



State of the Town Address Mayor Howard Long

2019 was a year spent in change and transition, tackling long-standing issues, adding new personnel, and creating a new organizational culture focused on the future of the Town. As an administration, we're moving away from "the way we've always done it" to "the way we do it now," and with continued hard work and dedication from Staff and Officials, we've put ourselves in a great place to have continued progress and expand on the successes of 2019.

This past year, we worked extensively on our water loss issue. With 30-40% loss for over 20-years now, and the detriment that presents for growth and permitting, we understand that correcting this issue is arguably the top priority for Boonsboro. We conducted system tests, at multiple locations, and we contracted a leak detection expert to survey our water system. We're taking a closer look at our infrastructure, data collection, data management systems. We continued an ambitious residential meter replacement program and both Staff & Officials are focused on fixing the issue, once and for all. This past quarter, we're proud to say that with a more careful accounting of usage, water loss dropped from an average of 33% down to 26%, thereby correcting the loss by 1.7 million gallons.

We're proud and excited about the personnel changes we made, in 2019. Here at Town Hall, we hired a new Administrative Assistant and a new Town Clerk. We couldn't be happier with the almost-immediate impact they've had both with job performance and helping to create a friendly, collaborative workplace. At the Police Department, two new officers were hired, and we now have a very well-rounded Police Force. BPD has done an excellent job increasing their presence and visibility in the community, while providing quality policing and public safety. In Water & Sewer, we hired two new Operator Trainees to address a staff shortage and ensure the future of the department. We're confident they'll thrive, both in the industry and with the Town, and we're excited to continue the strategy of training and developing new staff.

It can't be expressed strongly enough how thankful we are to our Town Officials and Volunteers for the effort and time they put into the Town. We rely heavily on their guidance and leadership, and we share with them the following successful programs and projects, from 2019:

- In Fiscal Year 2019, Town Officials and Staff worked diligently with consultants and contractors to improve the Annual Financial Report. After years of recurring findings, the Town reduced its findings, from 5 in FY2018, to 2 in FY2019. We're confident that with new staff and policies, we won't have any findings, next year.
- Over the last two years, better investment practices through CD-Laddering, in all three funds, has resulted in year-to-date interest revenues of over \$45,000 dollars.
- The United Way Foundation and the Park Board organized and installed a Born Learning Trail, at Shafer Park, offering fun, active learning activities for young children and their families.
- Using Project Open Space grant funding, we installed Shade Canopies at the Tot Lot, in Shafer Park. We were also able to fund tree-planting and further landscaping, at the Park. Funding

totaled over \$12 thousand dollars. Looking into the future, the Town has been awarded over \$150 thousand dollars in Project Open Space grants, to fund more Park projects like the Trail Extension, Parking Lot Resurfacing, and Roof Replacement for all Park Pavilions. These projects will all begin, soon.

- Using Appalachian Regional Commission grant funding of \$150 thousand dollars, the Town completed an upgrade of a sewer main, running through Shafer Park. The upgrade increased the system's capacity and efficiency, replaced aging infrastructure, and significantly reduced inflow & infiltration to our Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Town expects another \$150 thousand dollars in matching funds, in 2020, to continue with sewer pipe lining, and Phase II of our Inflow & Infiltration Project
- The Utilities Department was awarded \$30 thousand dollars in grant funding, from MDE, for excellent annual performance at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Funding was used to purchase wet well aerators and further upgrade the wastewater system for performance and capacity.
- The Town founded a Safety & Risk Committee to serve as an advisory board to Town Administration and the Mayor & Council in their corporate governance of employee and workplace safety.
- A short stretch of Reeders Alley was resurfaced, and stormwater management was improved to prevent flooding for local residents.
- The Town dedicated "Coach Scott Field" and "Coach Scott Run" to the memory of the beloved Boonsboro High Athletics Coach, Dwight Scott. The Town also dedicated a pavilion at Shafer Park, to former Councilmember Shirley Metz, and Boonsboro Pond was renamed "Hawkins Grove Pond" in honor of former Councilmembers Rich Hawkins and Ray Grove.
- The Town, and engineering contractor Whitman, Requardt, & Associates, completed the Water System Master Plan & Hydraulic Model. The Water Model, as its more commonly known, offers the Town a concrete understanding of our current capacity, and it allows system-wide consideration when planning and implementing infrastructure upgrades. The Town is in the process of procuring and creating a Wastewater Model, as well.

Moving forward into 2020, the Town will continue working on capital improvements, infrastructure repairs and maintenance, economic development, growth, public safety, and all the other functions that help make Boonsboro such a great place to live. However, as we continue-on with the day-to-day, we'll also strive to become less reactive and begin planning beyond the fiscal year. This year, we'll begin development of an Asset Management & Capital Improvement Plan to better monitor our infrastructure, prioritize capital investments, and plan funding years in advance. Better management and planning allow for more stakeholder-investment and reassures them their tax dollars are well-invested.

Sincerely,



Howard W. Long, Mayor