



Town of Middletown ♦ 7875 Church Street ♦ Middletown, VA ♦ (540) 869-2226 ♦ Volume 17, Issue 1 ♦ January 15, 2026

Winter Greetings from the Mayor

Charles Harbaugh, IV

As we embrace the winter season and welcome the start of 2026, I want to take a moment to reflect on the progress we have made together and share several exciting updates for our beloved Town of Middletown.

First, thank you to everyone who joined us for **First Night Middletown** to ring in the New Year. It was a wonderful evening that showcased the spirit of our community, and I extend special thanks to our generous sponsor, **FNB Bank**, along with the many volunteers and partners who made the event such a success.

We are also excited to share progress on the **Winchester Model Railroad Club Train Station project**. Construction is officially underway, with footers recently poured, and the contractor anticipates the building being under roof by mid-February. This project will become a unique community asset and a point of pride for Middletown for years to come.

We are pleased to welcome **Rachel Henry** as our new **Deputy Clerk**. Rachel lives here in Middletown, and we are proud to have her serving our community while assisting with office operations and strengthening our town staffing.

As Mayor, I am proud to share that under this administration, Middletown has maintained **no real estate tax increases for 12 of the past 13 years**, along with no increases to personal property, lodging, or meals taxes. This continued commitment helps keep Middletown an affordable, welcoming, and vibrant place to live and do business. In addition, this past year the Town has purchased and preserved two additional lots on Main Street for land preservation and beautification. These properties add to our total of **more than 35 acres of preserved land within town limits**, along with **more than 2,000 acres preserved outside of town limits**.

Thank you for your continued support and trust in our leadership. I wish you and your families a safe, joyful winter season and a prosperous New Year. Together, we will continue to keep Middletown moving forward.

From the Police Chief

Gary Benedict Jr.

Reminder no handheld devices while driving. 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. If 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 ensures that all calls are handled properly and in an efficient & timely manner.

For all non-emergency police questions please contact the Middletown Police Department Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 540-868-0535. Only leave a voice message if the return call is for administrative or non-emergency matters only.

From the Treasurer

Keith Smith

Reminder, please retain your original tax bill(s) for tax purposes as there will be a charge should you request additional copies when filing your taxes this year. There will be an administrative fee of \$3.50 for each copy requested. Due to the large number of requests each year we have had to impose this fee to the cover cost incurred.

Please remember Frederick County is the record keeper. They tell us who to bill and what to bill you for. If you have sold, traded, disposed of, and/or purchased a new vehicle you must update this information with Frederick County. Your due diligence in this matter is necessary for the town to bill you correctly.

To contact the personal property division of Frederick County please call (540) 665-5681 ext. 1

From the Town Clerk

Christina Smith

Citizens, please 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@middletownva.gov

The town offers online payments for your convenience. You will need your account number 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.middletownva.gov and check it out.

You may also pay your water & sewer bill over the phone, which is available 24/7 by calling (855)844-0226. If you need assistance registering your account, 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 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.

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.

Middletown Veterans Memorial

Please "save the date" May 25, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. We will host our annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Veterans Memorial. Guest speaker TBA.

We have bricks available to honor or memorialize family, friends and loved ones who have served and/or supported our military. Please inquire with the town office if you are interested in purchasing a brick. Applications can be found on the town website as well. www.middletownva.gov

Planning & Zoning Department

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 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.

Reminder Town of Middletown residents, no outside storage is allowed. Items should be properly stored in accessory buildings and out of view. Please clean up your property before being cited. Town officials graciously reach out and attempt to resolve matters before a citation is issued. Help by doing your part to keep the town neat and free of clutter.

All trash placed curbside must be in a trash can. We appreciate your attention in this matter and our trash company thanks you for your part. Large items such as card board should be broken down or taken to the landfill for recycling.

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 must have a Town of Middletown business license. Forms can be picked up at the Town office or found online at www.middletownva.gov

When in doubt please feel free to contact the town office. (540) 869-2226 ext. 4 or zoning@middletownva.gov

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)

Middletown Heritage Society

Paige Ulevich

The Middletown Heritage Society 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 or meeting locations please feel free to contact President Paige Ulevich (571) 445-0889.

From the Public Works Superintendent

Les Morefield

Please make sure the water meter in your yard is always accessible. 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 always accessible.

YARD WASTE PICK-UP BEGINS MARCH 9, 2026

Please review the guidelines for yard waste. **Any yard waste that does not meet the required guidelines will be left curbside.** Yard waste collection takes place 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.

WINTERIZING YOUR HOME

 <h3>HEATING</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test all systems• Clean any debris around units• Change filters• Reverse ceiling fans• Program thermostat to regulate temperatures when you're not home	 <h3>FIREPLACE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean and check dampers• Stock up on firewood• Inspect your chimney cap• Ensure you have a fire extinguisher nearby	 <h3>INSULATION</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Look for drafts• Apply caulk/weather stripping• Remove and store AC units• Close vents in unused rooms• Seal off crawl space
 <h3>PLUMBING</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winterize sprinkler systems• Turn off outdoor spigots• Detach and drain hoses• Insulate pipes and faucets• Turn down your water heater	 <h3>EXTERIOR</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winterize and store lawn equipment, outdoor furniture, and grills• Prepare ice melt, sand, snow shovels, and car scrapers• Inspect roof for damage• Clean out gutters	 <h3>OTHER</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Test and replace batteries in smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors• Bring plants and delicate trees indoors• Replace old fire extinguishers



Middletown Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company

Want to make a difference in your community?? 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 EMS calls, there are other opportunities to help with fundraising.

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 volunteers!

THANK YOU to everyone that supported our mail-in fund drive for 2025! Money received from the fund drive helps to pay for building and apparatus maintenance, EMS and fire equipment and supplies, and utility bills, among other things.

You can now make donations to us on-line! You can go to our website (middletownfire.com) and click on the "make donation" button or use the QR code.



How you can help us to help you:

- Always wear your seatbelt
- Always install and use child safety seats properly
- Make sure your house number can be seen easily from the street
- When there is bad weather, help to keep hydrants clear of snow and ice

Calendar of Events

January 2025

January 19 – Town offices closed – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 26 – Planning Commission Meeting 7:00 p.m.

February 2025

February 2 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

February 14 – Heart and Soles 5k Race 9:00 a.m. www.svrnners.org

February 9 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

February 16 – Presidents' Day, Town offices closed

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

March 2025

March 2 – Work Session Meeting 7:00 p.m.

March 9 – Town Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.

March 9 – Yard Waste Pick Up begins 8:00 a.m.



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)