

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

November 18, 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 included Hilary Crothers-Moore, Michael Kline and Raymond Mitchell. Also present were Police Chief Jim Just, Maintenance Supervisor Phillip Meekins, Director of Finance and Administration Ken Natale, and Director of Planning Betsy Vennell. Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie, Commissioner Cynthia Billig and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean were absent from the meeting.

A moment of silence was observed.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

October 14, 2020

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2020 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Kline abstained because he was absent from the meeting.

October 28, 2020

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2020 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Mayor McKnight abstained because he was absent from the meeting.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

APPROVED MINUTES 12-9-2020

-GUESTS-

Ms. Cheri King, Signing Director, State and Local Government, Clifton Larsen Allen (CLA) reporting on the Fiscal Year 2020 Audit.

Ms. King reported that CLA is a national firm with a local office in Baltimore. Ms. King stated that their firm is dedicated to local government. This was CLA's first audit with the Town of North East and Ms. King reported that it went very well, especially with the COVID-19 and the fact that the audit was done 100 percent remotely. Ms. King presented a brief overview of what is new, what has been changed and items which have been removed when compared with last year's audit. Ms. King concluded by stating that working with Ken and the Town has been a very collaborative relationship. Mayor McKnight complimented Ken and CLA for their work on the audit, especially during this year's unique circumstances.

-APPOINTMENTS-

A motion to re-appoint Mike Nair, 14 Augusta Loop, North East, to the North East Planning Commission for a five year term expiring on November 21, 2025 was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None.

-REPORTS-

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline reported he attended a COVID-19 update via a telephone meeting. Commissioner Kline entered the October 2020 Maintenance Department Monthly Report into the record.

Director of Planning

Mrs. Vennell reported that the Planning Commission met on November 10, 2020 and the subdivision plat for Ridgely Forest Section 3B was approved for 38 detached duplex homes. The Planning Commission also approved the landscape and open space plan

which included a gazebo and picnic table area, a mailbox area with landscape and pergola and a dog park for use by the residents. They hope to have the model homes in Section 3B open in the spring of 2021.

Director of Finance and Administration

Mr. Natale reported that the Mayor and Commissioners should have received on their tablets:

- a) A listing of checks issued since the last meeting on October 28, 2020
- b) The first quarter financial statements, July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020
- c) A listing of all the manual journal entries (per a recommendation from the auditor.)

Credit card testing: Mr. Natale reported that the town has received the credit cards which were discussed at earlier meetings and the Police Department has been issued 3 credit cards. Each Department will eventually be issued cards, with the goal to use the credit cards as the preferred method of paying vendors.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Director of Finance

Water Allocation Extension Request: Mr. Tom Armour, 203 Razor Strap Road, North East; Tax Map 31, Parcel 1284, 1 Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU)

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to approve the extension request for two years. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Water Allocation Request: Mr. Barry Montgomery Company, Inc. Montgomery Oaks, Section 2, Phase 1, 2 and 3 for 58 Equivalent Residential Units (ERU's). Property found on Tax Map 25, Parcels 6, 8, 758 and 759.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to approve the water allocation request for 58 Equivalent Living Units (ERU's) for Montgomery Oaks Section 2. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Town of North East Christmas Bonus

Mr. Natale reported that the 2020 Christmas bonuses are in accordance with the personnel manual. Commissioner Kline made a motion to approve the 2020 Christmas bonuses. Commissioner Mitchel seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Water Accounts-Shut off for non-payment

Mr. Natale reported that the Town currently has 454 water accounts scheduled to be shut off on December 2, 2020. Mr. Natale requested confirmation from the Mayor and Commissioners that they were in agreement as to whether the Town should follow the normal

protocol for shutting off accounts for non-payment, during COVID-19. Mayor McKnight reported that he believed that the Town should follow their normal procedure concerning shut-offs, however, Mayor McKnight stated that if someone was interested in a payment plan, the Town would be willing to work with them. Commissioner Crothers-Moore, Commissioner Kline and Commissioner Mitchell agreed with the Mayor.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Mayor McKnight reported that the Town has received over twenty applications for the Assistant Town Administrator position.

Mr. Natale reported that the Town has received eight applications for the Utility Specialist position and stated that virtual interviews will commence on Friday, November 20, 2020.

Commissioner Kline asked if the Town would pay expenses in the event someone had to fly into the area for an interview. Mr. Natale indicated that typically all travel expenses and a hotel are covered when an applicant is flown in for an interview. Mayor McKnight indicated it may be a moot point if the Town is conducting virtual interviews during COVID-19.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

None.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Budget Amendment 2021-002, Fiscal Year 2021.

Commissioner Crothers Moore made a motion to approve Budget Amendment 2021-002 for Fiscal Year 2021. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Invoice R0-00553 for the Jackson House: \$175,867.00

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to approve RO-00553 for 175,897.00. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

-ADJOURNMENT-


With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning

ATTEST:



Robert F. McKnight, Mayor