

**Town of Westernport
Council Meeting
March 6, 2023**

COMMISSIONERS: Phil Whetstone, Eric Alexander, Kristi Williams and Allen Shapiro

ATTENDEES: Sandy Corsaro, Dick Walls, Pete Davis, Eric Dichera and Ronda Wertman of the Mineral Daily News Tribune

Mayor Judy Hamilton welcomed all and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer lead by Commissioner Whetstone. With a vote, the council dispensed with the reading of the minutes. The mayor made some announcements: The next council meeting will be Monday, April 3, at 7 p.m. The town will be closed on April 7 for Good Friday and April 10 for Easter Monday.

The **Memorandum of Agreement** between the Town of Westernport and the Maryland Rural Development Corporation for Circuit Rider/Town Manager services for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2023 ending June 30, 2024 was brought up. Services require 8 hours per week. Commissioner Shapiro made the motion with a second from Commissioner Alexander to accept this Memorandum of Agreement. Motion carried. Commissioner Shapiro noted that this program is funded by the state and is not a cost to the town.

The mayor continued:

Work is continuing on Phases 5 – 7 of the Water Project. We are currently in negotiations for property on Philos Avenue for another pump house. All looks good.

The closing on the Lincoln Drive Project will be sometime between March 23 and March 25. The mayor is waiting to hear from the bank. The Maryland Avenue Project (327/329 is completed and it looks good. Westernport will have a **Beautify Westernport Day on May 6**. Rain day will be May 20. Volunteers will be needed and the town will provide lunch.

Commissioner Whetstone gave the Water Department Report. In February we had 97 customers on the shut-off list with late fee amount of \$3,848.00 and a total outstanding of \$27,184.50. As of March we have 94 customers on the shut-off list with late fee amount of \$3,570 and a total outstanding of \$24,824.50. Commissioner Whetstone stated that we are making headway.

Commissioner Alexander gave the Street Department Report. A large water leak on Horserock was repaired on 2/7 and a water meter issue on Horserock was handled on 2/10. A new water line was installed for Mr. Kalbaugh. Several sewer line jobs were completed on Kalbaugh and Quality Streets. We will need to order gravel soon. Historically, in the springtime, we see more breaks in our system. Tandem load cost is approximately \$300. All storm culverts and ditches have been cleaned out. Commissioner Alexander and Glenn Green have completed the report on out of town water and sewer repair costs from May to January 2022. Total man-hours =83. Cost with labor, material and equipment was \$7,980.00.

Commissioner Alexander continued. New brushes have been ordered for our Bobcat's sweeper attachment. American Rent All is doing the work at a cost of \$712.36. Work is being done on the new budget. Several repairs to our trucks were done in February. The town workers are working on Creekside Park to get it ready for spring and summer. Three planters have been cleaned out. We would like to secure more planters. Peggy Boal at L & M will help with the cost and suggest to her church group to help. Four new "**Children at Play**" signs have been installed. (Maryland Avenue, Potomac Street, Smoot Street and Central Avenue.

A damaged storm grate has been repaired and reinstalled at Marsh and Greene. Commissioner Alexander has reached out to Westmar Middle School and Mountain Ridge High School to see if any students need public service hours to graduate. He has

not heard anything at this time. The town currently has 8 or 9 surplus properties we mow. We may have potential buyers for 3 of them. Commissioner Alexander would like to discuss this issue at a work session and get these properties back on the tax rolls.

Commissioner Williams gave the Police Report. All is going well with the Security Company. I see their truck out and about. If residents have the Allegany County Sheriff's App or Nixle on their phones, they can get warnings of bad weather, road closures and criminal activity going on in our area. Residents can also give information to the authorities on what they know on these events.

Commissioner Shapiro gave the Financial Report. Our council has held several work sessions with Piedmont on the state of their water supply. Westernport is a regional water source designated by the USDA. We will be offering a pipe to be placed under the bridge to supply Piedmont with treated water. We would add this to our existing water project, Phases 5 - 7. Estimated cost would be between \$200K and \$300K. Right now our cost for Phases 5 - 7 is \$22M. Piedmont would meet our pipeline on the other side of the bridge (the West Virginia side) and take it from there. Commissioner Shapiro made a motion on this with the deadline for acceptance by Piedmont to be May 1, 2023. Again, this water would be potable/treated water. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Motion carried.

A temporary solution to Piedmont's water issue was to supply them with raw water. We have been doing that for approximately 2 years. Commissioner Shapiro made the motion that Westernport supply Piedmont with raw water until the pipeline carrying potable/treated water is completed. Piedmont is to agree to accept treated water by January 1, 2024. If Piedmont does not agree to accept our treated water, they will be denied water. Commissioner Alexander seconded the motion. Motion carried. Piedmont has fully caught up on their account. There will be one meter to Piedmont and Westernport will not be maintaining any waterlines in Piedmont.

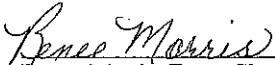
Balance as of 2/01/23				
Gen. Fund	Water	Sewer	Garbage	
\$323,391.36	\$239,701.50	\$192,490.43	\$13,456.97	
Balance as of 2/28/23				
\$205,943.63	\$254,074.76	\$167,116.21	\$26,763.98	

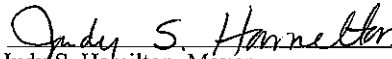
Commissioner Whetstone made a motion that the Financial Report be accepted with a second from Commissioner Alexander. Motion carried.

Mrs. Sandy Corsaro wanted the water to Piedmont explained again. Commissioner Shapiro told her that this is a USDA Project. Westernport does need permission from the Maryland State Highway to attach the pipeline to the bridge. The project will start in November 2023. Mrs. Corsaro feels that each resident in Luke should pay the surcharge. The mayor stated that the agreement with Luke has been done and signed. Luke pays one surcharge and it is based on having one meter. State agencies (USDA, MDE and CDBG) were involved in the agreement with Luke.

Mr. Eric Dichera is a coach for Hot Stove Baseball and he would like 200 feet of the Maryland Avenue fields for boys' baseball practice and games. Commissioner Shapiro stated that Westernport purchased the Maryland Avenue fields to give Girls' Softball a place for practice and games. Commissioner Shapiro suggested Mr. Dichera look into the old Bruce Middle School field and maybe Barton. Mr. Dichera has looked into this issue and there is nothing available until you get to Frostburg. The only other option would be to play all their games at the Fairgrounds. April 1 will be the first day of practice.

Commissioner Whetstone made a motion to adjourn with a second from Commissioner Williams. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.


Renee Morris, Town Clerk


Judy S. Hamilton, Mayor