



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 14, Issue 4 ♦ July 15, 2023

From the Mayor

Charles H. Harbaugh, IV

What a July 4th Celebration we had this year! It was an amazing 2-day event from start to finish. It takes a village of dedicated people and months of planning to make this happen. We are very grateful to have the devoted individuals we have on board. Hats off to our July 4th Committee, town staff, our Chief and his department and the agencies that assisted us in a safe event. The Public Works Department who works tirelessly to prepare our town for this event. We have amazing event coordinators among all these folks and are so thankful to them all.

Thank you to our generous sponsors who made the event possible for the community. Thermo Fisher Scientific, Capon Valley Bank, First Bank, Valley Health, Rappahannock Electric, Windmar Advisory, MEP Home Services, Modern Renovations, Judy Excavating, Tech Team Solutions, Trex Company, Continental, DDL Business Systems, Johnny Blue, Vulcan Materials, Middletown Data Center, and our very own Italian Touch. We are grateful to have the support and generosity that each of these wonderful sponsors provide.

Our next event is the City National Bank 13th Annual Car, Truck & Tractor Show on Saturday August 19, 2023 from 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. located on Historic Main Street. Rain date will be Saturday August 26, 2023. There is a \$10 entry fee, all proceeds will benefit the town's July 4th Celebration.

The Town of Middletown will host NW Works 8th Annual Farm to Table on September 9, 2023 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Road closure for this event will affect Church Street in front of the town office. For further details or to purchase tickets please visit NW Work's website at www.nwworks.com or by calling 540-667-0809.

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

Please remember when mowing your grass do NOT blow or discharge grass clippings or debris on to the roadways or sidewalks. This is for the safety of our motor cyclists along with water runoff and clogging the storm drains. (Town Code § 6-1)

No handheld devices while driving. 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.

If you have police matters, please do not call the Town office staff. This creates confusion, possible miscommunications and takes up unnecessary time in having an officer respond to the complaint. For all non-emergency police issues please contact the Middletown Police Department directly Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 540-868-0535. Only leave a voice message at the Middletown Police Department if the return call is for administrative or information only.

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.

From the Treasurer

Interest was applied on July 3, 2023 on all delinquent Personal Property and Real Estate accounts that have not been paid. If you have any questions or need to check to see if you have an unpaid balance, please feel free to contact the town office. If a property lien or DMV stop has been placed there will be additional fees applied. The lien or DMV stop will not be removed until the entire balance(s) has been paid in full.

From the Clerk

Christina Smith

Yard sale season has begun, please make sure you get a yard sale permit except for 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. The yard sale permit and rules & regulations can be found online at www.middletonva.gov

The town offers online payments for your convenience. 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.middletonva.gov and check it out. You may also pay over the phone, which is available 24/7 by calling (855)844-0226. If you need assistance registering your account, please feel free to contact the town office.

Homeowners, 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're 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@middletonva.gov We still have a good bit of contact information that needs to be updated. I came across several accounts just recently with bad contact information.

As always, all 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 call before the account is past due.

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

From the Planning & Zoning Department

Hello citizens, reminder all trash must be placed curbside in a trash can. Our trash company requires it. 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 our trash company thanks you for your compliance. Large items of card board should be taken to the landfill and placed in the recyclables.

As property owners, should you decide to build a fence, deck, patio or shed a zoning permit must be completed along with a detailed drawing of your proposed project. The contractor should apply for/or have a Town of Middletown business license. Forms can be picked up at the Town office or found online at www.middletonva.gov When in doubt please feel free to contact the town office. (540) 869-2226 ext. 4 or zoning@middletonva.gov

From the Maintenance Department

Les Morefield

Please make sure the water meter on your property is always free and clear. This is the property owner/tenant's responsibility. The meter should never be covered by any type of over growth including but not limited to; 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.

Yard waste pick-up is in full swing and will continue through Monday December 4, 2023. If a holiday falls on a Monday, yard waste will be picked up the next day.

Please review the guidelines for yard waste. **Any yard waste that does not meet the required guidelines will be left curbside.** Yard waste collection will be every Monday, and must be placed curbside by 8:00 a.m. Yard waste consists of grass trimmings and leaves which CANNOT weigh more than 40 lbs. Branches or twigs can be **NO LONGER** than four (4) feet in length and **NO LARGER** than twelve (12) inches in diameter and must be **tied in bundles** (no wire or plastic string). Yard waste must be placed in biodegradable or paper yard waste bags only, **NO PLASTIC BAGS.** 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. Rain soaked or damaged bags that rip or tear during pick up will be the responsibility of the homeowner/tenant to clean up. If you have any questions, please contact Public Works (540) 869-7731.

