

Harpers Ferry Community Newsletter



February 2014

Volume 11 Issue 2

Welcome to Harpers Ferry, Linda Marie and Dominica Anne !!!



Long-time Harpers Ferry resident Robert Brzostowski and his wife, Liz, welcomed not one, but two new baby girls into the world at Thanksgiving. The babies, Linda Marie and Dominica Anne, named after their two grandmothers, were born November 26. Liz's parents from Peru were here for over two months helping the family since the babies' arrival. If you think your renovation of your Harpers Ferry home was stressful, imagine going through that while caring for baby twins at the same time! Congratulations, Liz and Robbie!!

Federal Grant Opportunity for Harpers Ferry

During this past fall Superintendent Rebecca Harriett and Chief Ranger Dennis Frye from the Harpers Ferry National Historic Park informed me about the possibilities and details of a new Federal grant opportunity. The grant is funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration and is called the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP). Its goal is to provide financial assistance to improve State and local transportation facilities that access or are adjacent to Federal lands. The emphasis is to enhance and improve ingress to Federal lands by rehabilitating, restoring, constructing, and reconstructing the area. As a result of this grant opportunity we subsequently submitted our application and requested \$500,000.00. I might add that Jennifer O'Brien from West Virginia's Region 9 Planning and Development Council in Martinsburg provided us invaluable assistance. Specifically, the monies would be used to support the further improvement of the Potomac Street corridor in Lower Town. I am pleased to report that we were recently notified that Harpers Ferry was selected to be one of the nation's recipients for the FLAP Grant. This is a major accomplishment for Harpers Ferry and the improvements on Potomac Street will benefit us and the visiting public for generations.

Regards, Greg Vaughn

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The Town's official website has useful information including important notices, ordinances, meeting minutes, official applications, and events calendar. Visit us at www.harpersferrywv.us

Town Calendar

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All meetings at Town Hall, unless noted otherwise.

- Feb 20 Ordinance Review Committee meeting, 7-9pm
- Feb 20 Water Commission meeting (in the office), 7-9pm
- Feb 21 Budget & Finance meeting, 9:30-11 am
- Feb 22 Planning Commission work session, 9am-12pm
- Feb 23 HLC ordinance working group, 7-9pm
- Feb 24 Ordinance Review Committee meeting, 6:30-6:45pm
- Feb 24 Town Council Special meeting, 6:45-7pm
- Feb 24 Historic Landmarks Commission meeting, 7-8:30pm
- Feb 26 Harpers Ferry Foundation Board meeting, 5:30-7:30pm
- Feb 27 Tree Committee meeting, 7-9pm
- Mar 1 Planning Commission work session, 9am-12pm
- Mar 1 ATC Cake Baking Contest, 11am-2pm (see below)**
- Mar 2 Murphy Farm Hike, 1pm (see right)**
- Mar 2 HLC ordinance working group, 7-9pm
- Mar 4 Planning Commission meeting, 7-8:30pm
- Mar 5 Municipal Court, 7-9pm
- Mar 8 Planning Commission work session, 9am-12pm
- Mar 9 HLC ordinance working group, 7-9pm
- Mar 10 Town Council meeting, 7-9pm
- Mar 12 Parks & Recreation Commission meeting, 6-7pm
- Mar 16 HLC ordinance working group, 7-9pm
- Mar 17 Police Committee meeting, Bolivar Community Center, 8-9:30am
- Mar 17 Trail & Town Alliance meeting, 5-7pm

[Town Website](#) *Click here*

Murphy Farm Hike - New Date!!

Join us at 1pm, Sunday March 2 at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Visitors Center on Cavalier Heights. The hike will be approx. 1-2 hours long, moderately strenuous, with some steep but short elevation changes. Bring the family, great for kids over 8.



B&O Tax Time

Just a reminder - if you haven't paid your Business and Occupation tax for Fiscal Year 2014 - 2nd Q (ending December 2013). Please come visit us at the Town Hall. Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri: 8:30am-noon & 1-4:30pm, Tues: 2-4:30pm and Thurs 8:30am-noon. [B&O form](#) for print

ATC to Celebrate 89 Birthday

Bake a Cake !!!

Celebrate the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's 89 birthday by baking a cake! The ATC is hosting a cake baking contest from 11 to 2, Saturday, March 1, at its Visitor Center, 799 Washington St. This free event is open to the public.

