

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF NORTH EAST
106 S. MAIN STREET
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND 21901

September 23, 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 7:00 P.M. Participating via computer and/or telephone were Hilary Crothers-Moore, Cynthia Billig, Michael Kline and Raymond Mitchell. Also present were Police Chief Jim Just, Maintenance Supervisor Phillip Meekins, Director of Finance and Administration Ken Natale, Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean.

A moment of silence was observed.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2020 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Billig abstained due to her absence from the September 9, 2020 meeting.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-GUESTS-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

Town Board Approved Minutes October 14, 2020

A motion to re-appoint the following individuals to the Board of Supervisors of Elections to a one year term expiring on October 1, 2021 was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Mitchel and approved by all:

- Ulysses Grant Demond IV, 102 Mill Lane
- Kimberly Davis, 47 North Court
- Ruth L. Gonce, 408 Merrey Street

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

Resolution 2020-09-01 Approval of a COVID-19 Pandemic Utility Payment Plan in effort to help the customer during the extraordinary economic crisis related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-009-01 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Billig and approved by all.

-REPORTS-

Mayor McKnight

Mayor McKnight reported he along with the Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie met with Ms. Laura Levy, Director of the Cecil County Health Department on Friday, September 18, 2020, along with members from the North East Chamber of Commerce to discuss a number of activities the town has during the Fall and Christmas Season and asked Ms. Laura Levy for guidance on how to make these events safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Billig

Commissioner Billig entered into the record the August 2020 Crime and Traffic Breakdown for the North East Police Department.

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline entered into the record the August 2020 Maintenance Department Monthly Report and also to thank the Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins and his staff for all their hard work to make the town look beautiful.

Commissioner Kline reported he will not be attending the next town board meeting on Wednesday, October 14, 2020.

Commissioner Mitchell

None

Director of Finance and Administration

Mr. Natale reported the Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Statements have been sent to the auditors, Clifton Larsen Allen for review, the unaudited results has a \$200,000.00 surplus in the general fund which is actually \$500,000.00 better that was determined. The amount of \$300,000.00 was for capital projects throughout the town and the additional amount of \$200,000.00 is a surplus towards Ridgely Forest and the income tax revenue that was higher than anticipated.

Mr. Natale reported the auditors, Clifton Larsen Allen will be scheduled to review the full statements and any audit results will be shared with the Board by the end of October 2020.

Mr. Natale reported the water bills for September 2020 quarter will be mailed the earlier part of next week, Monday September 28, 2020.

Mr. Natale reported he filed the August CARES Act Fund reimbursement request to the Cecil County in the amount of \$16,900.00.

Mr. Natale reported the town received the \$22,000.00 from the USDA for the Stormwater Management three years ago.

Mr. Natale reported he is reviewing a new insurance collateral arrangement with Howard Bank, Mr. Natale advised he spoke with the town's auditors and was advised it is cheaper and would be more beneficial to keep the funds locally.

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

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she has met several times with the contractor, Mr. Patrick Lynch, President of Lynch Repair & Remolding during the past several weeks regarding the Jackson House Exterior and Interior Renovation Project. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated she will be having a final meeting with the contractor on Thursday, September 25, 2020 regarding the final proposal which she will then refer to the Board for review.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she met with Mr. Rob Jugler the owner of Alpha Branding, 374 Joseph Biggs Highway, Rising Sun, Maryland regarding the signage for the North East Community Park, the parking lot sign in town with the exception of the directional signs.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she met with Patrol Officer Matthew James Kelty regarding the new employee orientation.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the Cecil County Salute to Cecil County board meeting on Thursday, September 17, 2020.

Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie reported she met with Ms. Laura Levy, Director of the Cecil County Health Department on Friday, September 18, 2020, along with members from the North East Chamber of Commerce regarding a number of activities the town has during the Fall and Christmas Season and asked Ms. Laura Levy for guidance on how to make these events safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie did advise the Board, the North East Chamber is considering several events during the month of October but would need further discussion with the merchants on how to make it safe for the community.

