

# CORPORATION OF HARPERS FERRY

## Town Council

### MINUTES

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**Regular Meeting**                      **Monday, 11 August 2025**                      **7:00 p.m.**  
**Town Hall • 1000 W Washington Street, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425**

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The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Vaughn, followed by a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Member	Title	Status
Greg Vaughn	Mayor	Present
Kevin Carden	Recorder	Present
Chris Craig	Councilmember	Present
Greg “Storm” DiCostanzo	Councilmember	Present
Jesse Z. Melton	Councilmember	Present <i>(by telephone)</i>
Christian Pechuekonis	Councilmember	Present
David Simmons	Councilmember	Present

The agenda was approved as amended.

There were two public comments:

- Ranson City Council member Amanda Stroud spoke about population decline and the need for affordable housing in Harpers Ferry.
- Lynn Pechuekonis spoke about population decline in Harpers Ferry and gave some recommendations for a forward-looking approach to addressing it.

**1. Mayor’s announcements.**

The Mayor announced that a letter was recently received from a tourist who had a medical emergency. Sergeant Michael Armentrout of the Harpers Ferry Police Department was commended for his attention to helping and comforting this individual until paramedics arrived. Chief John Brown read the letter aloud to great applause.

**2. Recorder’s announcements.**

The Recorder clarified his remarks from last month’s regular Town Council meeting, that the commissions and committees must submit signed hard copies of minutes.

**3. Community announcements.**

**a. Hilltop Hotel.**

*No report.*

**b. National Park Service.**

Superintendent Tanya Gossett announced that the Maryland Heights trail has been reopened after the nesting peregrine falcons hatched three fledglings. She commended the Town for co-sponsoring the opening concert of the Appalachian Chamber Music Festival on the historic Storer College lawn. The Superintendent reminded the public that all commercial activities on Park property require a Commercial Use Authorization (CUA). She stated that the Stephen T. Mather Training Center is being absorbed into the Department of the Interior. Amtrak officials will be visiting the Harpers Ferry station tomorrow to assess upgrading the station, including platforms, to be ADA-compliant. Last month, the Superintendent received a letter requesting feedback on a First Energy / Potomac Edison high-voltage transmission line improvement project.

Chris Craig mentioned that he hopes the issue of bicycles on Amtrak will be addressed during the railway officials' visit.

**c. Other.**

*None.*

**4. Approval of minutes.****a. Regular meetings: 10 March 2025, 9 June 2025, 14 July 2025.**

No minutes were submitted for the 10 March and 9 June 2025 regular meetings. The minutes for the 14 July 2025 regular meeting were approved as amended.

**b. Special meetings: 16 June 2025, 29 July 2025.**

No minutes were submitted for the 16 June 2025 special meeting. The minutes for the 29 July 2025 special meeting were approved as submitted.

**5. Town reports.****a. Treasurer's reports and approvals.****i. Review and approval of financial reports: June 2025.**

The June 2025 financial reports were approved as received.

**ii. Approval of invoices and purchases.**

*None.*

**b. Budget and Finance Committee.****i. Discussion and action regarding the WDA grant.**

Storm DiCostanzo said this is part of the \$3.4 million water project, which is wrapping up. He stated that some restorative work still needs to be done, such as landscaping, replacing a reducing valve on Washington Street, etc.

**ii. Discussion and action regarding 2024, 2025, 2026, and beyond Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) funds.**

Storm DiCostanzo said the earliest bids can go out is 20 August 2025 with an objective of opening bids on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October. A matching grant will be coming from the State. We are awaiting the EPA's review before action can be taken on this item.

**iii. Discussion and action regarding maintenance of mains contracting.**

Specifically, this item is concerned with new meter pits to accommodate the new water meters. The item is not ready for action at this time.

**iv. Discussion and action regarding monthly invoice review.**

*Nothing to approve at this time.*

**v. Discussion and action regarding town paving.**

The paving will happen in two parts: Water Works paving, which will be paid from the Water budget, and the rest from the General Fund. A list has been compiled of the worst streets that need to be repaved. This item is not ready for action at this time.