This year's theme is "Leave No Trace," and participants are encouraged to become familiar with the principles that help Appalachian Trail visitors minimize impact to the environment and then incorporate at least one of those principles into a cake design. Leave No Trace principles include planning ahead, traveling and camping on durable surfaces, disposing of waste properly, leaving what you find, minimizing campfire impacts, respecting wildlife, and being considerate of others.

Cakes will be judged based on three categories: Best Tasting, Most Creative, and People's Choice. Prizes, including ATC gear and apparel, will be awarded to the winners. Cakes will be on display from 11 to noon and will be served to the public from noon to 2. Winners will be announced at 1.

To enter a cake in the contest, email Anne Baker at abaker@appalachiantrail.org by Feb. 27 with your name, type of cake and cake dimensions, as well as other relevant information such as possible allergens. After you email the ATC, you will receive information on cake drop-off times, directions, and other event specifics.

For more information about the event, visit www.appalachiantrail.org/events.



Planning Commission Update

The Commission has forwarded two important standards documents to Council related to the zoning ordinance amendments:

Construction Standards & Best Practices (7 pages)

Outdoor Lighting Standards (15 pages)

These proposed standards can be viewed on the [Planning page](#) of the Town website.

Once approved by the Town Council, these documents, by being cited in the Zoning Ordinance, will become law as though they were physically a part of the Zoning Ordinance. Note that these standards apply to all future buildings and projects in Harpers Ferry. Existing outdoor lighting that does not comply with the new standard will be legally nonconforming until 2019, when they must be made to conform to the new standard.

The Commission is also recommending an amendment to the proposed stormwater management ordinance that would exempt single family residences from the requirements of this ordinance. The Council has completed legal review of the proposed ordinance and it will go forward with the zoning ordinance amendments.

After reviewing public comments, the Council has made a few changes to the proposed zoning ordinance and related amendments, but has sent three elements back to the Planning Commission for further consideration. These are:

The Promontory overlay district (Article 1306)

Short term rental of entire residences (“holiday homes”)

Mitigation of nonconforming uses (Article 1313.03)

Once legal review is completed on the proposed Zoning Ordinance, the Council intends to take action on it, excluding those items being sent back to the Planning Commission.

The Commission has been working on the three elements on Saturday mornings during this month of February. The Commission may have a special meeting later this month if it concludes amendments to the existing proposal are needed. Watch the [Planning page](#) of the Town website for more information on this.

In response to confusion over what is in the proposed zoning ordinance and related ordinances and standards, the Planning Commission has posted on the [Planning page](#), a two page summary of Key Facts that provides clarification. This summary also addresses the status of the Hilltop Hotel as of January 7.



We are not in this alone.....

Looking for Volunteers !!!

The town is soliciting interested residents to serve on both the **Water Commission and the Tree Committee.**

Please submit your letter of interest and background to the Town Clerk, Leslie Stout at clerk@harpersferrywv.us.

These are both very important entities and it is hoped that you consider applying .

Council Meeting Report

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At its February meeting the Council:

1. Approved revisions to the General Fund and Water budgets.
2. Heard a presentation from the Water Commission on justification for a proposed water rate schedule adjustment and rate increase.
3. Referred proposed changes to Ordinance 905 "Water" to the Ordinance Review Committee and scheduled a special council meeting for first reading.
4. Approved \$1000 for Music on the Ridge, to take place in June.
5. Discussed B&O tax collection and the Mayor's appointment of the Budget and Finance Committee as his designee in B&O tax matters.
6. Discussed H.B. 4333, which will cut 15% of revenue from lottery and table games to local governments.
7. Discussed revisions to the employee manual dealing with computer and internet usage and referred edited changes to the Office Operations Committee.

Proposed Water Rate Increase

The Water Commission has proposed a rate increase due to an increase in operational costs. The Water Works staff has worked diligently over the past two years to control costs and the Town of Harpers Ferry has been diligent in pursuing delinquent customers. However, the cost to maintain our water main lines and to provide quality water has exceeded budgetary expectations. The day-to-day problems of the aging infrastructure continue to arise and have been worsened with the severe winter conditions. In the meanwhile, repairs must be made and bond, State and Federal obligations must be satisfied.

