



# Stephens City Newsletter

Volume 31 Issue 1

January and February 2012

## From the Mayor's Office...

Hello Citizens,

I'd like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one of you a Happy New Year. As we start the New Year, things appear to be running smoothly and quietly at the Town Office.

You probably have already read this in the local paper, but I am pleased to inform you that the lawsuit brought against the Town by the county has been settled out of court. The three-judge panel dismissed the case at the request of the county. It took months of open discussion and cooperation by both jurisdictions to bring this case to an end. I am a firm believer that when lines of communication are kept open and honest, much can be accomplished. I offer my sincere thanks to all who were involved in bringing this unfortunate incident to an end.

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The Christmas on the Commons was another huge success. The Town would like to thank the Stephens City Business Association for making this event possible. It was great having the Sherando Band provide a brass ensemble and the Aylor Band performing a Christmas concert. Between the decorating of ornaments, getting some fresh baked goodies, the warming by the fire, and with the magic of a certain special guest, a good time was had by all. We can't wait until the 5th annual event next year!

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Newtown Heritage Festival presents:

2012 "Women of Stephens City"  
Calendars

\$10.00 each

*Get yours while supplies last at  
surrounding businesses and the*

*Town Office*

**SNOW REMOVAL**

It's hard to tell what lies ahead for this winter. It is our hope that we do not have the type of winter we had couple of years ago, but we have already one very early season snow, only time will tell; that and the Farmer's Almanac. With that in mind, we thought it might be a good time to remind all citizens about their responsibilities with regard to snow removal.

Property owners or occupants must clear all public sidewalks of snow where sidewalks front their property. This must be done within 6 hours after snow has ceased to fall or no later than noon the next day if snowfall stops overnight. Please contact the Town Office if you have any questions.

Also for the first time, the Town is asking residents who are willing to volunteer to "adopt" a neighborhood fire hydrant for snow removal. If you are interested in helping in this venture, please contact the Town Office or e-mail us to let us know which hydrant you are willing to keep clear in snow related events. Together we can make a difference.



**BUSINESS LICENSES**

Business licenses are to be renewed after January 1, 2012 through March 1, 2012. Renewal forms will be mailed to existing license holders. The cost of the business license is based on gross receipts or a minimum of \$15. **Please be sure to have your gross receipt records** available when applying for your license. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please call our office at 869-3087. Business and equipment taxes must be paid in full prior to licenses being renewed.

Town Clerk,  
Dianne L. MacMillan



**Frozen Water Lines**

Most of the time the first place to check for a frozen water line is an exposed drafty area beneath or within your home or business. Find and be aware of where the cutoff valve is within your home. **Do not open a water meter box** unless you have contacted the Town. Town water meters are insulated and not prone to freezing.

If you have a problem with frozen water lines, during office hours you may call 540-869-3087; after hours contact 540-662-6162.



*Recycled Christmas Trees will be picked up on Tuesday, January 3rd and 10th, 2012*

From all of the Town Council, Appointed Officials and Staff of Stephens City, we wish you and yours a joyous and prosperous New Year!



## Water and Sewer Billing

Water and sewer bills for the bi-monthly billing end **Thursday, December 30, 2011** and are due upon receipt.

After **Monday, February 6, 2012** a **10% penalty** will be added. On **Monday, February 13, 2012** service will be discontinued for delinquency. A reconnect fee of **\$25** plus the full amount of the bill must be paid before service can be restored.

Just a reminder that for your convenience a night drop is available at the Town Office for dropping off check or money order payments and payments can now be made online at the Town's website. ***It is important to note that, if you pay your bill online after midnight the day it is due, it will not be posted until two business days after the due date and will be subject to additional penalties.***

Water/Sewer bills can be paid using a Visa or MasterCard. If you pay a bill online after the due date, you will still be responsible for the 10% penalty and if the bill is paid after the shut off date, the \$25 reconnect fee will need to be paid as well, prior to reconnection.

**DO NOT PUT CASH IN THE DROP BOX!**



### From the Town Manager's Desk...

Happy New Year!

The best news so far in this new year of 2012 is that the problem with synthetic towels, wipes and other similar non bio-degradable products being flushed into the Town's sewer system has diminished.

However, the problem has not completely stopped! It is essential that everyone be made aware that all kinds of cleaning towels and wipes are not to be flushed!

This past July, (in a large part due to the "rag" problem) there was a significant increase in the water

and sewer rates. The increase was imposed to meet operational and maintenance costs at the treatment plants by Frederick County Sanitation Authority. To avoid additional rate adjustments as a result of the O&M costs, everyone must be aware of and responsible for their actions. To think that just one little thing will not cause a problem or that the rules don't apply to you will eventually cost you as well as your neighbors in Stephens City. Town officials will be forced to look into additional rate increases, should we have to install expensive grinder equipment and or bar screens, .

