

**BOLIVAR
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
Tuesday, August 7, 2018 @ 7:30p.m.**

**Helen Dettmer, Mayor
Sarah Gordon
John Paul Heafer-Mayor Pro Tem
Stephen J. Paradis
Jerry Powell
Scott Whetsell
P. Jean Reed, Recorder**

Mayor Dettmer asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Bolivar Town Council was called to order by Mayor Helen Dettmer on Tuesday, August 7, 2018 @7:30p.m. Councilperson John Paul Heafer arrived late (7:40p.m.) for this meeting.

Treasurers Report

Account Eric Lewis gave the financial report as of July 31, 2018 end of the year. City Hall spent \$17,311 more than we took in due to the \$80,000 police payment during the month of July. Mr. Lewis explained the Financial Report in detail. Councilperson Scott Whetsell asked about fire hydrants and how much we paid per month. Laura stated we have 28 fire hydrants and we pay \$280 per month. All are working except one and it will be working within 30 days. **Councilperson Scott Whetsell moved to accept the July, 2018 Financial Report as presented by Accountant Eric Lewis. Councilperson Sarah Gordon seconded the motion. Motion passed.**

Mr. Lewis explained a Budget Revision moving \$1000 from line item 440 City Hall to line item 953 Social Services in order to cover the \$1000 donation to Community Ministries approved at the July, 2018 meeting. **Councilperson Sarah Gordon moved to approve Budget Revision number 3 (General Fund 2018-2019) as presented. Councilperson Scott Whetsell seconded the motion.**

Roll call follows:

Jerry Powell	Yes
Stephen Paradis	Yes
John Heafer	Absent
Sarah Gordon	Yes
Scott Whetsell	Yes
P. Jean Reed	Yes

Motion passed.

Minutes:

Approval of Minutes for July 10, 2018 Regular Meeting

Councilperson Scott Whetsell moved to accept the minutes of the July 10, 2018 regular meeting as presented. Councilperson Jerry Powell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Town Attorney, Effie Kallas

As of July 27, Attorney Effie Kallas talked with the Tax Dept. concerning the April letter sent by Attorney Hammer. The letter is in reference to Tax on Liquor sold in Bolivar. After sending them documentation that Attorney Effie Kallas was our new Town Attorney, they said they would get right on that. Attorney Kallas will continue checking with them.

Mayor's Report:

- Mayor Dettmer thanked everyone (sponsors) that helped with the Movie Night and especially Parks and Rec.

- Meeting with Region 9 in Morgan County and their Industrial Park
- Mayor Dettmer asked Steve Paradis to tell us about the Stake Holders-Harpers Ferry Train Station gathering on July 30th.
Steve Paradis attended the Harpers Ferry National Park Stakeholders in the Parking Lot at the Mather Training Center. Have a number of fundings and discussion of transportation and parking issues.
This was well represented and attended by NPS, Dept. of Transportation, Marc Train, Merchants Association, Region 9, and Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority. A complete report should be available in January, 2019. Mr. Paradis did not know if there would be extra meetings.
- Superintendent Brandyburg will be meeting about transportation to Bolivar and back.
- Will be celebrating the 75th Anniversary of National Park Service
- August 10 will be the last Music in the Park with Mike Gallar
- August 18th NAACP Parade in Ranson at Noon
- Meeting with Mrs. Clark on Urban Deer Hunt, we need to get our Hunters qualified

Sheriff's Department Report and Public Comment (Brandon Conway)

During the month of July 2018 there were a total of 140 recorded calls of service by the Sheriff's Department in Bolivar.

This month the breakdown included: 80 directed patrols, 1 alarm call, 2 animal complaints, 1 Custody Dispute, 1 Disabled Vehicle, 3 Follow Up Visits, 1 Harassment Complaint, 1 Juvenile Complaint, 2 MVA Hit and Run, 7 Noise Complaints, 2 Overdoses, 1 Reckless Driver, 1 suspicious Person, 8 Traffic Stops, 1 Civil Process Issue, 1 Wildlife Complaint, 1 Break/Enter property NIP, 1 Counterfeit, 1 Destruction of Property NIP, 6 Disturbance Calls, 1 Domestic Violence Complaint, 1 Intoxicated Driver, 2 MVA no injuries, 2 Parking Complaints, 1 Public Service Call, 4 Welfare Checks, 2 Suspicious Activity, and 4 Theft NIP.

As always, if you have general concerns about law enforcement, call the Sheriff's Office during business hours Monday-Friday 8a.m. to 5:30p.m. and anytime there is an emergency call 911.

Street Committee (John Paul Heafer and Scott Whetsell)

Nothing to report.

