

MIDDLETOWN TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 13, 2015

The Middletown Town Council Meeting was held in the Council Chamber, 7875 Church Street, Middletown, VA on Monday April 13, 2015 at 7:10 p.m.

Town Council Present

Mayor Charles Harbaugh, IV
Councilor Tom Simon
Councilor Carole Snyder Jones
Councilor Jeff Pennington
Councilor Carolyn Aliff
Councilor Scott Fink

Town Council Absent

Councilor George Smith

Staff Present

Municipal Clerk Christina Smith
Chief of Police Phil Breedon

1. Call to Order

Mayor Harbaugh called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. Moment of Silence

Mayor Harbaugh asked for a moment of silence.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Harbaugh led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Roll Call

All Councilors were present with the exception of Councilor Smith.

5. Set Agenda

Mayor Harbaugh asked for a motion to set the agenda. Councilor Snyder Jones made a motion to set the agenda. Councilor Fink seconded the motion. All Councilors were in favor.

6. Citizen Comments

Tess Klimm 7930 Main Street Middletown, VA please see attached letter for her comments. Tess Klimm also brought a letter on behalf of Dan Beard which is attached as well.

Joe Stepongzi 125 Trillium Lane Cross Junction, VA states after looking at the information provided there was a series of trustees that were established by the court and I don't know if anyone has talked to them yet. Also the Methodist have the say so because they like to hold on property so I don't know if anyone on the Council has talked to them yet and what their plans are.

Gretchen Coffey 2329 Third Street Middletown, VA states she would like to reiterate what has been said and to make sure the Town Council knows that the members of the Heritage Society do value the history of Middletown and in particular the school house and oldest church building that is still standing. She notes that Mr. Wharton has been to last 3 Heritage meetings and that the Town has a valuable resource in him.

Mark Brown 7994 Main Street Middletown, VA states he is speaking as a member of the public not as a planning commission member. My question is that we just had a public hearing and if I hadn't walked in and heard about it then I would not have known about it. He states he was not sure how it was advertised. He states he is not sure if it was on the website and if so for how long? Mr. Brown states "you" said the Bernstein Family Foundation but there was no opening statement or asking for public comment so I am not sure what the purpose of the public hearing was for? What are we looking at? I would appreciate if the Council could explain to me what we are doing here or what we were supposed to be doing here.

7. Approval of Previous Council Meeting Minutes

Mayor Harbaugh asked for a motion to approve the March 9, 2015 minutes. Councilor Simon made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor Aliff seconded the motion. All Councilors were in favor and the Town Council minutes were approved.

8. Report of the Facilities Committee

Nothing to report

9. Report of the Personnel and Finance Committee

Councilor Snyder Jones made a motion to approve the treasurer report. Councilor Aliff seconded the motion. All Councilors were in favor and the treasurer report was approved.

Councilor Snyder Jones made a motion to abate Personal Property taxes greater than 5 years old in the amount of \$5746.28. Councilor Fink seconded the motion. Mayor Harbaugh asked for a roll call vote.

Councilor Aliff – Yes	Councilor Snyder Jones – Yes
Councilor Pennington – Yes	Councilor Fink – Yes
Councilor Simon – Yes	

Motion carried 5-0

Councilor Snyder Jones made a motion to approve VRS Contribution Resolution. Councilor Aliff seconded the motion. Mayor Harbaugh asked for a roll call vote.

Councilor Aliff – Yes	Councilor Snyder Jones – Yes
Councilor Pennington – Yes	Councilor Fink – Yes
Councilor Simon – Yes	

Motion carried 5-0

Councilor Snyder Jones made a motion to approve the revised Personnel Policy Manual. Councilor Pennington seconded the motion. Mayor Harbaugh asked for a roll call vote.

Councilor Aliff – Yes	Councilor Snyder Jones – Yes
Councilor Pennington – Yes	Councilor Fink – Yes
Councilor Simon – Yes	

Motion carried 5-0

10. Report of the Public Works Committee

Nothing to report

11. Report of Public Safety Committee

Councilor Aliff stated the police report/calls are in the packet.

12. Report of the Ordinance Committee

Nothing to report

13. Report of the Planning and Zoning Committee

Councilor Snyder Jones made a motion to approve the Bernstein Foundation Resolution. Councilor Fink seconded the motion. Mayor Harbaugh asked for a roll call vote.

