

# Special Town Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

10:30 a.m.

Zoom Meeting

**Present:** Mayor Jim Auxer, Lori Robertson (Recorder), Jim Ford, Chris Stroeck, Marty Amerikaner, and Jenny Haynes

**Absent:** Cheryl Roberts

**Staff:** Amy Boyd – Town Clerk

**Visitors:** –Jan Hafer, Christian Asam, Nancy Stewart, Annette Gavin-Bates, Chris Marshall, Deb Tucker, Lois Turco, Chazz Printz, Steve Pearson, Elise Baach, Meredith Wait, Mark Kohut, Carol Asam, Pat Phillips (Eastern Panhandle Green Coalition), John Sedlins, Mary Fortuna, and Ann Marie Sharp.

## **Agenda:**

1. Call meeting to order

**Call the meeting to order by Mayor Auxer at 10:30 a.m.**

2. Allocation of Hotel/Motel Tax (vote required);

Public comment:

M. Wait – this is a necessary move and it can be made successful- everyone needs to be patient. The 1% the town gets is significant and can be used to help fix the sidewalks.

C. Marshall – wasn't sure who the CVB board members didn't know how many.

A. Gavin-Bates – the CVB releases an annual report that includes financials and its members, several of which are from Shepherdstown. It isn't on the CVB website because the website is a destination marketing tool.

E. Baach – is in support of the visitors center. Who bears the cost of the town improvements? There wasn't a lot of notice for this

meeting.

Mayor – the 1% sales tax goes into the general fund. It can pay for the town gardener who helps keep the town clean.

J. Ford – proposed is 50% going to the CVB and 50% going to Parks & Rec in town.

There was a lengthy discussion as to how to spend the 50% coming to the town.

**L. Robertson – move to move the 50% to the CVB and 50% to Parks & Rec. effective January 1, 2021, and to task the Finance Committee with allocating the funds to see where it should be used. J. Ford moved to Second the motion. The motion was approved.**

C. Asam mentioned that she was uncomfortable with 50% going to Parks & Rec.

J. Ford – we can reallocate it at any time.

M. Amerikaner – confused as to the allocation to the CVB.

J. Ford – we need to give money to the CVB, by law, if the CVB has a presence here.

3. Consideration of and action regarding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Shepherdstown Visitors Center, Inc. and Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. and Interim Welcome Center Funding Agreement between Shepherdstown Visitors Center, Inc. and Jefferson County Convention & Visitor Bureau, Inc. (vote required);  
Annette Gavin-Bates – the CVB has signed a lease for the Shepherdstown Visitors Center in the space where Hypnocoffee used to be, behind the current library.  
C. Stroeck – noted that the timing of this meeting today is difficult for the public to attend. Regarding the MOU – is there any way to see how our portion of the money is being spent by the CVB?  
A. Gavin-Bates – it will go to payroll for the new Shepherdstown Visitors Center, and overall marketing campaigns. These expenditures can be shown.  
C. Stroeck – he noted the verbiage in the MOU. Can we do this for a year, see what works, and make changes going forward?  
A. Gavin-bates – yes.

C. Stroeck – a question for Chazz (town attorney) – if this doesn't work out for whatever reason/s, the council can reverse it assuring our own Shepherdstown Visitors Center is established?

C. Printz – yes. Because this MOU does involve town funds, the council should be able to weigh in on these agreements.

M. Amerikaner – questioned the financial responsibility of each entity. S. Pearson explained in detail the responsibility of each.

M. Kohut – how is progress measured?

A. Gavin – Bates – holding the CVB to a standard, we are happy to take that on. A measurement of success is how many people visit and book hotels/motels.

E. Baach – if there is a surplus after the lease, maybe the remainder can be used to maintain the Market House or fix sidewalks.

**C. Stroeck – move to approve the Consideration of and action regarding Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Shepherdstown Visitors Center, Inc. and Jefferson County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. and Interim Welcome Center Funding Agreement between Shepherdstown Visitors Center, Inc. and Jefferson County Convention & Visitor Bureau, Inc. L. Robertson – move to Second the motion. No objections noted.**

4. Adjournment.

**C. Stroeck moved to adjourn at 11:55 a.m., second by J. Ford, no objections noted.**

Draft Minutes respectfully submitted by L. Robertson, Recorder for the Corporation of Shepherdstown.