Another area of concern about the Town's sewer system is the ongoing problem with ground water leaking into the sewer lines. Often leaks originate in the lines coming from the house to the Town's main line. Collectively sump

pumps that are still connected to the sewer system, broken cleanouts and stairwell drains release and allow significant amounts of rain and groundwater into the wastewater system. The end result is higher flows and higher wastewater treatment costs to the Town and to you. The saying "there goes money going down the drain" is a literal interpretation of what is occurring when unmetered water is treated at the wastewater plant.

In 2012 Town employees will be conducting inspections throughout the Town in an attempt to locate the sources of infiltration and inflow of surface and groundwater. Property owners will be responsible to correct any deficiencies and violations found beyond the lines maintained by the Town.

*Michael K. Kehoe*  
Town Manager

### ***(Mayor's Office continued...)***

As always my door is open. If you have concerns or just wish to share some idea, please visit my office or call me. I welcome your comments.

Thank you for letting me serve you!

*Joy Shull-Gellner - Mayor*



## Corner

### The Planner's

A New Year is full of new beginnings and new ventures. For the Town of Stephens City a new year is no different. The New Year brings many new and exciting directions that our Town will be exploring together.

You may have noticed the new layout and look to the Newsletter.

This is just the beginning! In January, the Town will launch our newly remodeled website. It is hard to believe the Town launched our first official website over three years ago. At the time, our website was considered one of the best small locality websites in Virginia based upon what we offered for a Town our size. All of these features, such as online bill pay and GIS mapping will continue, but we have strived to recreate a website that is user friendly while at same time project a positive progression in website development. Not only will the website be remodeled, the Town will also be



launching the Town's official "Facebook" page. The page will be designed for residents or anyone who is interested in the Town of Stephens City to keep up with important notices or events. Be sure to click on the link on the new website and become a "fan" of the Town.

In other news, it will be our goal to begin the construction work on the North Main Street Enhancement Grant project and we will be presenting more about the project in the month's to come. The Stephens Business Association will be looking to resurge in 2012 by working directly with businesses to see how the association can improve the visibility and presence of the great businesses of Stephens City and the greater Stephens City area. The Parks and Recreation Committee will be working hard on fundraising efforts for the Veteran's Memorial at the Newtown Commons.

2012 is shaping up to be a great year in the life of Stephens City!

**Brian P. Henshaw**

**Town Planner/ Assistant Town Manager**

## Stephens City Lions Club "Citizen of the Year Award"

The Stephens City Lions Club announces that it is sponsoring a Citizen of the Year Award to be presented to a person who has made significant contributions to the community of Stephens City, Virginia. The recipient should live in the general Stephens City area.

A nomination form may be obtained at the Town Office of Stephens City, the forms will be available after January 15, 2012 and may be returned to the Town Office or mailed to the Stephens City Lions Club, PO Box 128, Stephens City, VA 22655.

The award will be presented at a Lions Club meeting in March of 2012.

# Town Calendar of Events

## January 2012

|      |    |   |
|------|----|---|
| Jan. | 2  | <b>Town Office Closed-<br/>New Years Day</b>  |
| Jan. | 3  | <b>Town Council at 7:30pm</b>   |
| Jan. | 10 | Personnel Committee meeting at 5:00pm   |
| Jan. | 16 | <b>Town Office Closed -<br/>Martin Luther King Day</b>  |
| Jan. | 17 | Historic Preservation Commission  |
| Jan. | 19 | Water/ Sewer meeting at 5:30 pm<br>Public Works meeting at 6:00 pm<br>Newtown Heritage Festival at 7:00pm |
| Jan. | 23 | Parks and Recreation Committee<br>at 5:00pm<br>Finance Committee at 5:00pm                                |
| Jan. | 24 | Planning Commission at 7:30pm   |
| Jan. | 25 | Finance Committee at 5:00pm   |

## February 2012

|      |    |   |
|------|----|---|
| Feb. | 6  | <b>Water/Sewer Bills Due without<br/>penalty.</b>   |
| Feb. | 7  | <b>Town Council Meeting at 7:30pm.<br/>Penalties added to Water/Sewer Bills</b>                         |
| Feb. | 13 | <b>Water Shut Off Date</b>  |
| Feb. | 14 | Personnel Committee at 5:00pm   |
| Feb. | 16 | Water/ Sewer Meeting at 5:30pm<br>Public Works Meeting at 6:00pm<br>Newtown Heritage Festival at 7:00pm |
| Feb. | 20 | <b>Town Office Closed-<br/>President's Day</b>  |
| Feb. | 22 | Finance Committee at 5:00pm   |
| Feb. | 27 | Parks & Recreation Commission<br>at 5:00pm  |
| Feb. | 28 | Planning Commission at 5:00pm   |

**\* All meetings subject to change without notice w/  
the exception of the Town Council meeting.**