



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 14, Issue 2 ♦ March 15, 2023

From the Mayor

Charles H. Harbaugh, IV

Hello Citizens! Please note that the Annual Spring Clean-Up will take place on Friday April 28, 2023 this year and not the usual Monday as years past. Please review the guidelines provided in the newsletter or contact the town office with any questions. We appreciate those that utilize this service to clean up the outside of their properties.

We will host the National Vietnam War Veterans Day Event again this year which will be held at the Veterans Memorial on March 25, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

The 2023-24 budget preparations have begun. We have a great group among us busy preparing this year's budget. The finance committee has a new chairman with a financial background, our interim treasurer is a CPA and our interim town manager Les Morefield has been successfully implementing our Public Works/Maintenance Department budget for the last several years. Finance Committee meetings will begin soon. Plan to attend and be in the know of how your tax dollars are being put to good use to benefit you.

If you have not had a chance to meet our two newest council members Diane Newman and Jacob Skeith, please plan to attend a town meeting which are held the first and second Monday of every month. Councilor Newman comes to us with a background in HR and Councilor Skeith has a background in finance and most recently received his credentials as a CPA. We are delighted to have these folks on board and serving in the community.

Please plan to attend the town's annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday April 8, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. in the town park. Please remember to bring a basket for your child to collect easter eggs and parents do not forget your camera. The Easter Bunny will visit and be glad to take pictures with those in attendance. Please remember to be courteous to others and keep a safe distance. We hope to see you there and share in this family fun event.

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

As a reminder, it is illegal to have your cell phone in your hand while operating a vehicle. Virginia Law effective January 1, 2021. 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 Town Clerk

Christina Smith

The town offers online payments for your convenience. Have your bill handy because you will need your account number in order to get started. Once there you can register your account and set up the many features that make paying your bill(s) easy such as automatic and recurring payments, text and email reminders, paperless statements, etc. Please go to www.middlestownva.gov and check it out. You may also pay over the phone, available 24/7 by calling (855)844-0226. If you need assistance registering your account, please feel free to contact the town office.

Yard sale season has begun, please make sure you get a yard sale permit with the exception of the Route 11 Yard Crawl which is scheduled to take place on Saturday August 12, 2023. You do not need a permit the day of the Yard Crawl. If you post signs, they must be free standing and not attached to any utility poles or roadway signs. Signage must be removed immediately following your yard sale. Permit and rules & regulations can be found online at www.middlestownva.gov under the Resources tab. Complete the required form and drop it in the payment drop box located at the town office and we will sign off on it and get it back to you before your sale.

Homeowners with the start of warm weather and outdoor clean up to begin, please remember if you are having contracted work done at your home such as landscaping, roofing, plumbing, electrical, additions, fencing and decks, etc., please make sure the contractor(s) has a valid Town of Middletown business license. This helps ensure you are dealing with a legitimate business and if recourse needs to be taken, we have information on file for the business that we can provide to you. No one should be soliciting business door to door in town limits without a Town of Middletown business license.

Please remember to update your contact information with the town office. Telephone numbers are very important to the staff in case we need to contact you in the event of an emergency or to discuss your account. Email is also a way we can communicate with you regarding account matters or issues at your property. Please feel free to email me with your updated information and email address which I will add to your account for future reference should we need it to contact you. clerk@middlestownva.gov

Utility payments are due by the due date indicated or by the cut-off date. If the bill is not paid in full by the cut-off date, service will be disconnected for non-payment and an additional fee of \$100 will be added to your account that must be paid before services are restored. Cut-off \$50/cut-on \$50. If you have any questions, or need assistance paying your bill please contact the town office. Please make payment arrangements before the account is past due.

For information regarding the Town of Middletown please visit the town's website www.middlestownva.gov



From the Planning & Zoning Department

Reminder from our trash service. All trash should be placed and stored in a trash can with a lid. It is an unsightly nuisance when animal(s) get into trash bags laying curbside. This creates trash blowing throughout the town and onto neighboring properties. We appreciate your attention in this matter and hope we are at 100% very soon.



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 contact the town office.

