

**Mayor and Council
Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2022**

Mayor Smith called the meeting to order at 7:04pm, with Councilman Faith, Councilman McCusker, and Councilman Kerns in attendance. Quorum in place.

Approval of Minutes

The March 8, 2022 meeting minutes were approved as presented. Motion made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Kerns. All in favor. No opposed

Pledge of Allegiance

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATION:**
 - **Hancock Trails Days**
 - Mayor Smith informed Hancock Trails Days will be held on June 4, 2022. This will be the 2nd annual Hancock Trails Days and will be held this year in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of the Tuscarora Trail.
 - **Train Display- Shawn Faith**
 - Shawn Faith approached Mayor and Council asking for the use of a room in the upstairs of Town Hall for a model train display. Councilman Kerns was in favor of having the display in Town Hall. Mayor Smith felt that donating a room in Town Hall would not be an issue. Motion to approve the use of an upstairs room in Town Hall for the model train display made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Faith. All in favor. No opposed. Mayor Smith added that the second railroad switch, original to Hancock, has been located and donated to the Historical Society.
 - **GREENWILL CONSULTING:**

- **Economic Development Bill-** Mr. Bill Valentine informed the development rights bill has passed. This Bill could be a tool for the Town of Hancock in regards to dilapidated buildings.
- **Congressional Funding Application-** Mr. Valentine informed the Congressional Funding application has been submitted with Congressman Trone's office. If received, this grant would help fund the Town's sewer system project.
- **Meetings-** Greenwill Consulting sent a group to meet with Mayor Smith and Mr. Valentine in March. This group is interested in bringing retail, senior housing, and a possible automatic car wash to Hancock. There is a second meeting set up with this group.
- **Website-** Mr. Valentine states the new website is under construction.
- **Grants-** Mr. Valentine informed the Town is working on two revitalization grants to offer. These grants would require a three-person board. The applications would be sent to Mayor and Council for final review.
- **Allegany County students** – Original correspondence between Mr. Valentine, Allegany County school board, and Washington County school board suggested that all was on board to start the process of allowing Little Orleans students to attend Hancock school. However, according to Mr. Valentine, the Allegany County superintendent is no longer interested. Councilman Faith inquired of Mr. Valentine, how many students this would include. Mr. Valentine estimated 50-60 students.
- **Pool-** Mr. Valentine suggested that Mayor and Council move forward on the new Town swimming pool. Mr. Valentine suggested keeping a grant for a Splash pad and incorporating the Splash pad into the pool design. The grant has already been awarded to the Town but has been on hold. The grant is for \$200,000, with a \$30-\$35,000 match from the Town.

- **Letter-** Mr. Valentine suggested that Mayor and Council send a letter to Mr. David Smith, asking that he cover or remove the Hancock Museum sign that is currently on his building. The Hancock Museum was located in Mr. Smith's building until a fire caused them to relocate. Mr. Valentine says the sign is confusing and misleading to tourist. Mr. Valentine suggest covering or removing the sign before Trails Days in June.
- **Primitive Park steps-** Mr. Valentine ask that Mayor and Council give him permission to speak with DNR regarding the steps that lead from the rail trail to the Hancock Primitive Park. Mr. Valentine stated the steps need replaced and signage added. Mr. Valentine would speak with DNR about the property lines. Mayor and Council gave Mr. Valentine permission to speak with DNR about the steps and property lines.
- **C&O Canal Plaza Grant-** Mr. Valentine suggested Mayor and Council make a decision regarding the C&O Canal Plaza and parking lot grant that has been awarded to the Town, but also on hold. This grant is for \$125,000 with a \$25,400 match from the Town.
- **Office space-** Mr. Valentine has received a request from RK&K engineer company to allow the on-site inspector for the pump station project to use the office space in the upstairs of Town Hall.
- **Town Manager position-** Mr. Valentine suggested Mayor and Council move forward with the process of hiring for the Town Manager position, starting with a review and finalization of a job description.
- **Budget-** Mr. Valentine suggested Mayor and Council do a review of the current budget to make sure everything is on track before the new Budget is created.
- **Audit-** Mr. Valentine informed that the annual Audit is almost complete. Mr. Valentine stressed the

importance of completing the audit as a completed audit is sometimes required for certain grants.

▪ **CITIZENS COMMENTS:**

- Billie J. Fischer- Former business owner of 13-15 West Main Street addressed recent social media posts and news article concerning her past water/sewer/flush and sanitation bill.
- Bill Williams- Informed he is running for Washington County Sheriff. Mr. Williams encouraged Mayor, Council, and citizens to inform him of any concerns or issues within the Town of Hancock.
- Derek Harvey- Informed he is running for Washington County Commissioner. Mr. Harvey introduced himself and gave his personal and political background.

● **DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

▪ **Police Commissioners/ Police Dept.**

- **Cadets-** Officer Faith informed the Cadets are set to graduate June 3, 2022
- **Vehicle Decals-** Officer Faith informed the ghost lettering, and decals are complete on the Police vehicles.
- **Redspeed Camera System-** Officer Faith stated that Redspeed has all requested paperwork from the Town.

