



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 13, Issue 6 ♦ November 16, 2021

From the Mayor

Charles H. Harbaugh, IV

Hello Middletown. Another year is coming to an end and with that said let us reflect on this past year and remind ourselves of the importance of kindness and gratitude. I think it is safe to say we have all endured and navigated a very hectic and worrisome year. Let us take a moment to remember those who have suffered from the effects of this past year and keep this in the forefront of our minds so we can continue to thrive as a united nation.

Hats off to our former Mayor, Ray Steele. Ray continues to volunteer countless hours maintaining the veteran's memorial. Ray along with Gary Fletcher and Myron Kremer willingly donate their time to maintain the success of the memorial. The dedication these gentlemen continue to put into the memorial is commendable. If you see any of these stellar gentlemen, please thank them for their continued dedication and success of the memorial.

Please plan to join us for this year's annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony which will be held on Friday November 26, 2021 at 4:45 p.m. The Christmas Parade will take place on Sunday December 5, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Registration forms can be found online at www.middletownva.gov. The kids can visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus after the parade at the fire department.

We will hold the 6th Annual Christmas House Decorating Contest again this year. 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 website or you can pick one up at the town office.

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.

Reminder; please retain your tax bills for tax purposes as there will be a charge should you request additional copies when filing your taxes. There is an administrative fee of \$3.50 for each bill reproduced. Due to the large number of request each year we have had to impose this fee to the cover the administrative cost.

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

No handheld devices while driving, Virginia Law effective January 1, 2021. Phone Down. It's the Law. A person who violates 46.2-818.2 is subject to a fine of \$125 for the first offense and \$250 for the second and subsequent offenses. In the event that you are pulled over for holding a handheld personal communications device, act in the same manner you would for any traffic stop. You will not be asked to hand over your device. Keep in mind that what you are doing with the device is irrelevant, it is the act of HOLDING the device while driving that is illegal.

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.

From the Clerk

Christina Smith

We are proud to announce we have added a new accessibility assistive toolbar feature to the town website. The town partnered with Recite Me which is a cloud-based web accessibility assistive toolbar solution that allows website visitors to customize our website in a way that works best for them.

With a touch of a button, the Recite Me toolbar can be launched providing text to speech functionality, fully customizable styling features to suit individual needs, reading support aids and a translation tool with over 100 languages, including 35 text to speech voices and many other features.

Recite Me and the Town of Middletown believes in accessibility for all, allowing everyone the opportunity to use the internet in the way that it is intended. Approximately one billion people globally have a disability and they often face barriers when visiting websites that prevent them from taking an active part in life.

Online payments continue to be a success. We have 146 accounts that have gone paperless and a substantial number of residents have set up the automatic payment feature. If you have not visited the online portal or set your account up, please do so. This is not only to pay online but you can track your account history, consumption, print or review your statements, add text or email reminders and so much more. Check it out today.

Now is a great time to update your contact information with the town office. Up to date phone numbers are extremely important in case we need to contact you in the event of an emergency or to discuss your account. If applicable you can add an email address to your account as another form of communication.

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.

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

From the Zoning Administrator

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 Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

Company 12

November is a time to be especially thankful and we at Co. 12 are very thankful for many things.

We want to thank Rappahannock Electric Co-Op's, "The Power of Change" for the award of a grant for \$8,028.60 to purchase swift water rescue and safety gear. The Power of Change receives its funding from REC members who volunteer to have their electric bill rounded-up to the next whole dollar. Please consider supporting The Power of Change to help others in need!

We were also blessed to receive a grant for \$23,696 from The Firehouse Sub Safety Foundation. This grant is being used to purchase six sets of firefighter gear. Please support our local Firehouse Subs in Winchester!

We are thankful for ALL of the support of our community. We are very grateful for all of the donations received this year and for the support of our on-going mail-in fund drive. We are also thankful for our dedicated Bingo players. Our recent raffle was a big success. Thanks to Middletown Firearms for their help and support and to Winchester Equipment for their donation.

Our new Rescue Engine has arrived from Wisconsin. We are grateful to have the opportunity to purchase this new truck to protect our community. We thank everyone for the support that enables us to make sure we have up-to-date equipment and apparatus for service and protection of our community. We are hoping to receive the new ambulance within the next couple of months.

We are thankful for all of our members and their families and their commitment to serving.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

BINGO is held every Tuesday night! Regular Bingo starts at 7 p.m. Concessions are available from our Auxiliary. We provide an ATM and outside smoking areas. Proceeds from Bingo pay for fire and EMS equipment.

We are always looking for new members. Applications are available on our website (middletownfire.com) or at the fire station. You must be 16 years old to apply. Training is provided. Joining a volunteer fire and rescue company is a great opportunity for young people! If you aren't interested in running fire and EMS calls, there are other opportunities to help with fundraising.



Middletown Veterans Memorial

Raymond Steele

Thank everyone who attended this year's Veterans Day Ceremony. We have individuals year after year volunteer their time and talent to make our ceremonies a success. A special thank you to town resident Andrew Paul, SU student Geovanni Rodriguez, VFW Post 2123, Myron Kremer, Gary Fletcher, Rev. Clay Knick, James Wood Chapter, SAR, Allen Boyd and guest speaker Col. Bill Schwetke. God bless these selfless individuals.

The entire Public Works Department for their efforts cleaning up the grounds and the set up and take down of the chairs, and, to Mrs. Christina Smith, our Municipal Clerk, for all she does to prepare for our ceremonies. It takes a village to accomplish what we do and we are blessed to have these folks among us willing to volunteer and donate their time.

We will continue to install bricks twice a year as we receive orders. Please come out and support the memorial by purchasing a brick or by making a donation. All donations, big or small are appreciated.

Please mark your calendars now for our Memorial Day Ceremony to be held Monday, May 31, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.

Middletown Heritage Society

Tess Klimm

The Middletown Heritage Society (MHS) is still hibernating but definitely plan to meet in person come spring. Our case of Middletown memorabilia is on display in the museum room located at the Wayside Inn. Tammy is working on changing the displays so if you have something to show and tell, please get in touch! Please contact Tammy Keeler at (540)327-0754 or Tess Klimm, President (540)247-2211 for more information. We look forward to reviving our projects and making new plans in early spring. We welcome anyone with an interest in Middletown's history to please attend our meetings.

Calendar of Events 2021 - 2022

November 2021

November 22 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.
November 24 – Town office closing at 12 noon
November 25 & 26 – Town office closed
November 26 – Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony 4:45 p.m.

December 2020

December 5 – Christmas Parade 2:00 p.m.
December 6 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.
December 13 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.
December 16 – Mayor Harbaugh's **BIRTHDAY!**
December 24 – Town office closed
December 27 – Town office closed
December 28 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.
December 31 – Town office closed

January 2021

January 1 – Happy New Year
January 3 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.
January 10 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.
January 24 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.