Please take a minute to review the Town's ordinance on grass, weeds or like vegetation as well as littering. When mowing or weeding it is unlawful to leave your grass clippings on the sidewalks and roadways.

Town Code section 6-2

Duty of owners, etc., of premises - To cut and remove tall grass and weeds.

- a.** It shall be unlawful for any person owning, occupying or having charge of any real estate or an interest therein, located within the corporate limits of the town, where the parcel is one acre or less, to allow grass, weeds, or like vegetation grow on the property to a height of no more than 10 inches.
- b.** Parcels greater in size than one acre that lies within 25 feet of the right of way boundary of a public roadway (except for interstate highways) must also keep the grass, weeds or like vegetation to a height of no more than 10 inches.
- c.** If any owner, occupant or person in charge of such land or interest therein shall fail to have such illegal growth of grass or weeds on his land cut or otherwise removed within 7 days written notice of violation of this section, the town shall have the right to cut or remove such unlawful growth at the expense of the landowner, and such expense may be collected by the town as taxes are levied and collected. In addition, the owner shall pay a penalty of \$50.00 as a fine of this section.
- d.** Each day that any owner, occupant or person in charge of such land or interest shall fail to have such an illegal growth of grass or weeds on his land cut or otherwise removed after the above mentioned 7 days has run shall constitute a separate offense. Subsequent offenses in the same calendar year shall double until the fine reaches \$200.00. The fine per calendar year is capped at \$2000.00.
- e.** This section shall not apply to any land used for agricultural or industrial purposes.

From the Public Works Department

Les Morefield

NOTICE: Town Park visitors - The wastewater treatment plant on Third Street is under construction, this area is off limits to all residents and visitors. A lot of people have been using the wastewater plant road as an entrance to the park and ball fields for activities such as practices and games. Please use the park entrance off Senseney Road to gain access to the Town Park for all activities moving forward.

Access to the Park: going North on Main Street turn Left onto Second Street, going South on Main Street turn Right onto Second Street.

Citizens the Public Works department will begin hydrant flushing during the month April. You could potentially experience cloudy or discolored water during this time. If you do notice a change in your water it will clear up and resolve itself the more you run your water. If you have any questions regarding this process, please feel free to contact the Public Work Department Monday - Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (540) 869-7731.

This year yard waste pick-up will begin on Monday March 20, 2023 and will end on Monday December 4, 2023. If a holiday falls on a Monday, yard waste will be picked up the following day. Any yard waste that is not within the required guidelines will be left curbside and it will be for the tenant/owner to remove from curb same day.

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. 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 on your property is free and clear and accessible at all times.

Middletown Veterans Memorial

Raymond Steele

Please save the date for Monday May 29, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. for our Memorial Day Remembrance & Wreath Laying Ceremony to pay homage to our veterans. We will host the ceremony at the veteran's memorial and live stream via the town's Facebook page. If by chance there is rain the day of, the ceremony will take place at the Middletown Fire Department.

Recently a former resident of Middletown asked me if he could purchase a brick in honor of his military service. He was under the impression that you needed to live in town to be included. Please let me remind everyone that you do not have to be a current resident to honor someone or to be included in our memorial. If you want to honor a love one who served out country or someone else you wish to honor, please contact the town's website for a form.

Middletown Heritage Society

The Middletown Heritage Society (MHS) meets the second Thursday of every month. We look forward to reviving our projects and making new plans. We welcome anyone with an interest in Middletown's history to please attend our meetings. For questions feel free to contact President Paige Ulevich (571) 445-0889.

If anyone has stories to tell, remember we have an MHS Facebook page and if you or someone you know would like to be added to our email list, please get in touch with Paige Ulevich. Our next meeting will be held at Italian Touch on April 13, 2023 at 12 noon.

Middletown Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) mandates and enforces the “4:00pm burning law” effective February 15th through April 30th of each year during which open burning may only take place between the hours of 4:00pm and 12:00midnight. Always check to see what the burn laws are because the laws vary at different times of the year.

