtown develop in a certain manner and would put businesses that fit into that vision in their buildings.

Ms. Smith advised that, as to the general direction, she believed that Middleburg needed businesses and events that met the needs of residents, both those from Middleburg and within the region; and, opined that this must drive everything. She stressed that the tourists needed to come second. Ms. Smith opined that tourists wanted to see what Middleburg really was, not an illusion. She further opined that if Middleburg was what it wanted to be that tourism would be better. Ms. Smith suggested the need to develop community serving businesses, whether this was another Coach Stop or a general store, and opined that the town could support both. She suggested this could be accomplished by developing and recruiting the businesses, the community could purchase a building for the uses that were determined to be important, or private investors could work together to fund a business. Ms. Smith noted that the town had the ability to be as indirect or direct as it wanted to be to create businesses. She suggested the need to redevelop Federal Street, which had great possibilities. Ms. Smith opined that it could be used for an entertainment/dining/arts district, the home to a brew pub or as a business incubator place. She suggested it could be used as a co-working space for those who had home-based businesses. Ms. Smith further suggested it could be used for small scale industrial uses, such as for 3D fabrication, architectural crafts or architectural salvage. She noted that there were towns that have clustered those types of businesses. Ms. Smith suggested the property owners be encouraged to utilize percentage leases when possible, in which the business would pay a lower flat rent and the property owner would receive a percentage of their profits. She suggested the need to provide capital for small business development and expansion; and, noted that the Piedmont Community Foundation was already doing things in this area and could possibly be a partner in this endeavor. Ms. Smith suggested the need to add product lines, businesses and events that were more reflective of Middleburg’s history and culture. She opined that Safeway needed to improve a little. Ms. Smith suggested the Town never eliminate its two-way traffic and noted that it was useful for businesses to have the exposure it created.

Examples - Ms. Smith presented examples of businesses in other localities and advised that she talked to people about pop-up space that could be used as an incubator. She noted that in some areas, landlords would accept an ownership share of a business in lieu of rent. Ms. Smith advised that there were lots of examples across the country of small businesses started by groups of investors, as well as community-owned general stores that were operating as co-ops.

Business Tools - Ms. Smith opined that there were business tools that could be used by business owners to boost their sales. She suggested it was important that they have a website. Ms. Smith noted the importance of taking one-time visitors and turning them into lifelong customers. She advised that this meant the businesses would have to keep great customer records and reach out to them. Ms. Smith reiterated the need for a great website and advised that the best service she has seen was called *Shopify*, which only cost \$25/month for a website and was simple to use. She noted that they also handled credit card fulfillment. She opined this was important for businesses that wanted a long-term relationship with visitors. Ms. Smith suggested the need for a website for the community that was entirely consumer focused. She noted that every business that took part in that website could have its own interface and enter new information on it. Ms. Smith reiterated that it was important to have a website that all of the businesses were connected to so it would present a unified image. She suggested that the businesses may need to utilize a business that handled order fulfillment.

Ms. Smith recommended the businesses make sure their storefront windows generated sales even when they were closed. She noted that there were front-of-the-store merchandizing strategies available and explained that often tourists wanted a souvenir as a memory of their visit. Ms. Smith noted that they did not want something that was large nor did they want to spend a lot of money on it. She advised that in her observations, she noticed that about half of the businesses offered such products.

Ms. Smith recommended the use of cross merchandising techniques, in which products from one business were put into another, whether as a display or for sale. She cited the example of the National Sporting Library, which offered a collection of historic cookbooks for sale. Ms. Smith suggested those cookbooks could be used for cooking demonstrations at the Salamander Resort. She recommended the development of business transition planning and noted that she had heard stories of retirements or illnesses that caused stores to close. Ms. Smith noted the need for a formal transition process to keep a business going if someone wanted to close their store.

Marketing - Ms. Smith suggested the town focus on making Middleburg the kind of place that its residents wanted. She stressed that they did not want it to be a place that tourists wanted. Ms. Smith advised that the Town could have multiple marketing strategies going at the same time as it had many kinds of customers and activities. She suggested the need to develop a marketing strategy for each major market group. Ms. Smith advised that it drove her crazy when she heard people talk about branding a community. She noted that everyone experienced a community differently; therefore, the Town did not want to make it homogenous. Ms. Smith recommended the need to choose and coordinate special events that would attract customer groups. She noted that she heard from people that Christmas in Middleburg was attracting too many people, was not fun anymore, the residents no longer enjoyed it and it was too “touristy”. Ms. Smith suggested the Town promote events that needed more promotion, such as Shakespeare in the Burg, and suspend marketing Christmas in Middleburg for a few years.

