

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

**TOWN OF NORTH EAST
106 S. MAIN STREET
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND 21901**

May 13, 2020

In order to comply with Governor Larry Hogan's declaration of a State of Emergency as part of Maryland's response to COVID-19, and in order to comply with public gathering restrictions during this time the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East conducted a virtual meeting on this date.

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor McKnight at 7:03 p.m. Participating via computer and/or telephone were Commissioners Cynthia Billig, Hilary Crothers-Moore, Michael Kline and Raymond Mitchell. Also present were Police Chief Darrell Hamilton, Maintenance Supervisor Phillip Meekins, Director of Finance and Administration Ken Natale, Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2020 meeting was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Kline and approved by all present with no corrections or amendments.

-INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2020-05-01 re: Fiscal Year 2021 Budget, Constant Yield Tax Rate, Water and Stormwater Fees

-PUBLIC HEARING-

Mayor McKnight opened the public hearing at 7:05 p.m.

Ordinance 2020-05-01 re: Fiscal Year 2021 Budget, Constant Yield Tax Rate, Water and Stormwater Fees

The purpose of adopting a Fiscal Year 2021 Budget, Real and Public Utility/Railroad Operating Tax Rates for the Taxable Year beginning July 1, 2020, and a Homestead Credit Percentage to be applied for the purposes of the Homestead Tax Credit under State Law; stating certain projected expenditure and expense allocations; specifying circumstances under which approval of the Mayor and Commissioners is required for modifications to revenues

Town Board Approved Minutes May 27, 2020

and expenditures; establishing comprehensive fiscal plan for the Town of North East for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

No one from the public spoke regarding the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. There were no comments from the Mayor or Commissioners regarding the 2021 Budget.

Mayor McKnight closed the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.

-GUESTS-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None.

-REPORTS-

Mayor McKnight

Mayor McKnight reported he participated in the North East Chamber of Commerce virtual Town Hall meeting on Wednesday May 13, 2020. Also in attendance, Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie and Commissioners Kline and Mitchell. The discussion focused on the reopening of local businesses and the unity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Both Commissioners Kline and Mitchell stated the meeting sounded very optimistic.

Commissioner Billig

None

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline entered into the record the April 2020 Maintenance Department Monthly Report.

Commissioner Kline reported he has been listening to the virtual weekly press conference held by the County Executive, Dr. Alan McCarthy regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mayor McKnight asked Mr. Rick Dudley, who joined the virtual meeting after the public hearing closed, if he had any questions regarding the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Mr. Dudley

wanted to verify if the proposed Real Property Tax Rate will maintain at \$0.4800 per \$100.00 dollars. Mayor McKnight advised there would be no change to the real property tax rate.

Commissioner Mitchell

None

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the April 22, 2020 Town Board meeting.

- Thursday, May 7, 2020 - 2 virtual meetings
- Friday, May 8, 2020 - 4 virtual meetings

Director of Finance and Administration, Ken Natale

Mr. Natale entered into the record the list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting.

Mr. Natale entered into the record the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget to Actual Statements for the General & Enterprise Funds through March 31, 2020.

Mr. Natale advised the Board, he ran a report this week to compare the outstanding balances of the water utility bills for the March 30, 2020 versus the December 31, 2019 quarter. In comparison, it does reflect to date, the outstanding balance is what a normal quarter reflects, even during the COVID-19 pandemic.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised all operations are continuing as normal, Planning and Zoning are continuing to receive construction authorizations along with fence permits.

The Water Tank Mixer Project has a tentative virtual preconstruction meeting on May 17, 2020.

The Jackson House Exterior and Interior Renovation Project preconstruction meeting with T-N-T Contractor is being scheduled.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Re-Opening from COVID-19

Mayor McKnight advised Governor Hogan lifted the stay at home order with specific guidelines. After discussion with the County Executive, Alan McCarthy, he did elaborate, that he would follow the guidelines to insure the safety of our communities.

North East Community Park Guidelines re: the COVID-19

Mrs. Melissa Cook-MacKenzie advised she is working with the town staff in regards to the events at the North East Community Park. Once the guidelines are set, all information will be placed on the town's website.

Honoring the North East High School 2020 Graduation Class

Mayor McKnight reported he has been speaking with Mr. David Dollenger, Principle of the North East High School, on ways to honor the 2020 graduates. Due to the cancelation of the traditional graduation because of the Coronavirus pandemic, they are asking if banners can be placed at the north and south islands of town.

After discussion, it was agreed, that a small banner could be placed at the north island stating that a large banner with photos of the graduates could be placed at the south island. The Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins, will oversee the banner wording and placement.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Ken Natale advised the Board, the Maryland Municipal League sent out information about the format and the schedule of events for the virtual Summer Conference that will be held the week of June 28, 2020.

Mayor McKnight received an email message from a concerned Cecil County citizen regarding not permitting local businesses to re-open and the impact on the businesses. Although the individual is not a resident of the Town of North East Mayor McKnight will respond.

Mayor McKnight stated he received a call from a local church, New Beginnings Christian Fellowship. They are requesting approval from the Board to proceed with their Waterfront Worship at the North East Community Park, this Sunday May 10, 2020. After discussion, and the passing of the Roadmap to Recovery, the board has requested the church to follow the guidelines of social distancing.

Commissioner Mitchell asked Mr. Don Harmer, who is running for the Cecil County Council District 5 Seat, if the Election Board has mailed out the ballots for the June 2, 2020 primary. Mr. Harmer confirmed, ballots have been mailed. However, he noted the original primary date of April 28, 2020 remains on the ballot. Residences have the option of returning by mail or drop their ballots off at four-drop boxes.

- Bohemia Manor High School
- Perryville Middle School
- Rising Sun Town Hall
- Cecil County Government Administration Building

Maintenance Supervisor Phil Meekins advised the Board, he has been in contact with two cleaning services, Vanguard and Servpro regarding a price for the exterior bathrooms and

playground at the North East Community Park due to COVID-19. Both contractors will list all materials they will be using per the guidelines from the State of Maryland and the Cecil County Health Department. This information will be received by the end of this week.

Mayor McKnight stated the town hall staff will continue working from home, during the COVID-19 pandemic and he is pleased with the work results from all departments

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-


None


-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Kline and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Robert F. McKnight, Mayor