Did you check and/or change your batteries in your detectors when the time changed on March 12?? We can NOT stress enough how important smoke detectors are to save lives and property. If you need a smoke detector, please let us know.

Another important reminder is to make sure your house number is clearly visible from the street or road. This saves valuable time getting to you in an emergency.

We need YOU! 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. If you aren't interested in running fire and/or EMS calls, we can always use help with fund raising.

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.

In April we will celebrate our 80th birthday! 80 years of service to our Town and community. We thank YOU for your support!



SPRING CLEAN UP

THE ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN UP WILL TAKE PLACE ON

FRIDAY APRIL 28, 2023

ALL ITEMS MUST BE PLACED

CURBSIDE by 7:00 a.m.

ALL ITEMS MUST BE LANDFILL ACCEPTABLE

IF IT IS NOT LANDFILL
ACCEPTABLE IT WILL
NOT BE PICKED UP

A FEW EXAMPLES OF NON-ACCEPTABLE ITEMS:

APPLIANCES, TV'S, COMPUTERS, MONITORS, MICROWAVE OVENS, PAINT,
HAZARDOUS WASTE, TIRES, PRESSURE TREATED LUMBER,
CONSTRUCTION/REMODELING MATERIALS, BRICKS, CONCRETE, LAWN
EQUIPMENT ETC.



Please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to clean up the outside of your property. We offer this to help keep the town free of unsightly clutter.

Calendar of Events

March

March 17 – St. Patrick's Day

March 20 – Yard Waste Pick-Up Begins

March 25 - National Vietnam War Veterans Day Event 1:00 p.m.

March 27 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

April

April 3 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

April 8 – Easter Egg Hunt 11:00 a.m.

April 9 – Easter

April 10 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

April 24 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

April 28 – Annual Spring Clean-Up, curbside 7:00 a.m.

May

May 1 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

May 5 – Apple Blossom – Town offices closing at 1:00 p.m.

May 8 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

May 14 – Mother's Day

May 22 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

May 29 – Memorial Day Ceremony, Veterans Memorial 1:00 p.m.

May 29 – Memorial Day – Town office closed

Middletown Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday April 8, 2023 | 11:00 a.m.

Middletown Park | 7833 Senseney Ave.

Bring your own basket



Parents do not forget your camera. The Easter Bunny will be here to visit.

Yard Waste Guidelines

Please take time to review the guidelines for yard waste. **We will no longer pick up any yard waste that does not meet the required guidelines.**

Yard waste collection will begin on **March 20, 2023 through December 4, 2023**. Yard waste must be placed curbside by 8:00 a.m. the morning of pick up. Yard waste consist of grass trimmings and leaves, which cannot weigh more than 40 lbs.

Branches and twigs **CANNOT BE LONGER** than four (4) feet in length and **NO LARGER** than twelve (12) inches in diameter. They must be tied in bundles. No wire or plastic string. Do not place branches or twigs in bags.

Yard waste must be placed in biodegradable or paper yard waste bags only. **NO PLASTIC BAGS** will be picked up.

Rain soaked or damaged bags that rip or tear during pick up will be the responsibility of the homeowner/tenant to clean up. Yard waste should not be placed curbside until the morning of collection. This helps keep the community neat and free of clutter and ensures the bags have not been compromised due to weather.

In the event a holiday falls on a Monday or the Town Government is closed, yard waste will be picked up the following day, after the holiday or closure.

If you have any questions, please contact our Public Works Superintendent Les Morefield at (540) 869-7731.

Thank you for your continued support and effort to help make the everyday operations of the town manageable for all involved

