

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

February 24, 2021

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 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, Assistant Town Administrator Robb Carey, Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie, and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Absent from the meeting, Commissioner Billig.

A moment of silence was observed.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2021 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-GUESTS-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

Town Board Approved Minutes March 10, 2021

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-REPORTS-

Mayor McKnight

Mayor McKnight reported he along with Commissioner Kline and Chief Just attended the VFW Memorial Post 6027 75th Anniversary on Sunday, February 21, 2021 and presented a Proclamation to congratulate, honor and bless the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6027.

Mayor McKnight reported he attended a luncheon with Artesian Water Company Inc. on Friday, February 12, 2021 at the North East Town Hall regarding the Route 40 East Interconnection.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Mitchell

Commissioner Mitchell entered into the record January 2021 Planning and Zoning Monthly Report.

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline reported he attended the VFW Memorial Post 6027 75th Anniversary on Sunday, February 21, 2021 and thanked Mayor McKnight for introducing both himself and Chief Just to the community.

Commissioner Kline reported he attended a luncheon with Artesian Water Company Inc. on Friday, February 12, 2021 at the North East Town Hall regarding the Route 40 East Implantation Plan.

Commissioner Kline reported he attended several Maryland Municipal League Virtual Meetings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in the past 4 weeks:

- 60 percent decline in new cases
- 50 percent decline in hospitalizations
- 37 percent decline in deaths

Commissioner Kline advised the Board, we are trending in the right direction and this is a positive note not only for our state but the entire country.

Water Superintendent, Ron Carter

Mr. Carter gave the January 2021 report for both the Rolling Mill and Leslie Water Treatment Plants.

Mayor McKnight asked the Water Superintendent if there were any concerns regarding the higher water usage at the Rolling Mill Treatment Plant. Mr. Carter stated it could be due to:

- The customers are staying home, due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- New construction in the Ridgely Forest and Bay Club communities.

Director of Finance and Administration, Ken Natale

Mr. Natale entered into the record the list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting along with the January 2021 purchasing summary.

Mr. Natale reported there were two emergency purchase orders for the Water Department, one for the repair of the generator and the second was for the cleaning of the filter screens at the Rolling Mill and Leslie Treatment Plants in the amounts of \$6,200.00 and \$5,000.00.

Mr. Natale reported the Town has given out approximately 100 credits to the water customers regarding the second notice fees due to the non-receipt of their online bank payments and postal delays.

Mayor McKnight asked the Water Superintendent if the wire filters for the Rolling Mill Water Treatment Plant been received. Mr. Carter stated they will be delivered within the next week.

Assistant Town Administrator

None

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the February 10, 2021 Town Meeting:

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported the moving van arrived today, Wednesday, February 24, 2021 at the Jackson House, 300 Cherry Street. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie wanted to thank the Maintenance Supervisor Phil Meekins and his staff for preparing the deck and ramp safe for the movers to enter the facility due to the ice from the previous storm.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended a luncheon with Artesian Water Company Inc. on Friday, February 12, 2021 at the North East Town Hall regarding the Route 40 East Interconnection. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, the draft plan will be made available for the Board to review in the next couple of months.

Town Board Approved Minutes March 10, 2021

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she has met several times with the Director of Planning and Zoning and the Water Plant Superintendent regarding previous ongoing projects and the merge between EN Engineering, 1630 Robin Circle Forest Hill and the town's previous engineering firm, C N A. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, she along with the town staff, wrote a seven page detailed letter and summary explaining the town's concerns regarding the merge. In addition, the town staff requested to resume their relationship with Christopher R. Mink, P.E. PMP, Senior Project Manager who they have worked closely with over the years on past and ongoing projects throughout the town such as:

- Ridgely Forest
- Chesapeake Club Parkway
- North East Public Library
- North East Gateway Facility

This request was honored by the engineering firm and the town staff will resume working with the Senior Project Manager, and meeting bi-weekly on projects throughout the town.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie thanked the town staff for the preparation of the Artesian Water Company Inc. luncheon which was held on Friday, February 12, 2021.

Mayor McKnight asked the Town Administrator if there has been a date for future Mayor Kline and the County Executives to tour the Jackson House. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised she along with Tourism Coordinator, Sandy Turner, suggested early Spring 2021.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

North East Gateway Crossdock Facility re: Town's Lot 4

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie is requesting the approval from the Board to move forward with Trammell Crow Company regarding the purchase of the town's lot in the amount of \$106,000.00 at the North East Gateway Facility. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated there were several questions regarding the sale of the parcel that was outlined in the annexation plan that was filed with the State of Maryland. This protocol was a requirement by the owner, due to the donation of the parcel to the town. And secondly, the town needed verification that there would be no restrictions to the town's disposable income. After review from the town's attorney, Mr. Dennis Clower and the Attorney General, it was determined the town's lot can be purchased without any restrictions. Trammell Crow is moving forward with preparing the documents for the purchase of the parcel and will forward the contract to the town within the next week. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reminded the Board, there will be a public hearing pursuant to local government and the Maryland State Law.

A motion to approve and to proceed with the Mayor signing of the contract for the sale of lot 4 at the North East Gateway was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

None.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mayor Robert F. McKnight's Retirement as Mayor of the Town of North East

The Commissioners, town staff and past employees of the Town of North East wanted to express and thank Mayor McKnight for his leadership and guidance throughout his 29 years of service to the town. Many employees reminisced, what he contributed, the projects he oversaw and his commitment to not only the community but to the town's employees. Mayor McKnight was not only the Mayor of the Town, he was also a mentor, friend and part of our family and he will be missed by all.

Mayor McKnight wanted to thank the town staff for all their hard work throughout his tenure and making the town a better place for our community. He also expressed, this is not a sad day but a good day, he has been blessed for so many years to serve the Town of North East.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

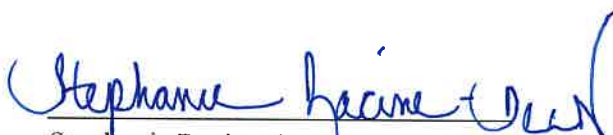
None


-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 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Michael Kline, Mayor