▪ **PLANNING COMMITTEE:**

- Mr. John Cohill stated the zoning ordinance for signage needs clarification.

▪ **HANCOCK IN MOTION: NO REPORT**

▪ **PARKS / PARKS AND REC:**

- Councilman McCusker informed open gym is continuing for basketball on Saturdays and girls middle school volleyball on Sundays.
- Mayor and Council agreed to replace gravel and fill mud hole at Kirkwood Park.

- Hancock Little League is requesting permission to pour a concrete pad for the batting cages at Kirkwood Park. Little League will cover all cost and do all the work. Motion to approve made by Councilman Kerns. Seconded by Councilman Faith. All in favor. No opposed.
- Councilman Kerns stated that while doing the upcoming roof project at Gerber Field, there is a needed electrical upgrade. Councilman Kerns informed there is an issue with getting needed supplies.
- **ARTS COUNCIL-**
 - Mr. Sinclair Hamilton informed that the Arts Council will possibly host a concert at Kirkwood Park this summer.
 - Mr. Hamilton informed there may be a possible River Park coming to Cumberland, MD
 - Mr. Sinclair inquired about progress with the Bowles House ramp. Mayor Smith informed he is waiting on a reply.
- **MAIN STREET HANCOCK- NO REPORT**
- **HISTORICAL SOCIETY-**
 - Mr. Daniel Murphy informed there is a meeting with Canal Partnership this week and they will be discussing the Bowles house.
 - Mr. Murphy informed the Historical Society will be hosting a history lecture June 26, 2022, at Town Hall.
 - Mr. Murphy informed the Museum transition from upstairs to downstairs is nearly 85% complete.
- **Public Works**
 - Mayor Smith informed the new water meters have arrived and installation is beginning.
 - Mayor Smith informed he received three quotes for a new mower. Motion to purchase new mower made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Faith.

- **TOWN ATTORNEY/ Mr. Ed Kuczynski: NO REPORT**

- **MAYOR and COUNCIL REPORT:**
 - **Monthly Reporting-**
 - Mayor Smith discussed the Leadership Conference he participated in earlier this week.
 - Mayor Smith informed he has a meeting with possible investors this week.
 - Mayor Smith stated the tanks from the Mobil gas station on Main Street has been removed.
 - Councilman Kerns informed that bids for construction of new pump stations should be open in May and construction to begin in June 2022.

- **OLD BUSINESS:**
 - **Kirkwood House-** Town attorney Ed Kuczynski stated he had received a scope of work/ bid packet draft from Councilman Kerns for the Kirkwood house demolition. Councilman McCusker asked if Mayor and Council could explore the option of a qualified public works employee doing the demolition.
 - **Discussion of details pertaining to the Water and Sewer Ordinance-** Mayor Smith stated the Ordinance was here previously to this administration, however, this administration cleaned it up and will implement it. Mayor Smith stated that enforcing the Ordinance would help the Town recover debt owed which in turn helps with the annual audit. Mr. Smith discussed the issue with online payments. Tax and Utility Clerk, Jodi Finney, addressed the recent social media and news article stating the Town will not accept checks as payment. Mrs. Finney stated the Town will accept checks as a form of payment unless the resident has received a cut- off notice. If a cut-off notice has been received the only forms of payment accepted are cash or money order. Mrs. Finney also noted that during the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Town was unable

to shut any water off and it seems that people took advantage of this which may have also attributed to the higher bill balances. Mayor and Council then discussed whether there would still be shut off notices once the Ordinance takes effect in July.

- **Budget Amendment-** Mr. Kuczynski stated he will call the auditor to discuss.

- **New Business**

- **Memorandum of Understanding- All County Police agencies and the Department of Adult Protective Services-** Motion to approve the agreement and allow the Mayor to sign documents on the Towns behalf made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Faith. All in favor. No opposed.
- Motion to allow Bill Valentine to proceed with the Splash Pad grant and the C&O Canal Plaza grant made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Kerns. All in favor. No opposed.
- Mayor and Council agree to send Mr. David Smith a letter regarding the Hancock Museum sign on his building.
- Motion to proceed with filling the Town Manager position made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Faith. All in favor. No opposed.
- Councilman Kerns ask that a letter of thanks be sent to Sheriff Mullendore for the donated Police vehicle. Mayor and Council agreed.

- **Closed Session:**

- Motion to move to Close Session at 9:33pm made by Councilman Kerns. Seconded by Councilman McCusker.
- Motion to move into Open Session at 10:25pm made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Faith.
- Motion to purchase new firearms and supplies for Police Officers made by Councilman McCusker. Seconded by Councilman Kerns. All in favor. No opposed.

Motion to adjourn by Councilman Kerns, Seconded by Councilman
McCusker.
All in favor. No opposed.

Meeting Adjourned @ 10:30pm

Heather Keefer