SUMMER WATER CONSERVATION TIPS

For more information visit our website: www.crwater.com



IRRIGATION TIPS

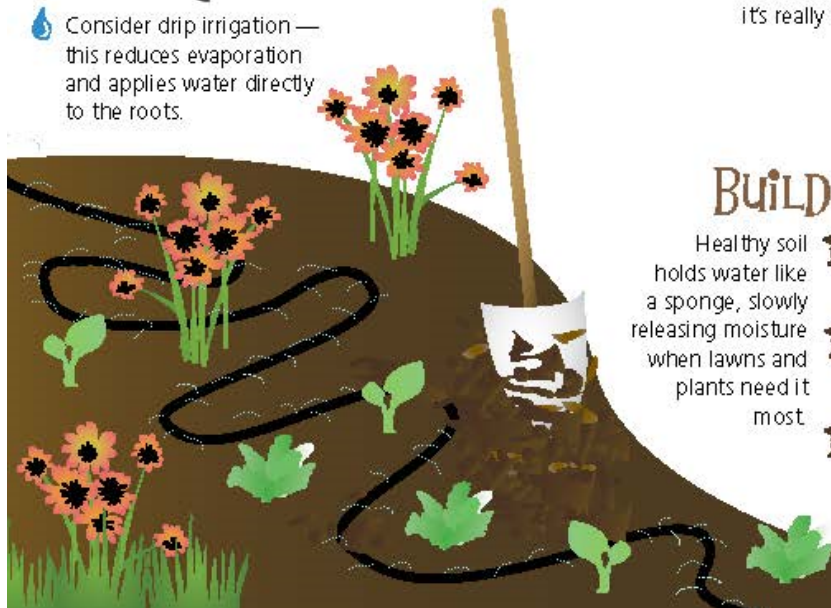
- Check your system each spring. Because automatic irrigation systems often come on during the early morning hours, leaks and other problems can go unnoticed for long periods of time.
- Take time to check your system and provide periodic checks throughout the summer to ensure the system is operating properly and efficiently.
- Replace your old controller with a new Watersense® weather based irrigation controller or adjust your current controller to the weather throughout the summer so you're not depriving plants or watering unnecessarily.
- Correctly program your irrigation controller.
- Install a rain sensor switch to temporarily shut off your system when it rains.
- Prevent run-off by splitting watering times into two or more applications with breaks in between. This will promote deeper root growth and foster a healthy landscape that is more resistant to dry weather.
- Water early in the morning when the air is cool and calm and evaporation is at a minimum. Watering in the evening is second best.



- Consider switching your old spray nozzles for more efficient multi-stream rotating nozzles.



- Consider drip irrigation — this reduces evaporation and applies water directly to the roots.



OUTDOOR WATER EFFICIENT TIPS

- Wash your car on the lawn.
- Take your car to a car wash that recycles and reuses the wash water.
- Fix all dripping hose bibs.
- Cover the pool when you're not using it to prevent unnecessary evaporation.
- Check for undetected leaks in your pool throughout the summer.
- Use a bucket of soapy water and a shut-off spray nozzle on the end of your hose when you wash your car.
- Sweep your driveways and patios instead of spraying them with water.



LAWN CARE TIPS

- A healthy lawn needs less water, pesticides, and fertilizers. Typical Willamette Valley lawns need only one inch of water a week, unless it's really hot.
- Aerate lawns in the early summer to allow water and air to reach the roots.
- Mow high to shade roots, keep soil cool and retain soil moisture.
- Mulch grass clippings to naturally green up your lawn.
- Water one inch a week, unless it's really hot. Visit our website for the weekly watering number.
- Fertilizer organically to protect kids, pets, and the environment.
- Skip the weed and feed products. Many of these can damage soil as well as pollute our waterways.



BUILD HEALTHY SOILS

Healthy soil holds water like a sponge, slowly releasing moisture when lawns and plants need it most.

- Avoid using man-made fertilizers and pesticides. They can harm worms and other beneficial organisms found in healthy soil.
- Healthy soil will reduce runoff — and less runoff means less pollution and sediment in our streams and rivers.
- Adding soil amendments like compost or mulch cools and feeds the soil, improves water holding capacity, encourages deeper root growth and reduces the need for water and fertilizers.

PETS POOP, YOU SCOOP

Pet owners please clean-up after your pets. Please do not leave your animals waste out there for others to step in and possibly expose other pets to disease. We work diligently to get the word out and make pet owners aware that this is a law. It is hazardous to the public and toxic to other animals.

Pet waste containers are located at the Town Park, at the corner of Third and Main Street and near the Town office located on Church Street.



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)