



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 12, Issue 6 ♦ November 16, 2020

From the Mayor

Charles H. Harbaugh, IV

Hello Middletown! I would like to start off by commending the extraordinary efforts of our former Mayor, Ray Steele. Mayor Steele has volunteered countless man hours maintaining the veteran's memorial and this past Veterans Day marked the memorial's 5th anniversary. Ray along with Gary Fletcher, Myron Kremer, and Scott Fletcher, donate their time and materials to maintain the success of the memorial. The dedication Mayor Steele puts into the memorial and the time he spends on the details is what keeps our beautiful memorial going. A lot goes into the everyday upkeep and maintenance and the preparing of the ceremonies held twice a year. If you see Mayor Steele around town, please take a minute to stop and thank him for his selfless acts of continued kindness.

Plan to join us for this year's virtual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony which will be held on Friday November 27, 2020 via Facebook. Stay tuned for further details on the town's Facebook page. The Christmas Parade has been cancelled due to Governor's orders and the rise in COVID-19 cases. We will hold the 5th Annual Christmas House Decorating Contest again this year. The Halloween House Decorating Contest was a huge success with the most entries received to date. If you plan to decorate for the holidays this year, please enter for your chance to win. Entry forms can be found on the town's Facebook page or online at www.middletownva.gov

From the Town Manager/Treasurer

Rebecca Layman

Real Estate and Personal Property bills have been mailed. Please remember to remit payment by the due date to avoid penalties. Please remember if you have sold, traded, disposed of and/or purchased a vehicle you must update your information with Frederick County so that the Town of Middletown can bill you correctly. This helps save time for all parties involved. The town receives all billing information from Frederick County.

Tax bills, both real estate and personal property can be paid online via Invoice Cloud. This process will differ slightly from the water & sewer bill process. You will need to have your tax bill with you in order to complete the payment process. To pay your bill(s) online please visit www.middletownva.gov, click on the online payments button and select property tax and complete the all the fields listed. If you have questions, please call the office.

Unlike years past we ask that you please save your tax bills for tax purposes as there will be a charge should you request additional copies when filing your taxes. There will be an administrative fee of \$3.50 for each bill requested. Due to the large number of request each year we have had to impose this fee to the cover cost.

Elections are over and we have a new council member on board. Councilor George Smith decided not to run again opening a vacancy for a new comer. We thank Councilor Smith for his time served. Please welcome our newest council member Stephanie Mitchell. Stephanie has been a Middletown resident since 2010 and is looking forward to working on many things including town ordinances that need updating. Her term will begin on January 1, 2021.

Let us also welcome back the best leader I have ever worked under! Mayor Charles Harbaugh, IV. His leadership and love for not only the town and its citizens but his employees as well is truly commendable. He exceeds anything I have ever seen. Let us also welcome back Councilor Carolyn Aliff who will be serving her third term on council. She is dedicated in serving her community and we are glad to have her on board for another term. We would also like to welcome back Councilor Shayla Rickard who came to us at a time of need when one of our council members had to resign unexpectedly due to a family illness. Councilor Rickard liked serving so much she ran for a full 4-year term. We are happy to have our re-elected officials back and welcome our newest member.

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SCAMS! Whether by phone or email, scammers are everywhere these days, offering extended car warranties, sweepstake prizes to threatening to sue you or have you arrested if you do not provide money or personal information. Some of the scams we continue to see locally are callers pretending to be from the Social Security Administration or IRS demanding you give them personal information or send them money, and callers stating they are the police and demanding you send money for fines or bail to get a family member or friend out of jail. These are just a few of the scams that go on daily both locally and nationwide. Some tips to avoid being scammed:

- **Be suspicious of any call from a government agency asking for money or information.** Government agencies don't use threats and they don't call you demanding money.
- **Don't trust your phone's caller ID** because it can easily be faked.
- **Never pay with a gift card, wire transfer, or cryptocurrency** in response to phone call or email demands or threats.

If you believe you are being scammed or are the victim of a scam, contact the Middletown Police Department at 540-868-0535 or stop by our office at 7735 Main Street, Monday thru Friday, 9am to 5pm. We are here to protect and serve you!

All non-life-threatening matters which require an officer please contact Frederick County non-emergency dispatch at 540-662-6162. If you have an emergency, please call 911. All calls for service must first go through Frederick County dispatch. Frederick County dispatch will contact the officer/deputy on duty who will be handling the complaint. This will ensure that all calls are handled properly and in an efficient & timely manner.

Please do not call the Town office with police matters. This creates confusion, possible miscommunications and takes up unnecessary time in having an officer/deputy respond to the complaint. For questions or concerns please contact the Middletown Police Department Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (540)868-0535. Only leave a voice message if the return call is for administrative or informational purposes.

To pay your water & sewer bill online please visit www.middletownva.gov or call (855)844-0226

From the Clerk

Christina Smith

Online payments have been a huge success. We have close to 75 accounts that have gone paperless and set up automatic payments. If you have not set your account up yet please do so. This is not only to pay online but you can track your account history, print, or review your statements, add text, or email reminders and so much more.

It is a great time with the new year approaching to update your contact information with the town office. Telephone numbers are very important to town staff in case we need to contact you in the event of an emergency or to discuss your account. We are also asking for an email address as well so we can stay in contact with you.

