

CORPORATION OF HARPERS FERRY

Town Council

MINUTES

Regular Meeting **Monday, 8 September 2025** **7:00 p.m.**
Town Hall • 1000 W Washington Street, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425

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
Christian Pechuekonis	Councilmember	Present
David Simmons	Councilmember	Present (<i>by telephone</i>)

The agenda was approved as amended. Item 5.b.ii. is stricken from the agenda. Item 7.e. will come after item 4.b. Item 5.d.xii. will follow item 5.d.7.

There were no public comments.

1. Mayor’s announcements.

The Mayor announced that during Labor Day weekend, the merchants in Lower Town advised him that this holiday weekend was one of the best sale days they have ever had.

2. Recorder’s announcements.

None.

3. Community announcements.

a. Hilltop Hotel.

Laurel Ziemianski announced that the Jefferson County Commission considered the renewal of the agreement with the State, which was approved. The general contractors are finishing their final estimates for construction. Festivities will be held this Saturday at 6 p.m. at the Promontory Overlook to celebrate the release of Lynn Pechuekonis’ latest book, “Among the Mountains”.

b. National Park Service.

Superintendent Tanya Gossett announced that the Labor Day weekend was very busy, and she thanked the Harpers Ferry Police Department for their great job managing the streets. Andrew Lee will be hosting a webinar to introduce the role of the Gateway Coordinator, which position he was appointed to for the Park. Byron Bridge bicycle ramp construction will begin next month. The old gas station on the Drumheller property behind the Jefferson County CVB building will be demolished soon. The community is advised that canon firing demonstrations will take place at Bolivar Heights on the 13th of September.

c. Other.

Chris Craig announced that the Old Armory Canal Trail (Potomac Street Extended) has been cleared of fallen trees and high weeds. On 4 October, Canal Trail will hold a viewing of Garnet Jex paintings at Camp Hill-Wesley United Methodist Church. On the same day, an exhibition of Jex paintings will be held in Sharpsburg, Maryland. A grant to West Virginia Rivers has been reinstated to address PFAS in the water; four open houses will be held in late September concerning this issue.

4. Approval of minutes.**a. Regular meetings: 9 June 2025, 11 August 2025.**

The minutes for the 9 June 2025 regular meeting were approved as amended. The minutes for the 11 August 2025 regular meeting were approved as submitted.

b. Special meetings: 21 August 2025, 28 August 2025.

The minutes for the 21 August and 28 August 2025 special meetings were approved as submitted.

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

The July 2025 financial reports were approved as received.

ii. Approval of invoices and purchases.

Motion	Motion to approve the invoices and purchases, pending approval of Police Department items (later on this agenda at item 5.b.xii.).
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

b. Budget and Finance Committee.**i. Discussion and action regarding WDA grant and approval of Resolution #10.**

Motion	Motion to approve Change Order #3.
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Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

Motion	Motion to approve WDA Grant Resolution #10.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

ii. Discussion and action regarding Non-Discrimination Assurances and Policy.

Stricken from this agenda.

iii. Discussion action regarding update regarding CDS funding for 2024, 2026, and beyond.

Storm DiCostanzo reported that progress is being made toward acquiring a Congressional grant. The Governor's Office will be approached for a matching grant.

iv. Discussion regarding sludge removal at the water plant.

The sludge removal has been completed. Sludge removal should be kept up on an annual basis.

v. Discussion regarding Town street paving.

The advertisement was posted, bids have been received, and bid opening will be held this Wednesday.

vi. Discussion and action regarding Town logo, colors, and website project.

Motion	Motion to approve payment to Wicked Design in the amount of \$1,425.00 from Line 440 City Hall Contracted Services for work on the new Town logo.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Jesse Melton
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

vii. Discussion and action regarding FY 2026 General Fund Revision 2.

