

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

December 9, 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 Commissioners Cynthia Billig, 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, 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 November 18, 2020 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Cynthia Billig abstained due to her absence from the November 18, 2020 meeting.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-GUESTS-

Mrs. Dawn Rodenbaugh, Program Administrator, Cecil County Neighborhood Youth Panel re: Fiscal Year 2021 Update

Mrs. Dawn Rodenbaugh, 32 Springfield Drive, North East, Maryland, expressed her gratitude to the Board for the continued support they have given to the Cecil County Neighborhood Youth Panel. Her appearance this evening is to request support for the Fiscal Year 2021. This

Town Board Approved Minutes December 23, 2020

panel is a juvenile diversion program which gives first-time juveniles misdemeanor offenders the option of appearing before a panel of community volunteers rather than entering the juvenile court system. In addition, the panel gives the community the opportunity to be directly involved in the process of determining sanctions for youth offenders, monitoring sanction compliance and acting as positive role models to our youth.

Mayor McKnight and the Board expressed the importance of this program and the continued success this has throughout the community.

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-REPORTS-

Mayor McKnight

Mayor McKnight reported he along with the Town Administrator have had several Virtual Meetings regarding the applicants for the Assistant Town Administrator.

Commissioner Billig

None

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline reported he attended a Virtual Meeting on Friday, December 4, 2020 with the Maryland Municipal League Town leaders regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic. The updates included:

- The State of Maryland positivity rate is up to 8 percent
- Increase in testing

- 227 Nursing Homes are being monitored and 180 of these Nursing Homes are reflecting positive cases
- 20 rapid response teams throughout Maryland that are focused on a variety of things, such as prevention and the support for these facilities.
- Police Departments have been provided a 24 Hour Hotline to receive additional information regarding the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Commissioner Kline reported he will be attending the Maryland Municipal League Virtual Meeting on Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 6:00 pm.

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 entered into the record the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget to Actual Statements for the General Fund through October 31, 2020.

Mr. Natale reported the Purchasing Card testing for the town staff is going well at this time. Mr. Natale advised the Board, he has provided on their tablets the first billing cycle statement showing the vendors transaction description and amounts were authorized. The vendors that are reflected on the statement do not have checks issued to them by Vendor Direct Deposit.

Mr. Natale reported he along with the Town Administrator have had several Virtual Phone Interviews regarding the applicants for the Billing Specialist II. Mr. Natale advised the board this position has been filled by, Ms. Christine Moran, she was a twenty year employee with DuPont in Delaware and was highly recommended by her previous Supervisor and peers.

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie on behalf of the town staff, we would like to thank the Board for giving the staff off the day after Thanksgiving on Friday, November 27, 2020.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following Virtual Meetings since the November 18, 2020 Town Meeting:

- Several Progress meetings with the Contractor regarding the Jackson House Exterior and Interior Renovation Project.
- Water Superintendent, Ron Carter and Entech Engineer, Steve Riley in regards to various water projects.
- Billing Specialist II, Virtual Phone Interviews with the Director of Finance and Administration

- Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins
- Mr. Al Winn and Eric Sennstrom regarding the pond dredging at the Leslie Water Plant and the County's land for disposal.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board she will be forwarding information from Tourism Coordinator, Sandy Turner regarding the Winter Lights and City Nights in the month of January and February 2021. This information will also be included in the water bills for the December 2020 quarter.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she along with Mayor McKnight have had several Virtual Phone Interviews regarding the applicants for the Assistant Town Administrator/Director Human Resource with second interviews continuing on Thursday, December 10, 2020.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported on behalf of Water Superintendent, Ron Carter, he will be having the town's water tanks inspected by the previous contractor for the Water Tank Mixer Project, MBA (Mumford-Borkman) regarding any sediment or settling in the water tanks. When the contractor was inspecting the Bayberry water tank, it was discovered there was a hole in the tank which appeared to be from a bullet. After determining the direction of the entrance in the metal/glass surface and the age, it was determined this happened prior of the construction on Bayberry Drive. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Bayberry tank has had a temporary repair and AquaTank will be contacted for a permanent repair in the near future and the cost.

