

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

March 10, 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 Michael Kline at 7:00 P.M. Participating via computer and/or telephone were Commissioners Hilary Crothers-Moore 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.

A moment of silence was observed.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2021 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-GUESTS-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

Town Board Approved Minutes March 24, 2021

A motion to approve the appointment of Catherine Bernard-Dutton, to the position of Town Commissioner with the term expiring March 2023 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

A motion to approve the appointment of Kelly Benson, to the position of Town Commissioner with the term expiring March 2023 was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-REPORTS-

Mayor Kline

Mayor Kline entered into the record the January 2021 Monthly Report for the Town of North East Maintenance Department.

Mayor Kline reported he attended a tour along with Robb Carey and Melissa Cook-MacKenzie at the newly renovated Jackson House, 300 Cherry Street, North East. Mayor Kline expressed how well the project turned out and what a pleasure it is to see it occupied by the Cecil County Tourism.

Mayor Kline reported he attended the donation photo shoot for the, "Friends Foundation of the Cecil County Public Library", 485 Mauldin Avenue on Thursday, March 4, 2021, along with a tour of the facility.

Mayor Kline reported he attended several Maryland Municipal League Virtual Meetings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in the past several weeks. There has been a new variant of the coronavirus in the United Kingdom, known as the B.1.1.7 and will be the dominant strain in the United States by April 2021. Mayor Kline advised additional topics that were discussed, Monoclonal Antibody treatments are progressing in the state of Maryland, which has been shown to reduce the severity of symptoms and prevent hospitalization in people with mild or moderate symptoms of COVID-19.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the donation photo shoot for the, "Friends Foundation of the Cecil County Public Library", 485 Mauldin Avenue on Thursday, March 4, 2021, along with a tour of the facility.

Commissioner Mitchell

Commissioner Mitchell reported he attended the donation photo shoot for the, "Friends Foundation of the Cecil County Public Library", 485 Mauldin Avenue on Thursday, March 4, 2021, along with a tour of the facility. Commissioner Mitchell expressed, what a beautiful building, this will serve our county very well.

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 financial statements.

Mr. Natale reported on Monday, March 8, 2021 the water department started the process of turning off the water to 118 customers that have not paid their December 2020 quarterly bill.

Mr. Natale reported to the Board, the Department Heads are working on their Fiscal Year 2021 Budget requests. Mr. Natale reminded the Board, there will be a Budget Workshop held prior of the Wednesday, May 12, 2021 board meeting and a public hearing will be held on Wednesday May 26, 2021.

Mr. Natale reported the House of Representatives passed the COVID relief bill and there is a substantial amount for state and local governments. Mr. Natale stated he is going over the house bill highlights through the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and will have information regarding the amount the town will receive and if the relief payment can be used towards water expenditure.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Carey reported as of the last meeting on Wednesday, February 24, 2021 he has been working on several projects:

- Various seminars through the Society for the Human Resources Management (SHRM)
- Interviews for the North East Police Department
- Programs with LGIT and Benacon
- Credit Card/Direct Deposit information to the water customers
- Review and updating all forms located at town hall
- Revision of the Personnel Manual
- Department Head training module

Mr. Carey reported he is gathering information regarding employee ratio from league members of the Maryland Municipal League (MML) as well as Nationwide and comparing with other municipalities to make sure the town is competitive in attracting talent in all positions.

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the donation photo shoot for the, "Friends Foundation of the Cecil County Public Library", 485 Mauldin Avenue on Thursday, March 4, 2021, along with a tour of the facility.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following virtual meetings since the February 24, 2021 Town Meeting:

- Stonebridge regarding water service outside the corporate limit
- Ridgley Forest Planning Commission
- Chesapeake Club
- Capital Budget meeting on behalf of the Water Superintendent, Ron Carter

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended a meeting with the Rotary Club of North East on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 and was advised the annual project has been approved at the North East Community Park. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised she sent a letter to Ms. Preston indicating the Board did approve the concept but in order to have final approval they would like to see in writing:

- Post location of equipment
- Brochure of the equipment
- Proposed installation date
- Letter from the Rotary Club indicating they are responsible for aspects of the project

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she along with Chief Just will be conducting interviews for a Maryland Certified Patrol Officer at the North East Police Department.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she met with Robb Carey, Assistant Town Administrator, regarding several ongoing projects that were outstanding and thanked him for his assistance.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she spoke with the owner of the North East Gateway Crossdock Facility, Trammell Crow Company, on Thursday, March 4, 2021 and the building has been leased. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised she will prepare a press release once the additional information is received from the owner of property.

Mayor Kline asked the Town Administrator when she thinks Trammell Crow Company will be in contact. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the board she thought she would have received the information by now, but was advised previously, the lease has been signed for a 10 year tenure and the new tenant will lease the entire building which is 718,000 square feet for manufacturing, distribution and possible retail.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

"Your Speed Signs" Mauldin/East Cecil Avenue

Mayor Kline requested an update from the Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins regarding the radar speed signs on Mauldin and East Cecil Avenue. The town is requesting permission from the Maryland State Highway Administration to place 3 signs in total, near the North East Elementary School and the North East Middle School. Mr. Meekins advised the Board, he wrote a letter directly to the Office of Traffic Management, District 5 in Chestertown and spoke directly with Mr. Richard Baker, District Engineer, who advised the state probably would not fund the speed signs but would not have a problem with displaying them in the desired locations.

Mayor Kline advised the Board, Chief Just referred 3 quotes from various companies for review and the only difference of the 3 are the battery lifespan. Mayor Kline asked the Maintenance Supervisor, once he has received verification that the state has approved the locations, he would like the town to move forward with the purchase and have the signs installed prior to the next school year.

-NEW BUSINESS-

None

-MISCELLANEOUS-

None

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

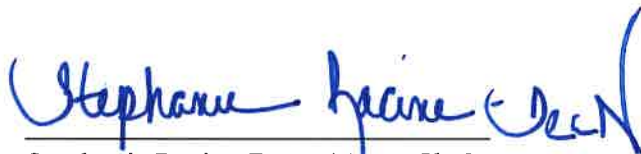
None


-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 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Michael Kline, Mayor