

**Corporation of Harpers Ferry
Budget and Finance Committee**

Minutes – March 24, 2025

Members Present: Chair Storm DiCostanzo
Chris Craig (recording minutes)
Nina Armstrong (remote)

Others Present: Finance Director Deb Kelly
Parks and Recreation chair Pat Morse
Town Clerk Virliisa Breeden
Police Officer Corbin

Mr. DiCostanzo Called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm.

Agenda: Mr. Craig moved to accept the agenda, with flexibility for guest attendees. Mr. DiCostanzo seconded; passed unanimously.

1. Approval of Minutes – *Mr. DiCostanzo moved to approve the February 24, 2025 minutes as presented. Mr. Craig seconded; passed with two ayes and one abstention.*

4.b. Discussion & Action regarding plants for lower town hanging baskets

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend spending up to \$500 to refresh the plants in the hanging baskets in Lower Town out of 906 funds. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

4.c. Discussion and Action regarding Parks and Rec's 2025 Earth Day event.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend spending up to \$100 to conduct plantings for Earth Day. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

4.d. Discussion and Action regarding Parks and Rec's Music on the Ridge event.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend allocating \$3,500 from 402 funds and \$3,500 from 906 funds for Music on the Ridge 2025. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend spending \$1,250 to pay a 50% non-refundable deposit to the Bill Papas Project for Music on the Ridge, per contract. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

4.e. Discussion and Action regarding Parks and Rec's Easter egg hunt event.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend spending up to \$250 out of 402 funds for the annual Easter egg hunt. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

2.a. Discussion and Action regarding the WDA grant.

The project is underway and has experienced numerous problems due to engineering issues. Resolving these issues is resulting in some savings, some additional expenses, and considerable delays. Negotiation with the both the engineering firm and with the contractor is forthcoming.

3.f. Discussion and Action regarding HFPD pension program.

Officer Corbin presented his findings on a possible switch of pension program from the present public employment retirement program to the police retirement program created in 2010. Under the new plan officers would be eligible for full retirement at a younger age, and the town's monthly payments would

be lowered. Information on the cost of buying into the new program is still being gathered. The deadline for a decision by the town is July 1.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend adopting the NPFERS retirement program for the HFPD, and explore providing plan conversion buy-in payments for its current full-time officers, pending additional information and analysis. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

2.b. Discussion and Action regarding CDS funding for 2024, 2025, and 2026.

2024 funding has been allocated, and the town is preparing for bids on the work. CDS 2025 funding has been eliminated from the federal budget, and we have been advised to start work on applying for FY2026 CDS funding.

2.c. Discussion and Action regarding maintenance of mains contracting.

Work is underway and progressing under the cost expected.

2.d. Discussion and Action regarding capital capacity and tap fee.

The town attorney has made a few modifications to the draft policy offering an amnesty period for the capital capacity fee. There will be more discussion on this at the upcoming Town Council meeting.

2.e. Discussion and Action regarding Water Works operational capacity

The new Class 2 operator will be starting work April 1. It is expected this will result in reduction of contracted labor and overtime wage expenses.

2.f. Discussion and Action regarding sludge removal at the water plant.

The vendor is analyzing the sludge to know more about the method and location of disposal.

2.g. Discussion and Action regarding water works budget revision.

A budget revision is being worked on.

2.h. Discussion and Action regarding 2026 water works budget.

No report at this time.

3.a. Discussion and Action regarding collection agency contracting.

The policy is complete and will be sent to the agency in the near future.

3 b. Discussion and Action regarding the Weaver-Gillison House.

Payment has been made for the first phase of the work. Some work beyond that first phase has been done, but no additional payments have been made.

3.c. Discussion and Action regarding monthly invoice review.

Monthly invoices were presented and briefly discussed. GDF invoices are under review.

3.d. Discussion and Action regarding opioid funds.

One additional payment has been received, and present funds total \$13,000.

3.e. Discussion and Action regarding Merchants Association Olde Tyme Christmas greenery.

A report on usage of the greenery had been received from the Merchants Association, and estimates were made on the amount of the greenery had been used on town property.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend paying \$537.60 to reimburse the Merchants Association for greenery along the town staircase and metal railing along High Street, for Olde Tyme Christmas 2024, out of 906 funds. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

3.g. Discussion and Action regarding vehicle fleet maintenance.

Nothing new presented.

3.h. Discussion and Action regarding FY25 Budget Revision.

Revision #5 was presented and discussed in detail.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend approving the FY25 Budget Revision as presented. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

3.i. Discussion and Action regarding FY26 Budget Process.

The draft FY26 budget was presented and discussed in detail.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend approving the FY26 Budget as presented. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend approving the FY26 Coal Severance Budget as presented. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

4.a. Discussion and Action regarding DarkSky compliant bulbs for the town's radial wave fixtures.

Mr. DiCostanzo moved to recommend spending up to \$2,500 to purchase 50 additional TCP DarkSky compliant light bulbs. Mr. Craig seconded; passed 3-0.

Adjournment.

Mr. Craig moved to adjourn. Mr. DiCostanzo seconded; passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.