Ms. Smith advised Council that she heard a lot of comments about the need for evening activities. She noted that this included a restaurant component. Ms. Smith opined that the Town had plenty of music activities that could be turned into venues. She suggested the storefront windows be livelier so people would browse. Ms. Smith cited the example of one community that coordinated when the businesses changed their window displays and unveiled them all at the same time. She also cited the example of a business that used video as a part of its window display, in which the video was triggered by a heat

sensor. Ms. Smith suggested a video in Middleburg could incorporate a horse jumping or dogs running. She cited the example of a business in New York that installed a snowmaker on its building that had a telephone trigger, with people dialing a telephone number to make it snow. Ms. Smith suggested the Town could do this and offer a Christmas in July event. She noted that young people loved this type of interactive activity. Ms. Smith suggested the Town consider creating a heritage business program, which would be a public recognition program for long-term businesses or those offering a unique craft skill. She noted that some communities also provided financial incentives for heritage businesses to keep them going.

Ms. Smith advised Council that she had not completed the written report; therefore, she could still look at anything the Council would like her to consider.

An unidentified member of the audience asked whether anyone made mention of the need for a community green space and how it could be utilized. She inquired as to Ms. Smith's thoughts about a village green and opined that it would help knit the community. Ms. Smith reported that she heard from people who wanted to do special events in public spaces. She suggested this aligned with the need to actively plan promotional events.

Town Administrator Semmes noted that civic space was planned as part of the Salamander development. She reminded Council of the former plans to turn the Safeway into a green space.

Ms. Smith suggested a village commons could be placed on Federal Street. She noted that the National Sporting Library was also interested in offering more programs in their green space.

Councilmember Shea inquired as to how much of what was included in the report already existed but was not being seen. She cited the example of the Community Center that had green space available that was not being looked at as green space. Ms. Shea acknowledged that it was private property; however, she opined that this did not mean there could not be a public/private partnership to increase its use.

Ms. Smith noted that it was important that the green space be in the center of town, on the street. She further noted that it did not have to be a permanent space. Ms. Smith opined that moving the space could help create movement downtown.

Councilmember Shea noted that she was also thinking about the statistics and opined that there were things in Middleburg that people did not know about. She suggested the need to bring things to light.

Mayor Davis expressed appreciation for Ms. Smith's work on the study.

Councilmember Shea inquired as to the next step once the Town received the report. Town Administrator Semmes advised that it would start implementing the ideas. Ms. Smith noted that the report would contain implementation steps. She further noted that some would be prioritized; however, some would require prioritization by the Council.

An unidentified member of the audience noted that a lot of young people wanted to live here but there was no place for them to rent. She further noted that there were spaces over the businesses that could be turned into apartments if there was parking. She suggested the need to create and better use the available parking.

Town Administrator Semmes advised that there were situations where there were mixed uses. She noted that the residents in those units often parked on the street at night.

The unidentified member of the audience reported that landlords have told her that they could not rent the spaces unless they provided dedicated off-street parking. Town Administrator Semmes advised that they could address this through shared parking.

Councilmember Snyder opined that the Town lost a lot of apartments that used to be over the shops because businesses started moving into them and using them as office space.

The unidentified member of the audience noted that more than 50% of this space was vacant. She suggested the rents would decline if both floors were rented.

Approval of Minutes

Councilmember Snyder moved that Council approve the May 8, 2014 Regular Meeting and May 22, 2014 Work Session Meeting Minutes as amended.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Hazard, Littleton, Shea, Snyder and Stewart

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Councilmembers Kirk and Murdock

(Mayor Davis did not vote as there was no tie to require her vote)

Staff Reports

Town Administrator Semmes reported that she was making progress on the hiring of a Town Planner/Zoning Administrator, with two individuals having been interviewed this week. She opined that the Town would be pleased with either candidate. Ms. Semmes reported that she was checking references; and, noted that the interview committee would get back together shortly. She expressed hope to make an employment offer by the end of next week. Ms. Semmes reported that she has received the renewal of the sludge handling contract.

Economic Development Coordinator Pearson reported that there was a call for artists to design a new logo for the Middleburg Community Farmers Market. She displayed a copy of the winning logo. Ms. Pearson noted that it would not replace the current logo; and, explained that it would only be used for this year. She advised that it would be put on the market’s shopping bags.

Acting Zoning Administrator Semmes reported that she received a boundary line adjustment request from Salamander Development, which the Town Attorney was helping to review.

Economic Development Coordinator Pearson reported that a new business – Pop Up Boutique - opened at 112 West Washington Street. She advised that it was a women’s clothing store.

Acting Zoning Administrator Semmes reported that the landlord originally said the two businesses associated with this venture wanted to rent the space for a month each; however, they loved it so much that they decided to take it for an entire year. She advised that she also spoke with someone who was a clothing designer and who did their own clothing line; therefore, they would have a wholesale and a retail component. Ms. Semmes reported that the apple cidery was under construction and advised that the wood panels and tin ceiling have been installed. She noted that they hoped to open in July.

