

The Town of Laurel
Mayor & Council Meeting
September 16, 2024

A Mayor & Council Meeting was held at Laurel Town Hall in the Mayor & Council Chambers on Monday, September 16, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The following persons were in attendance Mayor John Shwed, President of Council Chris Calio, Carlos Oliveras, Robin Fisher-Cornish via ZOOM, George Lodato, Jonathan Kellam, and Donald Holden. Also, in attendance were Director of Code Enforcement Ken West, Public Works Director James Foskey, Chief Robert Kracyla, Judge Ruffin, Finance Manager Melissa Cassimore, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, and Town Manager Jamie Smith.

The Mayor & Council Regular and Closed Session Minutes of August 19, 2024, were presented for review. Councilman Holden made a motion to accept the regular and closed session minutes of August 19, 2024. Councilman Oliveras seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with one vacancy.

The August 2024 Department Head Reports were presented for review.

- Director of Code Enforcement West stated he had no additions to his report.
- Public Works Director Foskey stated he had no additions to his report.
- Chief Kracyla stated the Youth Police Academy was held this past August with 22 graduates. He stated the Laurel Night Out Event was a huge success and a great community event. He advised Patrolman Paul Amalfitano was sworn in this afternoon and he comes from the Harrington Police Department.
- Judge Ruffin stated she had no additions to her report.
- Finance Manager Cassimore stated there are two categories below 10%, but will be going into closer range in September.
- Town Manager Smith stated Tidewater Park is 99.9% complete with just the mulch and borders needed to be complete along with the mats under the swing set to be installed. She advised she received funding from the Laurel Women's Civic Club for picnic tables under the pavilion. Mayor Shwed inquired if there was a weight limit for the zipline. Town Manager Smith advised she would have to look into that. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired who would be responsible for injuries. Town Manager Smith advised Tidewater Park will be insured just as the other parks in the town and the playground equipment is inspected yearly.

Councilman Kellam entered the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Councilman Holden made a motion to accept the August Department Head Reports as presented. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with one vacancy.

Town Manager Smith presented the Development Updates.

- **Wawa:** The owner will be submitting their Final Site Plans to the town shortly.
- **Rigbie:** Currently under construction.
- **Globe Building:** Currently under construction.
- **Laurel Dutch Inn:** Opened in late August.
- **Good Neighborhood Partners:** Received Preliminary Funding approval.

Mayor Shwed presented the Update Alleyway between 6th and 7th Street. Town Manager Smith advised she reached out to the Fire Chief and is waiting to hear back and will follow-up at next month's Mayor & Council meeting.

Mayor Shwed presented the Dunbar Update. Town Manager Smith advised the town has received the Fire Marshall approval as of last week. She stated Director of Code Enforcement West inspected the building with a Certificate of Occupancy being issued. The furniture has been ordered with the help of a company donating furniture to the department. Detective Gardner has lined up the Correction Facilities to help put the furniture together. Once the furniture is installed the next step is to relocate the technology over. Mayor Shwed inquired if there is any more construction needed. Town Manager Smith advised she is looking to secure funding to repave the parking lot and a building for evidence.

Town Manager Smith advised the town is a recipient of a grant funding for Janosik Park Shore Restabilization.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired if there would be any signage of the police department. Town Manager Smith advised the current standing sign face will be replaced stating Laurel Police Department. Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish inquired if the sign will still have Paul Laurence Dunbar Community Building along with the police department. Town Manager Smith advised yes, and she will work with Del-DOT to install street signs.

Mayor Shwed Presented the 2nd Reading of Ordinance 2024-2. Mayor Shwed stated it is an amendment to Chapter 69 Curfew. Town Manager Smith advised we are amending the second reading to take effect on October 16, 2024, 30 days after the second reading. Councilman Kellam made a motion to accept the 2nd and Final Reading of Ordinance 2024-2. Councilman Oliveras seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with one vacancy.

Mayor Shwed presented the Appointment of Ward 4 Councilman. Mayor Shwed recommended to appoint Mr. George Lodato to fulfill Councilwoman Martin's term due to her passing. Councilman Oliveras made a motion to accept the appointment of Mr. George Lodato for Councilman Ward 4. President of Council Calio seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0, with one vacancy.

Mayor Shwed presented the Oath of Office to Mr. George Lodato, Councilman Ward 4.

Mayor Shwed presented the Veteran Flag Request. Town Manager Smith advised individuals have reached out to her to see if the town would be willing to display Veteran Flag Banners on the light poles. She advised families will sponsor the flag and there are brackets already installed on the light poles. She inquired if Mayor & Council will endorse this project to allow her to create a policy which she will then bring back for their approval. President of Council Calio made a motion to allow Town Manager Smith to move forward in drafting a policy to bring back to Mayor & Council for the Veteran Flag Request. Councilman Oliveras seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Town Manager Smith stated the Town of Laurel will be hosting their 7th Annual Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at the Laurel Elementary School – Bus Parking Lot from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Town Manager Smith the town will be holding Trick or Treat on Thursday, October 31, 2024, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Councilman Oliveras made a motion to accept Trick or Treat on Thursday, October 31, 2024. Councilman Lodato seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilman Lodato thanked the Mayor & Council for the opportunity to serve the town.

Councilman Oliveras thanked Chief Kracyla and his department for a safe summer.

Councilwoman Fisher-Cornish welcomed Councilman Lodato and she is looking forward in working with him.

Councilman Kellam thanked the town staff and the police department for their hard work. He also welcomed Councilman Lodato to the Mayor & Council.

President of Council Calio thanked Councilman Lodato for stepping-up and accepting the appointment of Councilman.

Mayor Shwed welcomed Councilman Lodato to the Mayor & Council.

Mayor Shwed stated change is visible in the town with the new construction of homes, paved roads, and a Habitat Home Dedication for home ownership.

Mr. Richard Davis, resident of East 6th Street, thanked the town for all their improvements and that they're committed and dedicated to the town. He stated he's glad the town is participating in the Veteran Banner Initiative.

Mr. Davis advised they have a neighbor who has three dogs outside and they bark excessively and is inquiring who should the complaint be addressed to. Town Manager Smith advised the town has an ordinance pertaining barking dogs and a nuisance ordinance. She advised if a property receives 12 points within a 6-month period a rental owners license can be revoked, and a property

owner will receive a fine. Chief Kracyla stated if Mr. Stanley could leave him his phone number and address and they can implement a strategy.

Mrs. Melody Davis, resident of East 6th Street, inquired if the town could stipulate that a property must be owner occupied for a prior time before it may become a rental property. Town Manager Smith advised she can discuss with the town's attorney.

Mr. Asa Johnson advised they will be doing a Coat Giveaway and they're looking for sponsors.

Mr. Johnson stated there is a drug epidemic and they're no NA meetings in the area and he is working with Mrs. Stacey from the Library for meeting areas.

Councilman Holden advised Mr. Johnson to reach out to the School District and contact the counselors as they know who will need a coat the most.

Mayor Shwed advised Town Manager Smith to reach out to Mr. Johnson.

With there being no further business, Councilman Oliveras made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Lodato seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Regular Session Adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Mayor

President of Council

Town Manager

Recording Secretary