

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

May 27, 2020

In order to comply with Governor Larry Hogan's declaration of a State of Emergency as part of Maryland's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, 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 7:00 P.M. Participating via computer and/or telephone were Commissioners Hilary Crothers-Moore, Michael Kline and Raymond Mitchell. Also participating were Maintenance Supervisor Phillip Meekins, Director of Finance and Administration Ken Natale, Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Absent from the meeting were, Commissioner Cynthia Billig and Police Chief Darrell Hamilton.

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

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2020 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

A motion to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2020 Budget Workshop, as presented, was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-GUESTS-

None

Town Board Approved Minutes June 10, 2020

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

Ordinance No. 2020-05-01 Adopts Fiscal Year 2021 General Fund, Water Fund and Storm Water Management Fund Budgets and establishes a comprehensive fiscal plan for the Town of North East for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021.

Commissioner Kline made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2020-05-01, Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Resolution 2020-05-01 Adopts the amount the Town will contribute toward premiums for Medical Insurance.

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-05-01, Commissioner Kline seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Resolution 2020-05-02 Adopts the amount the Town will contribute toward premiums for Dental and Vision Insurance.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-05-02, Commissioner Kline seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Resolution 2020-05-03 Adopts the amount the Town will contribute toward a Life Insurance Policy for each full time employee.

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2020-05-03, Commissioner Kline seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Resolution 2020-05-05 Approval of an Employee Buyout Program in an effort to lower annual expenses for the next few years by reducing salary expenses.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-05-05 with the changes as outlined was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Town Board Approved Minutes June 10, 2020

Resolution 2020-05-06 Amends the Town of North East Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 which begins on July 1, 2020. Section 20 of the Budget Ordinance (Ordinance 2020-05-01) allows the Mayor and Commissioners to amend the budget by Resolution. This amendment increases the General Fund-Fund Balance Resources (10-000-399-50-00) by \$25,192 to \$321,290 and Police Expenditures (10-600-421) by \$25,192 to \$1,473,356.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-05-06 was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

-REPORTS-

Mayor McKnight

COVID-19 pandemic weekly Calls

Mayor McKnight reported he has been participating in weekly conference calls with Governor Hogan's staff along with the County Executive, Dr. Alan McCarthy and his staff regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect it is still having on communities.

Governor's Modified Executive Order regarding Restaurants

Commissioner Kline asked if there was any thoughts regarding the Governor modifying the executive order earlier in the day to allow restaurants to serve outdoors under certain conditions effective 5:00 p.m. on Friday May 29, 2020? This would allow the expansion to alternative areas, such as their parking lots. In addition, the Governor encouraged the closure of streets to accommodate table space.

Mr. Kelly Benson, Porthouse Grill, 15 North Main Street, North East, stated they plan to serve patrons outside in the rear of their restaurant as they are already permitted to do. He indicated he has no interest in serving patrons off-premise because he would be concerned with sanitizing the tables, utensils and the surrounding areas. He indicated that sounds very challenging.

North East High School Graduates

Mayor McKnight reported the honoring of the North East High School 2020 Graduation Class is moving forward with the placing of banners located on the north and south islands and the proudly displayed banner across Main Street.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline reported he has been participating in the weekly conference calls with the State and County regarding COVID-19 pandemic. He also participated in an update from the Maryland Municipal League.

Commissioner Mitchell

None

Director of Finance and Administration

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

Mr. Natale reported he has been attending the Governor's Finance Officers Association Virtual Conferences. Mr. Natale advised he has spoken with the towns IT contractor, Mr. Michael Devine regarding Cybersecurity and Ransomware attack and other strategies we may have available to deal with this latest threat.

Mr. Natale reported the staff within the department is working well, during this time they are telecommuting from home. They are continuing being productive with daily tasks that have been assigned and there has been no complaints regarding the staffs performance.

Water Superintendent, Ron Carter

Mr. Ron Carter was experiencing technical difficulty participating in the meeting. Mayor McKnight advised the Board that the April 2020 report for both the Rolling Mill and Leslie Water Plants were on their tablets for review.

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she has been participating in the weekly conference calls with Governor Hogan's staff, County Executive, Dr. Alan McCarthy and his staff regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect it is still having on communities.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she has been participating in weekly calls with the Town Administrators from the Cecil County towns during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she participated in the virtual preconstruction meeting, on May 17, 2020 regarding the Water Tank Mixer Project.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported the Jackson House Exterior and Interior Renovation Project will be moving forward with the preconstruction meeting now that the contractor, T-N-T of Harford County, submitted the required construction bond.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she has been researching the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for Community Parks and Playgrounds in preparation for when the playground can reopen.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

None

-NEW BUSINESS-

North East Chamber of Commerce Fundraiser

Mayor McKnight spoke to a North East Chamber of Commerce Board member regarding a Drive-In Movie Night Fundraiser in the parking lot of the VFW, Post 6027 815 Turkey Point Road, North East. If approved, by Post 6027, the event would take place on Friday, July 10, 2020.

Salute to Cecil County Veterans, July 3, 2020

Mayor McKnight stated the Salute to Cecil County Veterans Committee has officially postponed the July 3, 2020 event. The Committee felt it is inappropriate given the current social and economic environment to fundraise for a fall event. The Committee looks forward to “Saluting the Cecil County Veterans” and having an amazing event on July 3, 2021.

Maryland Municipal League Summer Virtual Conference

Commissioner Kline stated he would like to be registered for the Maryland Municipal League Summer Virtual Conference for the week of June 26, 2020. After discussion, Town Clerk, Stephanie Racine-Dean advised she would register Commissioner Kline to participate in the event.

Flag Day Celebration, Sunday June 14, 2020

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reminded the Board the Annual Flag Day Celebration is scheduled to be held on Sunday, June 14, 2020 at the North East Community Park. After discussion, it was agreed by the Board, the event will be cancelled, due to group gatherings being limited to ten (10) people because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Deed of Conveyance re: North East Station, Water Improvements

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board a Deed of Conveyance regarding the North East Station, Water Improvements.

A motion to approve the Deed of Conveyance for the water line improvements at North East Station was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

North East Fire Company Carnival

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board the North East Fire Company cancelled their event, which was scheduled to begin on Thursday July 2, 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The North East Fire Company Board of Directors would like permission from the Town of North East to hold the Carnival next year starting on Friday, July 2, 2021.

After discussion, it was agreed by the Board the date will be held for the event in 2021, with the condition of the Fire Company submitting a 2021 Special Events application.

Appreciation Summer Family Event, Saturday July 25, 2020

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reminded the Board the Appreciation Summer Family Event is scheduled for Saturday, July 25, 2020 at the North East Community Park.

After discussion, it was agreed by the Board, the event will be cancelled, due to group gatherings being limited to ten (10) people because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mayor McKnight addressed requests from the community regarding the closure of Main Street during the COVID-19 to allow retail businesses and restaurants to conduct business. Discussions with the Board and town staff have taken place. It has been determined that the impact this would have throughout the community outweighs any potential benefit.

Maintenance Supervisor, Phillip Meekins asked the Board, if his department could still raise the Flag in honor of Flag Day in the North East Community Park, which is held every year on June 14th. The Board had no objection. This ceremony is held to commemorate the adoptions of the Stars and Stripes as the official flag of the United States.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

None

-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Kline seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:

Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

Robert F. McKnight, Mayor