Under the proposed new rates the minimum water bill will rise from \$21.69 to \$24.80, an increase of \$3.11 per month. The number of water usage categories has been reduced from four to two. Water customers who use 30,000 gallons or less per month will be charged \$12.40 per thousand gallons. Water over 30,000 gallons per month will be charged \$8.95 per thousand gallons. The new rates are expected to generate approximately \$75,000 additional revenue for the year.

The Harpers Ferry Town Council will hold two readings on this issue. The first will be on February 24, at 6:45 p.m. in the Town Hall. All interested members of the public are encouraged to attend.

Submitted by: Barbara Humes, Chair

Harpers Ferry in Ice, Feb 5 2014



Photos by: Kathryn Payne

Hard Working Water Works Staff

The staff at the Water Works has been working hard to keep our water service up and running during these weeks of sub-freezing weather conditions, snow, and ice. They have been outdoors for days in below-freezing temperatures to fix broken street mains. They have taken shifts during 24 hour periods to man the pumps at the water plant around the clock to ensure that our tanks remain full especially as we experience a series of winter storm strikes.



Chris & Brandon

Missing from photo:

Josh & Andrew

Ice caused multiple trees and branches to fall across Bakerton Road and around town and the Water Works staff has assisted the town in removing these obstructions. Fortunately, all the hazardous trees at the water plant were cleared out last year, so we have no danger there.

Meter readings this month had to be estimated due to the snow and single degree weather that occurred during the reading period. Our thanks and appreciation go out to Water System Manager Josh Carter, and his crew Brandon Chualas, Chris Styer, and Andrew Whittington.

Harpers Ferry / Bolivar PSD

Recently, erroneous public comments were made about sewage overflow at the PSD sewage treatment plant. The District would like to address the concerns of the effect of heavy rains and storms, that cause inflow and infiltration to the wastewater treatment plant. When the groundwater level exceeds the height of the collections system mains, groundwater enters into the pipes, and is carried to the wastewater treatment plant. This used to be a major issue for our treatment plant. Our normal operating procedure would be to monitor the flow reducing the air to the treatment process, to allow the inflow and infiltration to flow through the plant while keeping the solids in the treatment facility. The problem was addressed in our Phase 1 of the treatment plant upgrade, by installing a belt filter press to remove excess solids from the treatment process. The process allowed us to treat our waste more efficiently and to handle higher storm flows.

Inflow and infiltration are issues in every wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment facility in the nation. We are now entering into Phase II of our treatment plant and pumping stations upgrade to better cope with these issues. Thus we will update and replace equipment that is in our facility, that was original to the plant in 1978. We are also updating one of our main sewer lift station on Old Furnace Road.

By PSC rules it is the Harpers Ferry/Bolivar PSD responsibility to provide sewer service to any customer that is in our coverage area or district.

James A. Addy – Chairman, Robert Hardy – Treasurer, Edmund Stazyk - Secretary

Valentine Fun Facts

- Richard Cadbury produced the first box of chocolates for Valentines Day in the late 1800's.
- More than 35 million heart shaped boxes of chocolate will be sold for Valentines Day.
- Over \$1 billion worth of chocolate is purchased for Valentines day in the U.S.
- Out of 73% of people who buy flowers for Valentines Day, 27% of them are women.
- Red roses are considered the flower of love because the color red stands for strong romantic feelings.
- 189 million stems of roses are sold in the U.S. on Valentines Day.
- 145 million Valentines are sent out each year in the U.S.
- Women purchase approximately 85% of Valentines cards
- About 3% of pet owners will give Valentines Day gifts to their pets.
- 220,000 is the average number of wedding proposals on Valentines Day.



Notice to All Residents and Property Owners

Now that Punxsutawney Phil has predicted that we are due an additional six more weeks of winter, our snow possibilities will continue. I want to remind every resident and property owner of their responsibilities regarding the removal of snow on sidewalks that are adjacent to their property. Unfortunately, during the week of January 27 one of our local residents, while walking down the sidewalk on High Street, slipped and fell on the ice and snow and sustained a major break to their arm. This accident could have been prevented if the sidewalk had been properly maintained by the property owner. In order to protect the safety of our residents and visitors I have asked Chief Brown to closely monitor this situation and proceed with the necessary action to ensure compliance. I have also taken steps to make certain that seasonal business owners fully comply with this requirement. The Town ordinance governing this regulation states:

909.04 All owners or occupants of property within the Town shall remove, or cause to be removed, the snow from the sidewalks adjacent to their property within four hours after the snow has ceased to fall; provided, however, that should the snow fall during the night or on a Sunday, it shall be removed, within four hours after sunrise on the following day. (Ord. 86-1. Reinstated)