Motion	Motion to approve FY 2026 General Fund Revision 2. (ROLL CALL VOTE)
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo

Second	Jesse Melton
YES	Carden, Craig, DiCostanzo, Melton, Pechuekonis, Simmons, Vaughn
NO	<i>none</i>
Result	MOTION APPROVED

viii. Discussion and action regarding snow and ice removal for the 2025-2026 season.

Motion	Motion to put out an advertisement for bids for the snow and ice removal contract for the 2025-2026 winter season.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Jesse Melton
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

ix. Discussion and action regarding previously approved funding for Parks and Recreation Commission's 2025 Scarecrow Contest.

Motion	Motion to approve up to \$300 from Line 906 Arts and Humanities for the 2025 Scarecrow Contest.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

x. Discussion and action regarding Potomac Street and other bank accounts.

Motion	Motion to close the Potomac Street bank account at Jefferson Security Bank and transfer the funds to the General Fund.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

Motion	Motion to direct the Budget and Finance Committee to develop specifications to explore banking options at local financial institutions.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Jesse Melton
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

xi. Discussion regarding parking revenue.

Several revenue checks from ParkMobile were not received by the Town, but the vendor will send out new checks. The Town has now entered into an ACH arrangement with ParkMobile, so that is how revenue will be received going forward. There is also an interest in improving cellular communication in Town so that parking customers can access the ParkMobile app. Jesse Melton proposed that a task force be put together to explore this idea.

xii. Discussion and action regarding Police Department equipment.

Motion	Motion to approve payment of \$16,742.42 to Axon Enterprise for tasers for the Police Department that were approved in December 2024.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

Motion	Motion to enter into a five-year service agreement with Axon Enterprise in the amount of \$4,133.58 annually for Police Department body camera equipment and service, in addition to \$3,167.10 for FY 2025 annual maintenance for body cameras.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

c. Ordinance Review Committee.**i. Ordinance Review Committee report.**

Kevin Carden reported that the Ordinance Review Committee recommended approval of the ORC mission statement as amended. Amendments to Article 735, allowing garage sales, was also recommended for approval. The Committee also discussed amendments to Article 1711 Floodplain; the Planning Commission will be sending a draft of recommended changes in that Article to the ORC, as well as to FEMA and the State for their approval. Afterward, it will be considered for approval by the ORC and the Town Council. Amendments to Article 130 Uniform Removal of Members of Commissions, Committees, and Boards were considered to make the grounds for removal more specific, at the request of the Town Attorney. In conjunction with that, the Committee discussed the nomination and appointment process for members of commissions, committees, and boards, as well as transjurisdictional collaboration between the Harpers Ferry and Bolivar Planning Commissions.

ii. **Discussion and action regarding approval of Ordinance Review Committee mission statement.**

Motion	Motion to approve the Ordinance Review Committee mission statement as amended.
Motion by	Chris Craig
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	6
NO	1
Result	MOTION APPROVED

The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to format the approved ORC mission statement to match the formatting of the other committees' mission statements. After reformatting, each of the mission statements should be placed on the Town Council page of the website.

iii. **Discussion and action on first reading for approval of Ordinance 2025-02 Garage Sales.**

Motion	Motion to approve first reading for approval of Ordinance 2025-02 Garage Sales.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Christian Pechuekonis
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

iv. **Discussion and action on potential ordinance amendment for transjurisdictional collaboration.**

Motion	Motion to direct the Ordinance Review Committee to review and draft an ordinance allowing transjurisdictional collaboration between the Harpers Ferry and Bolivar Planning Commissions.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

v. **Discussion and action on potential ordinance amendments addressing how members are appointed to commissions.**

Motion	Motion to direct the Ordinance Review Committee to examine, amend, and harmonize Town ordinances relating to the appointment of members to commissions and committees as deemed necessary.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo

Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

vi. Discussion and action regarding potential ordinance amendment to remove the requirement for physically signed hard copies of meeting minutes.

Motion	Motion to direct the Ordinance Review Committee to examine amending Town ordinances that require physically-signed meeting minutes.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Jesse Melton
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

d. Board of Zoning Appeals.

i. Discussion and action regarding the use of markers and signs on residentially zoned properties.