Commissioner Kline asked the Town Administrator if there has been an update regarding "Your Speed Signs" that was presented to the Board on July 10, 2019 and the effect this made on the comprehensive traffic management. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie asked for Chief Just to follow up on the data from the previous post-signing and the pre-signing that was taken on Mauldin Avenue during this time. Mayor McKnight and the Board agreed they would like these signs to be posted in certain areas of the town, especially at the North East Elementary School on Thomas Avenue, North East Middle School on East Cecil Avenue and Mauldin Avenue where there has been several complaints about the excessive speeding.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

North East Town Hall re: HVAC Unit

Mayor McKnight asked the Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins if he retrieved the bids for the replacement of the 20 year old HVAC unit at North East Town Hall. Mr. Meekins advised the Board each contractor has given a quote with the exception of the air purification system which if used properly can help reduce airborne contaminants including viruses especially in confined spaces, this system has been recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Preventions (CDC).

- Hentkowski, Inc. \$23,942.00
- Moon Air Inc. \$24,850.00
- R. Brooks Mechanical \$20,335.00

A motion to approve the bid to R. Brooks Mechanical for the HVAC system in the amount of \$20,335.00 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Kline and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Halloween in the Town of North East

Mayor McKnight advised after discussion with Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie and Ms. Laura Levy, Director of the Cecil County Health Department, due to the increase in the COVID-19 cases in Cecil County in recent weeks, the Cecil County Health Department advised the traditional door-to-door is not recommended this year and encourages residents to think about creative ways to celebrate the 2020 Trick or Treating at home.

After discussion it was agreed by the Board with feedback from Chief Just to cancel the 2020 Trick or Treating within the corporate limits of Town and communicating with posted signage both along Main Street and also in the Timberbrook Community.

A motion to approve the cancelation of Trick or Treat in the cooperate limit of the Town of North East on Saturday, October 31, 2020 was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

Annual Halloween Party at the North East Community Park

A motion to approve the cancelation of the Annual Halloween Party at the North East Community Park on Saturday, October 24, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Annual Christmas Tree Lighting on the Green

A motion to approve the cancelation of the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting on the Green, Friday November 27, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Billig and approved by all.

Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins asked the Board if the town staff will still be involved in the decorating of the tree. Mayor McKnight advised the owner of property, Mr. Robert Crouch will have to be notified and confirm if help is needed.

Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, the North East Rotary Club is trying to get Santa in town for pictures with the children during the 2020 Christmas Holiday. After discussion with Laura Levy, Director of the Cecil County Health Department, she will be visiting the Santa House to determine if this can be a safe environment for the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purchasing Cards for Town Staff

Mr. Natale advised the Board there are several vendors that have contacted the town in the past several years but more frequently now about being paid by a credit card. With the Town not having a credit card, Mr. Natale explained there is a card that is called a purchasing card (P-Card) is a type of Commercial Card that allows organizations to take advantage of the

existing credit card infrastructure to make electronic payments for a variety of business expenses (e.g., goods and services). In the simplest terms, a P-Card is a charge card, similar to a consumer credit card and would be given to certain employees to make certain purchase only and at specific vendors.

With consensus, it was agreed by the Board to move forward with the Purchasing Cards for the Town Staff with stipulations put in place. Mr. Natale advised he will put together a plan and amend the purchase order policy and return back to the Board for their review.

Job Posting re: Assistant Town Administrator

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie gave an update on the new position that was discussed with Mayor McKnight and Vice Mayor Kline on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. Mrs. Cook-Mac-Kenzie advised she is working with the Director of Finance and Administration regarding the job description of the fulltime Assistant Town Administrator which will require a Budget Amendment. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie also requested for Mayor McKnight and Vice Mayor Kline to sit down with her and go over the job description and the progression scale.

Emergency Personnel Section 2-209

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, she is working with the Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins regarding the Emergency Personnel Section 2-209.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins asked the Board for their thoughts and prayers to be sent at this time for several of his employees.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Amendment 2020-006

A motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Amendment 2020-006 for the Construction Services was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

Derstine Company, LLC, Storage Tank Mixers Payment Application No. 1 \$152,640.00

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie requested for this item to be tabled until further information has been obtained regarding the contract that was provided by Derstine Company LLC., this information will reviewed by the Town Administrator and formalized at the next town board meeting on Wednesday, October 14, 2020.

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie confirmed with Ms. Marsh Swezey, 207 Howard Street, North East who is attending the virtual meeting tonight, if she is still available

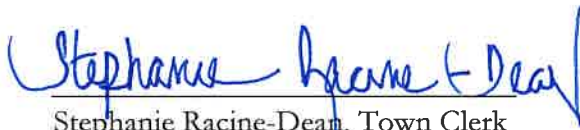
to meet on Thursday September 24, 2020 regarding the storm drain that is located in the back of her property.

-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Robert F. McKnight, Mayor