Town Treasurer Wheeler reminded Council that the Town received the reports related to the bank franchise tax in February. She advised that this report indicated the Town would receive \$166,000 from the Middleburg Bank. Ms. Wheeler reported that the Town actually received \$238,000; therefore, this revenue line item would not be \$94,000 short as originally reported.

Councilmember Shea noted that the expenses for the Health Center Fund were at 79% and the revenue was at 48%. She asked why the two amounts were so disproportionate. Town Administrator Semmes explained that this was due in part to the donations the Town gave from this fund. She reminded Council that when they gave donations, they were using the fund balance to do so because the Fund was just barely breaking even. Ms. Semmes suggested the Council may want to consider giving donations from the General Fund if they wanted to save the fund balance to cover the building's maintenance costs.

Mayor Davis opined that part of the reason was that some of the rent was paid annually in advance. Councilmember Shea suggested this would be reflected in the income anyway.

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that the budget projected the Town would need \$35,000 from the Health Center Fund reserves to supplement the expenditures. She noted that the expenses included \$31,000 in donations, which were coming from the reserves.

Councilmember Shea asked that this item be placed on a future agenda for discussion.

Chief of Police Panebianco noted that Sergeant Henry Milton Seaton was the only Middleburg police officer to be killed in the line of duty. He reported that he planned to honor Sgt. Seaton during the upcoming National Night Out and would present his family members with a plaque. Chief Panebianco reported that the Commonwealth of Virginia was making an engraving of all officers killed in the line of duty in Virginia for display at the State Capitol and advised that he was able to get Sgt. Seaton's name added to the plaque. He noted that it was already on the National Law Enforcement Memorial. Chief Panebianco reported that Sgt. Seaton was killed in 1899.

Chief Panebianco reported that he served as the auctioneer for the Middleburg Elementary School's PTO Auction, which raised "a ton" of money.

Chief Panebianco expressed hope that within the next month, the Town would receive at least one test central parking meter so the Council could determine whether it would be acceptable. He reported that he contacted two vendors and hoped to have as many as two test meters for a month.

Chief Panebianco introduced Lauren Davis, an intern at the Police Department; and, advised that she would spend seven weeks with them learning about policies, patrols and what she needed to know in order to gain college credits. Chief Panebianco explained that she would write daily reports and discuss what occurred, which would provide him with an outsider point of view of their operations.

Mayor Davis noted that she was impressed with the course as Ms. Davis was doing all kinds of things, including going to the police academy and dispatch center. She further noted that she has read the Police Policy Manual.

Councilmember Shea questioned whether the Council knew about the ads for National Night Out. Chief Panebianco reported that the Middleburg Eccentric donated a full page for the advertisement of National Night Out, which included advertising spots he could sell in order to raise money. He further reported that he sold \$600 worth of ads. Chief Panebianco advised that he asked the businesses to hold their checks until after July 1 so the money could be put into the same budget year as the expenditures. He noted that he was still looking for volunteers for the event.

Terry Inboden, of IES, noted that the Council may have received brown water complaints. He advised that he did not know why the Town was experiencing brown water other than the velocity stirred it up.

Mr. Inboden reported that the Town would not have to build a larger re-use tank at the wastewater treatment plant as he has made adjustments to the system. He noted that there may be a need for larger pumps to handle the pressure. Mr. Inboden reported that he was looking at a new SCADA system and would have a company here next week to look at the facilities. He advised that the Water/Sewer Committee's first meeting would be held next week.

Town Administrator Semmes reported that Bob Krallinger was donating his time to serve on this Committee.

Town Clerk North reported that the Town received the Wellhead Protection Grant it sought for the construction of fencing around Well 2. She noted that the grant was in the amount of \$29,000 and advised that the only condition was to install a "no trespass" sign on the fence at the Town's expense.

Reports of Town Committees/Council Liaisons

Councilmember Shea reported that Go Green has put an item on the next work session agenda so the Council could discuss adding the duties associated with the HEAL Cities Program to their assigned work duties.

Action Items (non-public hearing related)

Council Approval – Resolution – Employer Contribution Rate – VRS

Town Administrator Semmes advised Council that VRS was recommending the Town adopt the certified rate of 19.77%. She reminded Council that the next audit must reflect the Town's liabilities associated with the pension fund, which would show as a negative on the Town's assets. Ms. Semmes reminded Council that the amount of the liability was based on the difference between what the Town has contributed and what would have to be paid out according to the actuarial, which was \$600,000. She opined that it would behoove the Town to slowly increase the rate. Ms. Semmes noted that in the past, some communities opted for the lower contribution rate; however, she opined that it was good that Middleburg did not do so as its liability would have been larger. She noted the need to play catch up until the balance matched the obligations. She reminded Council that they have always approved the recommended rate and noted that the reason for the deficit was that VRS did not do a good job of calculating the rate in the past.