Motion	Motion to direct the Ordinance Review Committee to explore an ordinance addressing signs and historic markers on private property.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

e. Planning Commission.

i. Planning Commission report.

Zach Morse reported that the Planning Commission made a recommendation to the Ordinance Compliance Officer that the land disturbance on Fillmore Street follow the stormwater ordinance. Prioritization of Comprehensive Plan items is being reviewed, and work is ongoing toward a final version of the Plan. The Commission revisited the street paving plan. Henry Clay Street was given the highest priority, followed by paving and non-paving repairs. The Planning Commission had no further comments or recommendations on the proposed language amending Ordinance Article 1711 Floodplain. The ordinance will now need to be sent to FEMA for its review, but it is unclear who handles sending it to FEMA. The Planning Commission discussed a potential driveway for the Weaver house.

- ii. **Discussion and action on Planning Commission's recommendation to amend Part 13 of the Codified Ordinances of Harpers Ferry to define the existing third zoning category.**

Motion	Motion to recommend that the Ordinance Review Committee draft a definition for a third zoning category (the areas shown in green on the zoning map) in the ordinances for a conservation plan.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

- iii. **Discussion and action regarding the installation of turtle crossing signage on Henry Clay Street.**

Motion	Motion to allow the installation of turtle crossing signage on Henry Clay Street and to entertain similar requests in other areas of Town.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

f. Parks and Recreation Commission.

i. Parks and Recreation Commission report.

Zach Morse reported on upcoming Parks and Recreation events, which are also posted on the Town website.

ii. Discussion and action regarding access to the Town's social media.

This item is already being addressed, so no action is necessary at this time.

g. Internal Operations Committee.

i. General report.

David Simmons reported that the IOC is willing to work with the Mayor on a pending personnel issue.

h. Water Commission.

i. General report from Public Works Administrator.

Stephen Paradis reported that the unaccounted-for water rate was down to 21% for the month of August 2025, the lowest it has been for possibly decades. Terra Works started progress today on paving, which should be completed within about three weeks. Ten truckloads of sludge were removed at the water plant.

ii. General report from Water Commission.

Mike Rock reported that in the past ten years, Elks Run between Sam Michaels Park and Route 430 has dried up. This is concerning, since Elks Run is the primary source of water for the Harpers Ferry Water Works.

i. Dark Skies Committee.

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

Karen Sagisi reported that the Dark Skies Committee will meet tomorrow evening to continue work on a draft ordinance for presentation to the Town Council.

6. Unfinished business.

a. Discussion and action regarding engineer's proposal for repairs to Henry Clay Street.

Motion	Motion to send the engineer's proposal to the Budget and Finance Committee for a recommendation on how to proceed with it.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

7. New business.

a. Discussion and action regarding the negotiations of the Post Office lease renewal.

Motion	Motion to send negotiations on Post Office lease renewal to the Budget and Finance Committee for a recommendation to the Town Council.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

b. Discussion and action regarding seat expiration dates for Commissions.

Motion	Motion to adjust seat expirations for the Tree Commission as presented.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Chris Craig
YES	7
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED

c. Discussion and action regarding developing a plan to have all Town-owned streets surveyed.

There is currently no survey of all the Town's streets. The Planning Commission will review this item further.

d. Discussion and action regarding establishing a plan to repurpose and fund modification to the first-floor vacant space at the Town Hall.

This item will be brought back for further deliberation next month.

e. Discussion and action regarding waiver of Zoning Compliance Permit Application fee.

Mayor Vaughn recused himself from discussion and action on this item.

Motion	Motion to waive the Zoning Compliance Permit Application fee for the project at 395 York Street for the Trustees of the Harper Cemetery.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	1
Result	MOTION APPROVED

Motion to adjourn by Jesse Melton, second by Storm DiCostanzo. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

The above minutes are true and correct, as approved.

Mayor: _____ Date: _____

Recorder: _____ Date: _____