**vi. Discussion and action regarding the Budget and Finance Committee's mission statement.**

<b>Motion</b>	Motion to approve the Budget and Finance Committee's mission statement as amended.
<b>Motion by</b>	Storm DiCostanzo
<b>Second</b>	Chris Craig
<b>YES</b>	7
<b>NO</b>	0
<b>Result</b>	<b>MOTION APPROVED</b>

**vii. Discussion and action regarding opioid settlement funds.**

<b>Motion</b>	Motion for the Budget and Finance Committee to create a task force consisting of Jesse Melton and Michael Zeleke to explore and make recommendations for the Town's opioid funds, reporting to the Budget and Finance Committee.
<b>Motion by</b>	Storm DiCostanzo
<b>Second</b>	Chris Craig
<b>YES</b>	7
<b>NO</b>	0
<b>Result</b>	<b>MOTION APPROVED</b>

**c. Planning Commission.****i. Planning Commission report.**

Jesse Melton reported that the Planning Commission has worked with the State on a priorities and timeline matrix.

**d. Internal Operations Committee.****i. Discussion and action regarding Internal Operations Committee's mission statement.**

<b>Motion</b>	Motion to approve the Internal Operations Committee's mission statement as amended.
<b>Motion by</b>	Storm DiCostanzo
<b>Second</b>	Chris Craig
<b>YES</b>	7
<b>NO</b>	0
<b>Result</b>	<b>MOTION APPROVED</b>

**ii. Discussion and action regarding Town logo.**

The designer is close to having a finished product, but it was not ready in time for this meeting.

**iii. Discussion and action regarding Town website overhaul.**

This item is pending approval of the Town logo before it can be completed.

**e. Water Commission.****i. General report from Public Works Administrator.**

Stephen Paradis submitted a graph of water usage and billing over the last several months. He reported that in June-July, the unaccounted-for water usage was about 35.6%, less than it has been.

**ii. General report from Water Commission.**

*No report at this time.*

**iii. Discussion and action regarding an appointment to the Water Commission.**

The following applicant was nominated for appointment to the vacant position on the Water Commission:

Applicant  
Jay Srivastava

Nominated by  
Chris Craig

<b>Action</b>	Appointment to the Water Commission.
<b>YES</b>	Carden, Craig, DiCostanzo, Melton, Pechuekonis, Simmons, Vaughn
<b>NO</b>	<i>none</i>

<b>Result</b>	<b>Jay Srivastava appointed to the Water Commission with term expiring 31 December 2025.</b>
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**f. Dark Skies Committee.**

**i. Discussion only regarding an update from the Dark Skies Committee.**

Karen Sagisi reported that a draft ordinance is being finalized and will come to the Town Council for approval at a later date.

**6. Unfinished business.**

**a. Discussion and action regarding a resolution in support of the local Job Corps program.**

This item was approved at last month's meeting. It will be sent to several federal and state officials.

**7. New business.**

**a. Discussion and action regarding the creation of a committee to study population decline in Harpers Ferry.**

<b>Motion</b>	Motion to empanel a three-person pilot committee to determine the mission and composition of a committee to examine the root causes of population decline in Harpers Ferry, examine the town's appeal to potential new residents, and make recommendations for attracting new full-time residents.
<b>Motion by</b>	Storm DiCostanzo
<b>Second</b>	Jesse Melton
<b>YES</b>	7
<b>NO</b>	0
<b>Result</b>	<b>MOTION APPROVED</b>

**b. Discussion and action regarding High Speed Rail Alliance's request for support.**

<b>Motion</b>	Motion to authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of support for the High Speed Rail Alliance's request.
<b>Motion by</b>	Storm DiCostanzo
<b>Second</b>	Chris Craig
<b>YES</b>	7
<b>NO</b>	0
<b>Result</b>	<b>MOTION APPROVED</b>

**c. Discussion and action regarding the Purdue Pharma / Sackler family settlement.**

<b>Motion</b>	Motion to authorize the Mayor to accept the Purdue Pharma / Sackler family settlement.
<b>Motion by</b>	Storm DiCostanzo
<b>Second</b>	Chris Craig
<b>YES</b>	7

NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

Motion to adjourn by David Simmons, second by Christian Pechuekonis. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

*The above minutes are true and correct, as approved.*

Mayor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder: Kevin Carden.

Date: 8 SEP 2025