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

When out on your walks with your pet(s) please be considerate and pickup their 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.

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)

Please take a minute to read the outdoor water saving tips provided on the next page. We hear from a lot of folks in the warmer months that their water & sewer bills have gone up substantially and think they have a leak. To avoid this from happening to you take a minute to review the tips provided. If you think you have a leak, please feel free to call the Public Works Department and we will be glad to come out and check it out (540)869-7731. If you have a billing question, please call the town office for assistance (540) 869-2226.

12 Ways to Conserve Water Outdoors

During these warmer months, we spend more time outdoors tending to our lawns, growing gardens, and washing our cars. All of these activities require water. More than half of the average household's water occurs outdoors. As a result, your water bill can see a significant increase during the next few months. Using these simple tips will reduce your water bill and save you money.

1. Inspect your garden hose and irrigation system for leaks. Check hose connectors to make sure rubber washers are in place.
2. Add a shut-off nozzle to your hose. You can save about 5-7 gallons each minute your hose is on.
3. Put out a rain barrel. Collecting rain water is an excellent (and FREE) way to water your indoor plants or wash your car.
4. Water outdoor plants in the morning or late evening. Due to the colder temperatures, less water will be lost from evaporation. Avoid watering on windy and hot days.
5. Use a broom to clean off outside living areas (decks, porches, driveways), rather than hosing them off.
6. When cutting the lawn, set the mower blade to 2-3 inches high. The longer grass will shade the soil, allowing for better moisture retention.
7. Keep your mower blades sharp. Dull blades tear grass, making it susceptible to disease, and causing it to appear tan and worn.
8. Only water your lawn when necessary. Over-watering results in the growth of shallow root systems that are easily damaged. If rainfall isn't sufficient, water your lawn once a week. This routine will encourage healthier and deeper grass roots.
9. Mulch around plants and flower beds to keep the soil cool, reduce moisture evaporation, promote growth and control weeds.
10. Take your car to the car wash, rather than washing it at home. Most commercial car washes recycle the water.
11. Wash your pet outdoors in an area of your lawn that needs watering.
12. Don't water your lawn during a drought. The grass may turn brown, but it is not dead. Your lawn will turn dormant during dry and hot spells, but it will revive itself when wetter weather returns.

Information Courtesy of Dollar Energy Fund



Middletown Veterans Memorial

Raymond Steele

Save the date: Veterans Day ceremony Saturday, November 11, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. In case of rain, it will be held at the Middletown Fire Hall.

We still have bricks available to honor or memorialize family, friends and love ones who have served and/or supported our military.

Middletown Heritage Society

Paige Ulevich

Middletown Heritage Society will have our next meeting on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 12 noon at the Handley Regional Library Archives located at 100 W Picadilly Street, Winchester.

We will spend time learning how the archives are organized and review materials related to Middletown history. Afterwards, we will have lunch at Roma Old Town Wood Fired Pizzeria on the downtown Walking Mall. If you have questions, please feel free to contact President Paige Ulevich at (571) 445-0889

Middletown Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

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 are not interested in running fire and/or EMS calls, we can always use help with fund raising.

BINGO is held every Tuesday night! Doors open at 5 p.m. Early bird games followed by regular Bingo at 7 p.m. Concessions are available from our Auxiliary. An ATM is available, outside smoking areas are provided, and we have free coffee, tea, and water. Proceeds from Bingo pay for fire and EMS equipment. Come check it out, have some fun, and support YOUR fire and rescue company!



Calendar of Events

July

July 24 – CANCELLED - Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

August

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

August 12 – Route 11 Yard Crawl

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

August 19 – 13th Annual Car, Truck & Tractor Show 3:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

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

September

September 4 – Labor Day – Town office closed

September 5 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

September 9 – NW Works Farm to Table hosted by Town of Middletown

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

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



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.

Please remember when mowing your grass do NOT blow or discharge grass clippings or debris on to the roadways or sidewalks. This is for the safety of our motor cyclists along with water runoff and clogging the storm drains. (Town Code § 6-1)