Councilor Aliff – Yes Councilor Snyder Jones – Yes
Councilor Pennington – Yes Councilor Fink – Yes
Councilor Simon – Yes

Motion carried 5-0

Councilor Fink made a motion to appoint Frederick County Virginia Building Inspections Department as the Town’s Building Official and Inspectors. Councilor Snyder Jones seconded the motion. Mayor Harbaugh asked for a roll call vote.

Councilor Aliff – Yes Councilor Snyder Jones – Yes
Councilor Pennington – Yes Councilor Fink – Yes
Councilor Simon – No

Motion carried 4-1

14. Report of Special Committees

July 4th committee will have a meeting on Tuesday April 21, 2015 @ 6:00 p.m.

15. New or Unfinished Business

Committee Meeting will be April 21, 2015 @ 7:00 p.m.
Work Session Meeting will be May 4, 2015 @ 7:00 p.m.

16. Petitions and Communications

Mayor Harbaugh read the Proclamation for Northern Shenandoah Valley Disability Awareness week 2015 in effect. Councilor Pennington made a motion to approve the Proclamation. Councilor Snyder Jones seconded the motion. All Councilors were in favor and the Proclamation was approved.

17. Adjournment

Mayor Harbaugh adjourned the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

Christina Smith
Town Clerk

Charles H. Harbaugh, IV Mayor

My name is Tess Klimm and my husband and I have lived on Main Street since 1988.

I love the small town community feeling of Middletown and I am very interested in history and have served as the president of the Middletown Heritage Society off and on for several years. I was President when then the Middletown historic district was created and recognized nationally.

I hope the council will authorize the town attorney to research the deeds of the old historic church on Senseney Ave. This Methodist Church is the oldest Protestant/Methodist church remaining in all Frederick County. The only older structure used for religious purposes is the Quaker House on Apple Pie Ridge. This Methodist church built with logs in 1818 served the local community before being deeded to the "coloured community" a short time after the end of civil war. Several persons and parties are investigating grants and other sources to have income to restore and maintain the church in hopes that it might serve the community in a capacity similar to that of St Thomas Chapel.

The Town Council support in this endeavor is appreciated.

April 13, 2015

13 April 2015

Mr. Mayor, Members of the Council and Planning Commission,

Because of pressing family obligations I'm unable to attend the meeting this evening. However, I wanted to briefly present some thoughts on the matter of preserving and protecting the historic small town appeal of Middletown.

We're relatively new members of the Middletown Community, having moved into the Kendall Mills subdivision about two years ago. Like most of our neighbors and new friends, we love the rural, agrarian feel of the area; the mountains surrounding us, rolling fields, orchards, pastures full of crops and livestock, and ready access to the great outdoors. It's serene, beautiful, and you can sense the very real history of the area while walking through Middletown's streets, dining at the Inn, visiting Belle Grove, or walking the battlefield. It's a proud community with a strong historical heritage, and we're happy to be a part of it.

The question at hand is "How to preserve the historic nature of Middletown". The unspoken part of that question is "while keeping it afloat financially". I understand that change with the times is necessary for survival. However, I also understand that moving forward does not necessarily require yielding to someone else's values, values that may not reflect or even respect Middletown's history and sense of community.

As noted to Mayor Harbaugh in private correspondence, I fear that the new McDonald's sign may be a harbinger of things to come, things that could change the character of Middletown as viewed by outsiders and residents alike. Do we want them to see the quiet, inviting, serene country town in the shadows of the mountains, a town teeming with history? Or, do we want them to see a tangled and hectic mess like the one up in Stephens City at exit 307? What kind of first impression do we want to make? What kind of impression do we want visitors to depart with?

There are two parcels of commercially zoned land currently for sale on the exit 302 interchange. That they'll be sold and developed is inevitable. How that occurs is within your control. You have a choice. You can allow the main entrance to Middletown to be defined by a forest of competing commercial signs and define us as just another inconsequential and cluttered stop on the interstate, or you can tell people we're different and that Middletown has the backbone to remain the special place that it is today. You can ensure that new businesses are respectful of who we are and what we represent. It's not a hard decision to make. You just have to do the right thing.

Respectfully,

Dan Beard
414 Riley Mill Lane
Middletown VA