*Thank you for your cooperation.
Greg Vaughn*

The Role of the Ordinance Compliance Officer in Harpers Ferry

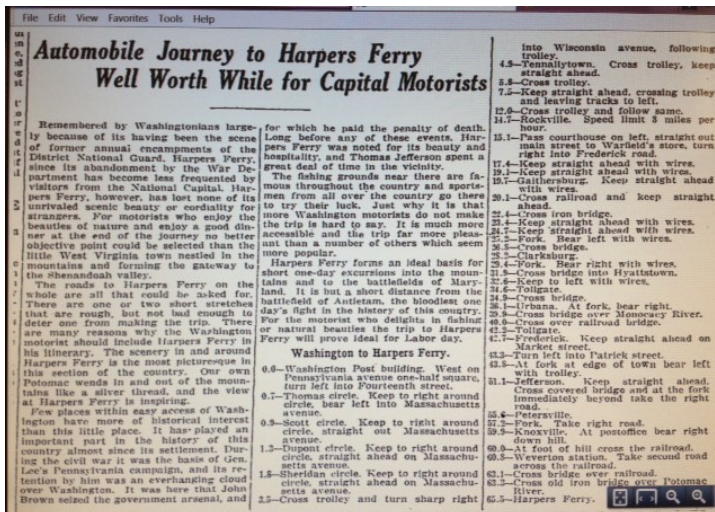
Recently the Town Council approved the hiring of a part-time Ordinance Compliance Officer. Since this will be a new concept for us, I thought it may be beneficial for you to have a clear understanding of the role and functions of this position. Most jurisdictions have similar positions although it may be titled differently. The responsibility of Harpers Ferry's Ordinance Compliance Officer is to ensure that all property, business, and building and zoning regulations are being fairly and consistently enforced. Specifically, the Ordinance Compliance Officer will enforce ordinances related to business signage, property maintenance and neglect, residential and commercial construction permits, demolition and renovation, property and animal nuisances, zoning and land use, and other similar regulations.

The incumbent will be expected to routinely patrol the town, investigate complaints, conduct inspections, and attempt to resolve issues by first informing, clarifying, and discussing. When necessary, the Ordinance Compliance Officer will have the authority to issue citations and assess fines as authorized by the Town's codified ordinances.

The intent of this limited part-time position is to bring a degree of fairness, stability, and consistency to the enforcement of our regulations. It is unacceptable that some of our ordinances are being ignored and not enforced. Each of us has an expectation that established community standards are being consistently and fairly enforced. When this occurs, a better quality of living is the end result. Let's continue to make Harpers Ferry the crown jewel that we all expect.

Please call me if you have any questions or need a clarification. We can make a difference if we all agree to work together.

Greg Vaughn



**DC to HF by Car
1914**

<http://tinurl.com/prsxjhx>

Harpers Ferry covered in the beautiful white stuff !!!!

February 14 2014

How much did we get????



Photo by: Kathryn Payne



Where is the fire hydrant ?



Anyone want to take a drive on Hog Alley?

Photos by: Josh Carter



Looking up High Street

Communicating with the Mayor or Council

Mayor	Greg Vaughn	<i>hfmayor@frontier.com</i>
Recorder	Kevin Carden	<i>kevin.carden@harpersferrywv.us</i>
Council	Betsy Bainbridge	<i>betsybainbridge@yahoo.com</i>
Members	Jerry Hutton	<i>jerwar@frontiernet.net</i>
	Dan Riss	<i>fdrfdr@comcast.net</i>
	Charlotte Thompson	<i>charlotte.thompson@harpersferrywv.us</i>
	Helen "Hap" Becker	<i>hap.becker@harpersferrywv.us</i>
Town Hall	Phone: 304-535-2206	<i>clerk@harpersferrywv.us</i>

Newsletter Information:

Editor: Christy Huddle
Layout: Leslie Stout

Next deadline: March 7, 2014

Email for submittal rules and deadline or to be added to the notification list.

Anyone wishing to review any of the documents or information considered by the Council (the Council "packet") for past (or pending) meetings can find them on the town website (www.harpersferrywv.us) under "Council Docs." The documents are posted to the website the Friday before regular Council meetings. A paper copy is also available in a public meeting notebook available at Town Hall.