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Littleton, that Council adopt a Resolution Setting the Virginia Retirement System Employer Contribution Rate for the Town of Middleburg.

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Hazard, Littleton, Shea, Snyder and Stewart

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Councilmembers Kirk and Murdock

(Mayor Davis did not vote as there was no tie to require her vote)

Council Approval – Agreement for Credit of Excessive Water and Sewer Charges – Michael Pappas/Leslie Mintz

Town Administrator Semmes reminded Council that they asked the staff to develop an agreement after Mr. Pappas asked to settle his remaining debt by allowing him to pay a lump sum amount of \$2,800. She noted that the Council was amenable to this approach if the staff could come up with agreement.

Ms. Semmes reported that Mr. Pappas has signed the agreement and remitted a check. She advised that if the Council approved the agreement, the Mayor would sign it and this issue would be settled.

Councilmember Snyder moved, seconded by Councilmember Littleton, that Council authorize the Mayor to sign an Agreement written by the Town Attorney on Excessive Water and Sewer Charges Credit.

Councilmember Shea moved, seconded by Councilmember Snyder, to amend the motion to include the phrase "in order to settle the outstanding account with Michael Pappas for water and sewer service".

Vote: Yes – Councilmembers Hazard, Littleton, Shea, Snyder and Stewart

No – N/A

Abstain: N/A

Absent: Councilmembers Kirk and Murdock

(Mayor Davis did not vote as there was no tie to require her vote)

(on motion as amended)

Discussion Items

Update on performers for Bluemont Concerts

Councilmember Snyder noted that he provided Council with a summary of what Bluemont Concerts' staff did. He reminded them that they appeared before the Council in February and shortly thereafter the Council gave them a "wish list" of performers. Mr. Snyder reported that the Town received a suggested list of performers from Bluemont and advised that he was able to tweak the list to get the Darryl Davis Band as the second concert so the schedule would include two of the four performers requested by the Council. He advised that Circa Blue would be a performer and noted that they have been bringing people into other Bluemont Concerts. Mr. Snyder expressed hope that they could find an audience among the local people in Middleburg as the concerts were really for them. He advised that the season would close out with a performance by Susan Greenbaum, who has been here in the past but not recently. Mr. Snyder noted that he provided Council with the list of past performers from 2006-2013. He advised that Bluemont was interested in the Council's input. Mr. Snyder reminded Council of the door prize tickets that ask for suggestions, which Bluemont took seriously, and noted that they were also seeking input via their website. He reported that all of this fed into the selection of performers. Mr. Snyder expressed hope that the Council would give Bluemont a new wish list next year. He noted that he had the concert schedule for all of the Bluemont towns if anyone was interested.

Information Items

Councilmember Shea reported that she, Jilann Brunett and Erik Scheps recently attended the FOIA presentation in Leesburg. She noted that Delegate Minchew provided a presentation on the Virginia Conflicts of Interest Act and advised that he indicated there were a lot of changes coming in the future; however, they would not affect anything until 2015. Ms. Shea suggested the Council consider having the Town Attorney provide an update on the new information.

Town Attorney Plowman reported that she and the Town Administrator were reviewing the legislative agenda and were scheduled to make a presentation to the Council in July. She advised that while there were a lot of changes to the Conflicts of Interest Act, some were not applicable to Middleburg due to its population. Ms. Plowman noted that there were some items that the Council should be made aware of to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, such as the new definition of gifts.

Councilmember Hazard reported that he and the Town Administrator met at the Asbury Church with an architect and engineer who specialized in historic renovations. He advised that they would forward a proposal to the Town for their services to assemble a list of what needed to be done to stabilize the building. Mr. Hazard noted that the Town was still looking at acquiring the church and advised that they were working on developing the renovation proposal. He opined that this was a wonderful place and noted that while it was not located on the main drag, it could be used for something like a coffee shop. Mr. Hazard advised that the back wall was starting to bow out; therefore, the Town must do something. He suggested the Town did not have to spend a lot of money now; however, it must stabilize the building now as it would be less expensive to do so than it would down the road.

Councilmember Snyder inquired as to what needed to be done to acquire the building so it could be saved. Town Administrator Semmes reported that the owner's representative was on his way back from Florida. Councilmember Hazard reported that he has had a number of phone conversations with him and he was amenable to working something out with the Town so it could assume possession of the property.

There being no further business, a motion was made and approved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

APPROVED:

Betsy A. Davis, MAYOR

ATTEST:

Rhonda S. North, MMC, Town Clerk