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Mayors Report – February 2018

Winter Weather - As a reminder, residents are responsible for clearing their sidewalks within 24 hours of a snow fall. This helps keep our pedestrians safe and allows our children to safely get to their bus stops. I'd like to thank those in the community who chip in to clear out the bus stops which are frequently plowed in when streets are cleared. We appreciate those who give this extra effort. Also, to help protect you and your neighbors, the town asks those with a fire hydrant in their yard to please keep them clear of snow -- so they can be located as quickly as possible if they are needed. When they are needed to put a fire out, but covered with snow, fire and rescue workers could be delayed in locating them - and in a fire emergency, seconds count. Having the hydrants clear can make a huge difference when they're needed. This will save fire fighters much time in finding the hydrants in snow, as well as clearing the snow off of the hydrants once they do find them. Also if a snow emergency is declared as per Town Code please ensure all vehicles are removed from town streets.

Town Safety- There is an increase of joggers on our road ways. As a reminder if hitting the streets in the dark, please wear a flashing beacon or reflective clothing. This will allow drivers to see you. These low cost safety options could save your life and prevent an unnecessary tragedy.

FY 2018- 2019 Budget- Understanding the process. Each year the Mayor, after working with staff, presents a draft budget. This is a starting point for The Town Council's consideration. The Mayor's role remains important, as fiscal officer, but it is then the Town Council which must consider what to approve - or not, and during the discussion, the Town Council will hold a series of public workshops. Once adopted by the Town Council, the budget is returned to the Mayor to be implementing on a day to day basis.

Mount Airy Train Station - The train station renovations by Hauptman Builders will be substantially completed around the end of February. Michael "Doc" O'Brien is continuing his volunteer work on the interior of the large doors. The Mount Airy Historical Society will have access March and April to transfer and setup their displays, archives and work tables. We anticipate a grand opening this Spring 2018.

1010 South Main Street- The Town mailed a warning letter to the property owner on December 18th. The property owner had ten days from the receipt of the letter to erect a visual barrier along the frontage of the property and 60 days to conduct a clean-up of the lot. Neither deadline was met. The property owner did reach out to staff on December 27th acknowledging our letter and seems cooperative in complying, although nothing has changed with date. The Town works to cooperate as much as possible with citizens and business owners, but we also recognize this area needs to be addressed in our reviewing further enforcement options. In the meantime, the property owner submitted a text amendment application to our office that requests to change the zoning ordinance to allow Townhouses in the RE- Residential Existing zone. That information is being reviewed by staff and the Town attorney.

Harrison-Leishear Property - Well testing was successfully completed and in a few weeks we should know more about the potential groundwater appropriations the Town could receive. The water quality testing resulted in clean water with a slightly high nitrate level. This was anticipated from prior testing and the recent Water Station #2 upgrade allowed space to add a nitrate removal system. Depending on progress from the Industrial Development Authority, the Town could have these added appropriations in the near future. Before any proposal on this property is seriously considered, substantial citizen input and outreach will occur. The Town is in and have been in the exploration stages.

Downtown Master Plan – After reviewing 10 proposals for our Downtown Master Plan and interviewing 4 separate firms, staff is recommending that the Downtown Master Plan bid award be given to Design Collective for \$121,200.00 at the February Town Council meeting. The Mayor concurs with this selection. Later in February, we will have an initial meeting with consultant to discuss the possible formation of a steering committee for this project and first steps. Remember this study will look at the Flat Iron Building, Center street corridor, parking and utility infrastructure and do a full marketing study among other items.

If I were Mayor Contest- We are once again kicking of this annual contest and I look forward to visiting 4th graders from both Carroll and Frederick Counties. **This year's theme is "Live to Lead"!**