Commissioner Kline asked the Town Administrator if the Jackson House, Exterior and Interior Renovations Project is on-schedule. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, it will be completed by the scheduled deadline, January 1, 2021.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

State Highway Administration Bridge over AMTRAK Proposed Name

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board the process is moving forward with State of Maryland to commemorate the bridge as "Cecil County Veterans Memorial Bridge" and with the appropriate signage to signify the town's support.

Cecil County Neighborhood Youth Panel

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie asked the Board if they would like the town to move forward with the funding that was approved to the Cecil County Neighborhood Youth Panel for the Fiscal Year Budget 2020.

After discussion, it was determined the organization is still functioning and operable and the Board agreed to move forward to release the funding to the Cecil County Neighborhood Youth Panel.

-NEW BUSINESS-

First Maryland Holding Company, II, Chesapeake Club H-3/Fairway Links, North East, Lots 314-331, Tax Map 31, Parcel 1265 Public Works Agreement, 2 Year Extension

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented a Public Works Agreement, 2 Year Extension Request for First Maryland Holding Company, II Chesapeake Club H-3/ Fairway Links, North East.

A motion to approve the Public Works Agreement, 2 Year Extension until December 31, 2022 with recommendation by the Town Administrator and the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Kline and approved by all.

Gemcraft Homes, Inc., 102 Pine Cone Drive, North East, Lot 47B, Tax Map 25; Parcel 775 re: Water Allocation Request, One Equivalent Residential Units (250 ERU)

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented a Water Allocation Request for Gemcraft Homes, Inc., Parcel 775; lot 47B 102 Pine Cone Drive, North East, for One Equivalent Residential Unit.

A motion to approve the Water Allocation request for One Equivalent Residential Unit or 250 gallons of water per day with recommendation by the Town Administrator and the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Cecil Transit, Potential Hub Locations

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented information to the Board regarding three future transit hub sites that are being considered in North East.

- 2548 Pulaski Highway
- 2001 Pulaski Highway
- 1974 Pulaski Highway

The Cecil Transit is requesting input, comments and or questions by Wednesday, January 6, 2021, via telephone, fax, e-mail, U.S. mail or on line www.ceciltransit.com.

Personnel Matter

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie gave an update regarding the Water Plant Trainee position, there is a scheduled interview on Friday, December 11, 2020.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie along with Chief Just have had several conversations regarding the North East Police Department scheduling and the coverage. Previously one officer concentrated mostly on Drug Prevention/Arrests. Due to scheduling and allowed time off for the following:

- Vacations
- Personal Time
- Sick Leave
- Court
- Training

This officer has had to spend less time on this much needed program. It has been determined that the Police Department has loss on full-time officer equivalent to over 2,080 hours per year to cover the allowed time-off. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie along with Chief Just is requesting to amend the current staffing table and to have Chief Just written authorization to move forward to hiring an additional police officer.

Chief Just advised the Board, there is a criteria for how many officers are needed per 1,000 residents and it does justify the additional officer that is needed.

A motion to authorize an amendment to the staffing table with the exception of providing the actual budget amendment to the Board at the next town meeting was made by Commissioner Billig, and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie asked the Board if they would like to change the date of the next Town Board Meeting from Wednesday, December 23, 2020 to Monday, December 21, 2020.

After discussion it was agreed by the Board to move the Wednesday, December 23, 2020 Board Meeting to Monday, December 21, 2020.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-


Mr. Jay Mahanti, 1 Ridgely Forest Drive, Elkton wanted to discuss the Town's policy regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and the water utility bill fees for non-receipt of payment. Mr. Mahanti advised the Board, he along with his family members have been on quarantine lockdown for the past two weeks. Mayor McKnight along with the Director of Finance and Administration advised Governor Hogan's executive order that prohibited utility service disconnections expired on September 1, 2020 and has not been renewed by the State of Maryland.

-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Billig and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Robert F. McKnight, Mayor