



Corporation of Harpers Ferry

Town Council

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Monday, July 13, 2026
7:00 p.m.

Town Hall
1000 Washington Street, 2nd Floor
Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Acting Mayor Carden

Member	Title	Status
Greg Vaughn	Mayor	Absent
Kevin Carden	Recorder	Present as Acting Mayor
Chris Craig	Councilmember	Present
Greg "Storm" DiCostanzo	Councilmember	Present
Jesse Z. Melton	Councilmember	Present
Christian Pechuekonis	Councilmember	Present
David Simmons	Councilmember	Absent

Mr. DiCostanzo was appointed as the Recording Officer for the meeting, to be assisted by Mr. Craig.

II. Approval of agenda.

- Item 5.g.ii was removed and the agenda approved as amended (Motion by Mr. Craig, Second by Mr. DiCostanzo)

III. Public comments on agenda items only.

Jacob White of the Jefferson County Foundation commented about the agenda and minutes. He called for greater transparency through timely and complete government document access.

Zach Morse praised the debut Music at the Gazebo event, and noted that the Town of Bolivar's Bicentennial celebration would take place on July 18th at 1 p.m. at the Bolivar Children's Park.

1. Mayor's announcements.

Acting Mayor Carden thanked Christie Huddle and her husband Robert Nelson for their years of service with the Tree Commission (18 and 6 years, respectively.)

2. Recorder comments and updates.

There were none.

3. Community Announcements.

a. Hilltop Hotel. No update.

b. National Park Service.

Superintendent Gossett reported that the Byron Bridge temporary pedestrian stairway is scheduled to be closed on July 20th and replaced with the permanent one. It is expected to take 3 to 4 weeks. Amtrak will be conducting work on the train station on July 23rd and then resuming from July 27th through August 3rd, rendering half the parking lot inaccessible. The mayor will be notified once the dates are confirmed. The “Presidential stairs” at The Point were deemed to be a safety hazard by Park engineers. They will be closed indefinitely. Access to The Point at river level will still be possible via other routes. The Appalachian Chamber Music Festival will hold a concert on the Storer College ground on Aug 7th at 7 p.m., featuring the music of Don Redmond and George Gershwin. Space for the concert can be reserved online at appalachianchamber.org

c. Other.

There were no other announcements.

4. Approval of Minutes.

No minutes were presented.

5. Town Reports.

a. Landmarks Commission.

i. General report.

Commission member George Owens reported on HLC’s June 18th meeting. He reported that the body discussed Appendix A, and a porch railing at 1227 West Ridge. Mr. Owens also reported that HLC sent correspondence to the WV Division of Economic Development regarding the state of historical structures inside the TDD (Hill Top Hotel development area.)

b. Planning Commission.

i. General report.

Chair Zach Morse reported that development of an infrastructure coordination plan was discussed.

ii. Discussion and action regarding Planning Commission’s recommendations regarding paper street encroachments.

Mr. Morse reported that the Commission examined multiple encroachments on town rights of way. He said that the Planning Commission decided to defer to Tree Commission on related issues. First recommendation is installing bollards marking rights

of way, for greater awareness. The second step will be for the Code Enforcement Officer to identify paper street encroachments that should be addressed.

Mr. Melton presented a statement regarding paper street incursions.

Motion	Motion that the statement about incursions on town paper streets be included, as presented, in the August, September and October town newsletters, and posted on the bulletin boards.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

c. Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Library Board

i. Discussion and action regarding an appointment to the Library Board.

Nomination	Karen Sagisi
Nomination by	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	Storm DiCostanzo, Chris Craig, Jesse Melton, Christian Pechuekonis, Acting Mayor Carden
NO	None
Result	Karen Sagisi appointed to the Library Board for a 5 year term ending June 30, 2031

It was noted that the town's other seat is held by Maggie Rock, whose term runs through June 30, 2027.

d. Water Commission.

i. General report from the Public Works Administrator.

Unaccounted water was 39% in June. 3.4 million gallons, and filtered 5.5 million. The number is expected to be as low as 30% once all improvement projects have been completed.

770 new radio read water meters have been installed. 20 pits need remediation to enable the water to be shut off. Roughly ten inside units have valve issues that need to be remediated. Both Bolivar apartments now have the new meters. HFWW is coordinating with the Park Service to install meters at its facilities. Bills are currently going out using a combination of the mechanical and radio read meters. The Park issued a letter of no objection for the radio read collection sites. The lease with PATC is nearly completed, and installation of the collection point is expected by the end of the week. Sensor signals from the water tanks have not been working, and the tanks are being monitored closely to prevent overflow until the sensors are fixed.

ii. Water Commission Report

Mr. Craig reported that the Commission is working on methods to address outsized customer water bills for the March cycle.

e. Treasurer's reports and approvals.

i. Review and approval of financial reports: May 2026.

The Finance Officer reported that for the General Fund, with the fiscal year at 91.6%, Income is running at 103% to budget, and Expenses at 96%. Water Works budget is on Revision 2, and revenue is on target, with expenses at 82.5%.

Motion	Motion to approve the financial reports as presented
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

ii. Approval of invoices and purchases.

The Finance Officer presented the invoices and purchases, one of which remains under review.