Bolivar Planning Commission (Steve Paradis)

Our meeting was held July 23, 2018. We are editing the language of our Ordinances. We are looking at the duties/responsibilities of the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the Zoning Administrator. When complete, this will be given to Attorney Kallas for review and approval to make sure we are in sink with State Codes. This will then go to the Town Council for approval. The August meeting will be changed to Monday, August 20, 2018.

Park and Recreation Committee (Eric Eastman)

No report.

Old Business

1. Reconsider and take action on the Hotel Motel Tax

Annett Gavin Bates

- The key mission is to promote business
 - Over the years (5) \$1.5 million has been spent on advertising
 - The focus has been on Bolivar, Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, and Charles Town.
 - \$1.5 million is totally funded by Tax
 - Bolivar does not participate, but has been getting the same benefits as Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, and Charles Town that are collecting this tax.
 - By marketing the County, you are getting the benefits.
 - Where do you (Bolivar) want to be with other towns and people?
 - This is not fair to others that do collect this tax.
 - If this does not pass, I cannot give you the same privilege.
-

Rock Wheeler

- Just found out this was on the agenda for tonight.
- Asked if this is passed tonight, keep it the lowest %. The 5% would hit us too hard.
- It would be more orderly to do it at the beginning of a new year.
- We appreciate what the CVB does. But I take offence, that we do not pay our fair share. Is this going to benefit us?

Benjamin Shankman

- Why is this a new tax? Can't Bolivar use tax money already collected to give a donation to the CVB?

Mayor Dettmer explained this is not an option since we are not allowed to use public funds to pay for personal advertising.

- Judged on its merit, is it right for Bolivar.
- We are concerned on how other towns look at Bolivar.

Annette Gavin Bates

- No other towns are saying anything against Bolivar.
- If you are going to fight this, then I have to prioritize this.

Laurel Drake

- I am not against the Hotel Motel Tax. Would like to see less than 5% tax.
- This is not transparent
- Steve went to all Businesses to let them know. This is not the right forum.
- This is the 3rd time you should have invited us to an informal setting.

Eric Lewis

- Town Council is not allowed to have a meeting on this tax.

Deb Hale

- Mentioned Web sites advertising rooms for rent, but are not listed on the list of approved licensed businesses. Would like to see a connection to short term rentals as this can change the fabric of our town. This extra tax will push away our business.

Phil Hale

- Our rates are pushing away our business.

Mayor Dettmer

- Read a letter from Carrie Gauthier

Annette Gaven Bates

- There are people that are for this tax. Some felt intimidated to even come and talk about it. Deb, you say you don't see the benefit, "I am disappointed."

Steve Paradis

- Is it illegal to give a donation to CVB?

Eric Lewis

- It is illegal to give a donation to CVB.

Steve Paradis

- Is it in State Code that we are required to enact this tax

Mayor Dettmer

- It is in State Code.

Eric Lewis

- State allows 6%, you can do it or you cannot have it.

Deb Hale

- Frederick Maryland has different codes.

Eric Lewis

- No States determine what towns are allowed to do. Cannot copy Frederick, MD because we have a different set of rules.

Steve Paradis

- Last year we had \$40,000 surplus and \$60,000 the year before, so why impose this tax when there is not a demonstrated need to where this tax would go.

Eric Lewis

The \$160,000 is not a fund rolls forward from the previous year. If you pulled that \$160,000 out, you would be in a negative situation. Easy to forget three years ago, we were in the red, year after year.

Sarah Gordon

- I emailed everyone about the Hotel Motel Tax so you would know. Sorry if you feel we are hostile.

Mayor Dettmer said we would hold a public workshop. Mayor Dettmer thanked Annette Gavin Bates for attending this meeting and providing input.

Deb Hale

- Asked who would enforce the policies on Air BnB's?

Mayor Dettmer said the enforcer is the Sheriff.

Deb Hale

- I am serving on the Planning Commission and no permit has been requested for change of use.

Rock Wheeler

- What about change of zoning (Business)

Annette Gavin Bates said she has letters that other towns have used and will share.

Councilperson Steve Paradis moved to hold a workshop on hospitality on August 16 at 7:00p.m. Councilperson Jerry Powell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Councilperson Sarah Gordon moved to table the vote on the Hotel Motel Tax and move to the September 4, 2018 meeting. Councilperson Scott Whetsell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

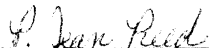
Note:

Curt McGee, Merchants Association presented some brochures to focus on our town. He said they get 50,000 hits a month in Trail Guide. They are developing videos for Olde Tyme Christmas. They have also welcomed Anne Rule Thompson to their committee. Mr. McGee gave an update on the hotel and said it is expected to be up and running by January, 2020.

Adjournment

Councilperson Scott Whetsell moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Jerry Powell seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned @9:15p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


P. Jean Reed, Recorder


Helen Dettmer, Mayor