

**Shepherdstown Special Town Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, February 28, 2019**  
**Shepherdstown – Town Hall**  
**10:00 a.m.**  
**DRAFT**

**Present:** Jim Auxer (Mayor), Lori Robertson (Recorder), Mark Everhart, Deb Tucker, and Cheryl Roberts.

**Absent:** David Rosen and Dave Springer

**Visitors:** Dolores Gregory and James Gatz

**Agenda Item 1 - Call to order:**

**Mayor – if there are no objections, call the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. None noted.**

**Agenda Item 2 – Interviews for Jefferson County Development Authority (JCDA) Representative from Shepherdstown:**

The candidates will be interviewed individually.

First candidate – Dolores Gregory – 202 W. Washington St

Mayor – why do you want to be on the JCDA?

D. Gregory – is new to town, and will be living here very soon. Has experience as a journalist. She knew we needed three names to put forth and she put her name in. She has issues using taxpayer dollars for private enterprise incentives for a low number of jobs. She likes the rollback clause when companies get tax incentives but then do not do what they say to get those incentives.

Mayor – what experience do you bring to the position?

D. Gregory – as a journalist, she takes a closer look at issues, and doesn't take issues at face value. She is willing to question things and to be more skeptical.

D. Tucker – do you have any economic development experience?

D. Gregory – not a lot, however she has written articles about it.

M. Everhart – WV has a business inventory tax and pilot agreements. Do you have an opinion on this?

D. Gregory – am skeptical about industries/companies relying on tax incentives as part of their business model. The state should change the tax codes. Sometimes tax incentives in poor areas can be a positive to draw in jobs. Jefferson County has a low unemployment rate, unlike many other areas of the state.

L. Robertson – Shepherdstown is an educated and informed community. As the town representative, and now that people know what the JCDA is and who you will be, are you comfortable being approached?

D. Gregory – yes, I hope to be able to answer questions.

M. Everhart – what kind of development would you like to see in Jefferson County?

D. Gregory – true light industry, more tech companies, tourism based, and small businesses.

D. Tucker – like a convention center. We need high-speed fiber optics; we are not easily accessible for tech firms unfortunately.

D. Gregory – yes.

C. Roberts – a good example is the Heritage Festival.

M. Everhart – do you have any experience on real estate transactions?

D. Gregory – not much, but can read up on it. Will want to attend the JCDA meetings and report to the Town Council.

Mayor – thanked her for coming and that he would be in touch. She departed.

Second candidate – James Gatz – corner of Duke and New St.

Mayor – why do you want to be on the JCDA?

J. Gatz – wants to be more engaged in the community. He wants to see good development come to Jefferson County. He works for the federal government, and has worked on some economic development, obtaining grants, and with poor communities. He wants the residents to be part of any development that goes on in the county. Planning is so important.

Mayor – what experience do you bring to the position?

J. Gatz – has done community development work, and has maintained those relationships in DC that could help on a local level. We have regional assets such as IAD and the racetrack. There doesn't seem to be a lot of collaboration with VA & MD, and there should be. It could be very beneficial. We need to reach out to other counties and states for long-term planning.

D. Tucker – that’s a great idea, a good vision.

M. Everhart - WV has a business inventory tax and pilot agreements. Do you have an opinion on this?

J. Gatz – he has issues with bringing in businesses with major tax breaks, there should be limits. We need to also build upon what is already here and make it stronger. Those breaks are a tool and we need to be thoughtful about when to use them.

L. Robertson – Shepherdstown is an educated and informed community. As the town representative, and now that people know what the JCDA is and who you will be, are you comfortable being approached?

J. Gatz – it is a good thing to hear other opinions, and has no problem being approached, or speaking his opinion on matters.

M. Everhart – do you have any experience on real estate transactions?

J. Gatz – he does have some experience in that area.

M. Everhart – and you can attend the JCDA meetings?

C. Roberts – they are the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month during the day.

J. Gatz – yes. He will keep the Council abreast of what is going on at the meetings either in a written format, and/or his attendance at our council meetings when needed.

Mayor – thanked him for coming and that he would be in touch. He departed.

A discussion of the candidates ensued.

**Agenda Item 3 – Recommendation to Jefferson County Commission:**

**M. Everhart - moved to recommend the three interviewed candidates: Cheryl Pullen (who was previously interviewed), Dolores Gregory, and James Gatz, to the Jefferson County Commission for consideration. Furthermore, to recommend James Gatz for consideration, as the only unanimously supported candidate as the Shepherdstown representative to the JCDA. No objections noted.**

**Agenda Item 4 – Adjournment:**

**L. Robertson – if there are no objections, move to adjourn at 11:34 a.m. None noted.**