Please remember utility payments are due by the due date indicated and, if late, penalties will be applied. If the bill is not paid in full by the cut-off date, service will be disconnected and additional fees will be assessed. The town will offer a onetime payment deferment on a case by case basis due to unforeseen circumstances. If you have any question regarding this policy please contact the Town Clerk at 540-869-2226 ext. 1

****To pay your water & sewer bill online please visit www.middletownva.gov or call (855)844-0226****

From the Planning & Zoning Administrator

Eric Bittner

As a reminder, permits must be secured through the Town office prior to any work. All renovations to buildings need a zoning permit. All accessory buildings such as sheds and/or outside storage containers also need a zoning permit. When in doubt please call the office and speak with me. 540-869-2226 ext. 4

Town Code section 14-4 Removal of snow from sidewalks

It shall be unlawful for the occupants of any building and where there is no occupant, for the owner of such vacant building or any unimproved lot or land lying on any street, alley or public place within the town where there is a brick or cement sidewalk, or any other walk so named by the Mayor or Town Council, to permit snow to remain on such a sidewalk longer than 6 hours after the snow has ceased to fall; except, that if the snow shall cease to fall in the night time, it shall be cleaned away by noon the following day. If the occupant or owner of the premises, as the case may be, fails or refuses to clear off the snow after being duly notified, it shall be the duty of the Town Sergeant to cause such pavement or sidewalk to be cleaned at the cost plus 10% to such occupant or owner of the premises. All bills for cleaning ice or snow from pavements are due payable when presented, which shall be in addition to any fine imposed. (10-3-55, ch.17, S 55.)

Penalty – Any persons violating the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to arrest, and upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$25.00 nor more than \$100.00 or the discretion of the court trying the case.

When out on your walks with “Fido” please be considerate and pickup waste. It is unlawful to allow feces deposited by his/her animal to remain on any public highway, street, sidewalk, part of other public property, or on private property without written consent of the owner thereof or his agent.

Town Code section 3-8 Littering

No person shall allow feces deposited by his/her animal to remain on any public highway, street, sidewalk, part of other public property, or on private property without written consent of the owner thereof or his agent.

Penalty – Any person who knowingly violates this Ordinance shall be guilty of a littering infraction and shall be subject to a fine of not more than \$25.00 per occurrence. (Middletown Town Code § 3-8)

From the Maintenance Department

Les Morefiled

Please make sure the water meter in your yard is free and clear at all times. The meter should never be covered or buried by anything. Please make sure the meter is not covered with snow, ice, grass, weeds, bushes, vehicles, boats, trailers etc. This can cause serious problems in the event of an emergency if we are unable to find and/or access the meter. The meter should be visible and most importantly easy to access. Please take the time to make sure the water meter in your yard is accessible at all times and clear from all debris and/or obstructions.

If you notice a streetlight out, please contact the Public Works Department at (540)869-7731. Please provide the following information. Your name, your phone number, the streetlight address, and the pole number if possible. We will contact Rappahannock Electric regarding the outage.

Middletown Veterans Memorial

Raymond Steele

I would like to thank everyone who attended our Veteran's Day Ceremony recently. A warm and special thank you to our guest speaker SgtMaj. Richard Van Norton Jr. We also want to thank all the participants including Mr. & Mrs. Allen Boyd for the setup and use of their sound system. To the town's Public Works Department for setting up and taking down the chairs, and, to Mrs. Tina Smith, our Municipal Clerk, for all she does to prepare for our ceremonies.

Our brick patio continues to grow and whether you have purchased a brick or not please come by for a visit. However, as always, bricks can still be purchased and installed. Please contact the town office for details.

Please mark your calendars now for our Memorial Day Ceremony to be held Monday, May 31, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. I want to wish each of you a happy and safe holiday season.

Middletown Heritage Society

Tess Klimm

Sadly, but keeping the best interests of everyone in mind, Merrimint has been cancelled this year. There was thought given to planning an outside activity or tying an event to the parade, but the MHS will plan to host the event next year. This winter Middletown Heritage Society (MHS) will take a break from all meetings and events with the hope to begin meeting again in the spring so please look for an announcement in March or April.

Any and all information about Middletown's history is appreciated and remember Handley Regional Library archives is serving as guardian of some of the materials that have been donated.

Thank you, Tammy Keeler for arranging the Facebook/Instagram sites so we can share photos and stories about Middletown and also for maintaining the MHS display cases in the lobby area of The Wayside Inn. Hoping everyone stays well. For more information, contact Tess Klimm, President (540)247-2211.

Calendar of Events 2020 - 2021

November 2020

November 23 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

November 25 – Town office closing at 12 noon

November 26 & 27 – Town office closed

November 27 – Virtual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony via Town's Facebook page

December 2020

December 6 – CANCELLED - Christmas Parade 2:00 p.m.

December 7 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

December 14 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

December 16 – Mayor Harbaugh's **BIRTHDAY!**

December 24 & 25 – Town office closed

December 28 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

December 31 – Town office closed

January 2021

January 1 – Happy New Year - Town office closed

January 4 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

January 11 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

January 25 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Middletown Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

Company 12

Thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you that have supported our recent chicken dinners, pancake breakfast, gun raffle, and fund drive. We are MORE than grateful for your continued support!

We are currently selling raffle tickets with different prizes (guns from Middletown Firearms, equipment from Winchester Equipment, and cash). The winning numbers will be based on the nightly pick three Virginia lottery during the month of February. The tickets are \$20 each and there are 500 tickets. If you would like to purchase a ticket, please contact the fire department (540)869-1829.

We are always looking for new members to help with fund raising and/or to run fire and EMS calls. Stop in and visit the station if you are interested!

With winter just around the corner, please help keep fire hydrants free of snow so we can find and access them as quickly as possible in an emergency. Always make sure your house number is clearly visible from the street.

This year will certainly be different from any other holidays, but we want to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas. Please be safe!

From our history files.....SCBA Training.



Pictured: Craig Hinkle, Trip Chewning, Gary Legge, Russ Shull, and Henry Shiley