Written by Gary Childers
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Is it possible to have too much of a good thing? That's one of the questions West Jefferson's Aldermen wrestled with during Monday night's monthly meeting as they considered several requests for events that would require closing off various down town streets. Ricky Goodman presented requests to close Main street from 4:00 pm till 7:00 pm on September 15th and October 20th for classic car cruise ins. Keith Woody requested closing of sections of Main Street for the West Jefferson Olde Time Antiques' Fair from 8:00 am till 6:00 pm on September 22nd. They also had a request from the Lions Club to close a section of Main Street for the Christmas Tree 5K Run on December 1st. The upside to these events is the extra people they bring into the town who may shop while there or return later for business. The downside is the restriction of parking and limiting of access for regular customers to the businesses along the street areas that are closed off. Alderman Stephen Shoemaker stated his support for these events, saying "I talked to a whole lot of people that come for the first time to West Jefferson, and they say 'we want to come back.' It's good for the town." Aldermen Calvin Green reflected concerns about these type events he had received from downtown merchants, "You've got a ton of cars parked all over town, can't nobody get in to conduct business…Can't nobody get nowhere." The Aldermen approved all requests presented with Alderman Tom Hartman summing up their intentions for the future, "The way to approach this and still to keep all the good is not to rule anything out, but we've got to take care of the merchants too."