Motion	Motion that the invoices and purchases be approved as submitted, with the police vehicle repair invoice to be reviewed by the Police Chief and Mayor before disbursing the funds to the vendor.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

f. Budget and Finance Committee.

i. Discussion and action regarding Distribution System Phase I.

The easements set in motion at the last meeting are in process. Construction is expected to begin in August.

ii. Discussion and action regarding FY24 Distribution System Phase II – Water Meters.

Mr. DiCostanzo additionally reported that data integration work is underway, and that EPA (the sponsoring entity) was impressed with HFWW's preparation and implementation during their site visit. App and portal access is expected to be available later in the year, and data from the meters has already been helpful in identifying lost water spots.

iii. Discussion and action regarding update regarding FY26 CDS Distribution System Phase III.

The next major water distribution improvement project is in the hands of the engineer and moving forward.

iv. Discussion and action regarding maintenance of mains contracting.

The Finance Officer described work being performed by Green Ridge, including projects on Mercer, Spruce and Putnam streets.

Motion	Motion to spend up to \$10,000 to pay the Green Ridge for maintenance of mains work
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

v. Discussion and action regarding water works vehicle.

Mr. Melton described the Ford Maverick hybrid that was identified to serve HFWW's need for a light-duty vehicle. The monthly lease is \$610/month, which is under the budgeted amount.

Motion	Move to lease a new Ford Maverick from Frederick Motor Co. with a purchase price of \$29,525 per Ford Financing quote #106108, with a 60-month term at 8.34%.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Jesse Melton
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

vi. Discussion and action regarding water works personnel capacity. *(This item may require executive session.)*

An update was provided. The PWA has a lead for a Class II operator, and is working with a subject matter expert to develop a Facebook ad to attract qualified candidates.

vii. Discussion and action regarding FY27 Coal Severance Revision 1.

The revision increases Coal Severance income by \$70, and the payment to Friendship Fire Department increases accordingly.

Motion	Move to approve FY27 Coal Severance Revision 1 budget as presented
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig

YES	DiCostanzo, Craig, Melton, Pechuekonis, Carden
NO	None
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

viii. Discussion and action regarding Police Department training.

HFPD requested funds for continuing education, to fulfill training mandates. HFPD would like to have the training conducted along with other local police forces, and bring instructors up from Charleston to conduct it in-person. Costs would include hotel nights, meeting room rental, projector, and per diem.

Motion	Motion to assign up to \$750 to facilitate Police Department continuing education, pending potential collaboration with other local police forces.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

ix. Discussion and action regarding town website.

Work with website vendor Revize continues. Feedback has been solicited from key stakeholders, and information has been supplied to the vendor. After a kickoff call, website buildout will begin.

x. Discussion and action regarding FY27 Historic Landmarks Commission funding request.

There was a brief discussion about HLC's request, which did not arrive with complete information as required by town spending policies.

Motion	Motion to allocate up to \$1,800 to HLC for expenses related to vacant and blighted properties out of 911 (Historic Landmarks Commission), upon receipt of appropriate documentation, to include but not limited to a detailed budget and/or quotes.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

Motion	Motion to allocate up to \$750 to HLC for editing services related to Appendix A out of (Historic Landmarks Commission), upon receipt of appropriate documentation, to include but not limited
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	to a detailed budget and/or quotes.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

xi. Discussion and action regarding FY27 budgeted funding for the Appalachian Chamber Music Festival.

Mr. DiCostanzo described this year's ACMF events in Harpers Ferry that funded in part by the town.

Motion	Move to distribute up to \$3,500 to the Appalachian Chamber Music Festival out of 906 (Arts & Humanities), upon receipt of appropriate documentation.
Motion by	Storm DiCostanzo
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

g. Ordinance Review Committee

i. Ordinance Review Committee report.

The Committee is working on five items.

ii. Discussion and action on first reading for approval of Ordinance 2026-04 Signs, pertaining to historic and solicitation signage.

No additional update.

h. Internal Office Operations.

i. General report.

There have been no IOOC meetings since the last regular Town Council meeting.

6. New Business.

a. Discussion and action regarding an open house hiring event.

Mr. Pechuekonis presented a draft idea to attract attention to the job opportunities with the town, and foster wide community engagement. He was encouraged to continue developing the idea.

b. Discussion and action regarding previously approved but deferred parking enforcement expansion and permit announcement.

Mr. Melton brought forward a parking enforcement announcement deferred since February due to administrative capacity issues.

Motion	Motion that an announcement be made informing that every home and business in town that parking enforcement throughout town will commence on August 15, 2026, be made in the next town newsletter and a mailer sent at the same time.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Storm DiCostanzo
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

c. Discussion and action regarding completing the installation of signs at intersections of paper streets.

Mr. Melton described Planning Commission's discussions about installing posts to make clear where paper streets begin and end. Additional signs and supplies will be needed.

Motion	Move that the Mayor work with the Maintenance Department to develop an inventory of paper street signage and materials, and to spend up to \$500 to install public property signs at the entrance and exit points of paper streets out of Streets – Materials and supplies.
Motion by	Jesse Melton
Second	Chris Craig
YES	5
NO	0
Result	MOTION APPROVED 5-0

Adjournment at 7:54 p.m. (Motion by Mr. Craig, Second by Mr. Pechuekonis)