

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

May 26, 2021

In order to comply with Governor Larry Hogan's reduced restrictions as part of the State of Maryland's response to COVID-19, and in order to comply with public gatherings during this time, the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East have decided to conduct this meeting in person and virtual for those who wish to attend.

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kline at 7:00 P.M. Present were Commissioners Kelly Benson, Catherine Bernard-Dutton, Hilary Crothers-Moore and Raymond Mitchell. Also present were Police Chief Jim Just, Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator Robb Carey, Director of Finance and Administration Ken Natale 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 May 12, 2021 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 12, 2021 Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Workshop meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

Ordinance 2021-05-01 re: Fiscal Year 2022 Budget, Constant Yield Tax Rate, Water and Stormwater Fees

Mayor Kline opened the public hearing at 7:03 p.m.

Town Board Approved Minutes June 9, 2021

The purpose of adopting a Fiscal Year 2022 Budget, Real and Public Utility/Railroad Operating Tax Rates for the Taxable Year beginning July 1, 2021, and a Homestead Credit Percentage to be applied for the purpose of the Homestead Tax Credit under State Law, stating certain projected expenditure and expense allocations; specifying circumstances under which approval of the Mayor and Commissioners is required for modifications to revenues and expenditures; establishing comprehensive fiscal plan for the Town of North East for the period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022.

No one from the public spoke regarding the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget. There were no comment from the Mayor of Commissioners regarding the 2022 Budget.

Mayor Kline closed the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

-GUESTS-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2021-05-02 re: Amend the Code of Ordinance Article 5 re: Economics Development Commission, Section 2-502

A motion to approve Ordinance 2021-05-02, Amend the Code of Ordinance Article 5, Economic Development Commission, Section 2-502 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Benson abstained, due to he will be the ex-officio for the, North East Economics Development Commission (EDC).

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-REPORTS-

Mayor Kline

Mayor Kline reported he and the Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie attended a meeting on Thursday, May 13, 2021 with the Cecil County Government regarding the tax differential.

Town Board Approved June 9, 2021

Mayor Kline reported he attended a meeting, along with the Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator, Robb Carey and several board members from the Salute to Cecil County Veterans on Friday, May 14, 2021 regarding the fireworks that is scheduled for Saturday, July 3, 2021.

Mayor Kline reported he attended a meeting with the Town Administrator to discuss the removal of several trees at the North East Community Park and several other park related issues.

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

None

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Mitchell

Commissioner Mitchell entered into the record the April 2021 Planning and Zoning Monthly report.

Commissioner Benson

None

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the May 12, 2021 Town Meeting:

- Cecil County Government regarding the tax differential.
- Several meetings with the Maintenance Department
- Salute to Cecil County Veterans Board Members regarding the fireworks on Saturday, July 3, 2021
- Employee Open Enrollment
- Several meetings with the Assistant Town Administrator
- Tourism Coordinator, Sandy Turner regarding the IKE Foundation

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the funeral service for Phil Meekins on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 and a memorial service for Ronnie Griffith on Sunday, May 22, 2021. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, the Maintenance Department is struggling at this time with grief, but they are working harder to make the town look better than it ever has.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Carey reported he attended the following meetings since the May 12, 2021 Town Meeting:

Town Board Approved June 9, 2021

Mr. Carey reported, in this somber occasion of the passing of the town's two employees, Ronnie Griffith and Phil Meekins, the town has devoted their time and effort to help their families. This process will be to initiate and complete the insurance claims process until they are completed with the help of the brokers and also by the town's various insurance companies. Mr. Carey assured the Board, he along with the Town Administrator will continue to provide assistance until this process is completed.

Mr. Carey reported he has been having weekly meetings with the two Maintenance II Supervisors, Lou Roark and Tom Berstler from the Maintenance Department, to discuss and establish team leadership and weekly planning.

Mr. Carey reported there was an Open Enrollment meeting for the town staff on Thursday, May 20, 2021 at 1:00 pm. The staff was offered to attend the event in person or virtual. Mr. Carey commended the Board for the extremely rich benefits and how the town takes great care of their employees.

Mr. Carey reported he attended a Department Head meeting which are on the first and third Tuesday's of each month. These meetings are evolving into calibration for new process that have been implemented, with the feedback by each Department Head.

Mr. Carey reported our own Town Clerk, Stephanie Racine-Dean has been nominated by the Town for the 2021 Municipal Clerks Honor Roll, a National Organization that in the last 20 years has recognized the top performers in the nation of Clerks and Town Clerks in all fifty states.

Director of Finance and Administration, Ken Natale

Mr. Natale entered into the record the list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting on May 12, 2021.

Mr. Natale reported he is meeting with the auditors, CliftonLarsenAllen LLP on Thursday, May 27, 2021 to start the audit process for Fiscal Year 2021.

Mr. Natale reported he received notification last week from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), the Town of North East has awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020.

Water Superintendent, Ron Carter

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

Mayor Kline asked if filter #1 has been replaced at the Rolling Mill Plant. Mr. Carter advised due to the shutting off of water due to non-receipt of payment next week, the filter will be replaced the second week of June.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

None

-NEW BUSINESS-

Special Events Application re: Salute to Cecil County Veterans, Saturday July 3, 2021

Mr. Brian F. DeMaris, President of the Salute to Cecil County Veterans, Inc. P.O. Box 413 North East, presented to the a Board a request of approval to move forward with the Salute to Cecil County Veterans Fireworks on Saturday, July 3, 2021 at the North East Community Park. Planning and organizing the event is accomplished much earlier in any given year to include services to provide a safe and secure event on the grounds and facilities and requires the services of but not limited to the Town Maintenance and Police departments. Due to the cancellation of the event in 2020, and due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the Salute Board began making plans to hold the event in September of 2021. After recent lifting of restrictions by the State of Maryland earlier this month, the Salute Board sought to seek approvals from the Cecil County Health Department and the Town of North East to return to the long standing date of July 3rd, 2021. Police Chief Jim Just estimated he could inform the Salute Board and the Town Board by June 2, whether he could secure the necessary amount of officers for the event for necessary traffic control and public safety at the event. After hearing the feedback from Police Chief Just and his concerns, the Salute Board requested the Town Commissioners vote on the Special Event application without any allowance of time for the securing of additional police officers.

After further discussion, the application was therefore denied due to the lack of obligation to provide public health and safety for its residents and the thousands who may attend the event. It is disappointing that the Town could not be afforded the requested time and we remain hopeful that the Salute Board will take a necessary steps to hold the event in September 2021.

Water Allocation Request, Mr. Wayne Peterman, 92 North Leslie Road, North East, Tax Map 25 Parcel 0191, One Equivalent Residential Unit

Mrs. Mac-Kenzie presented a Water Allocation Request for Mr. Wayne Peterman, 92 North East Road, North East, for one residential units.

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

Circuit Rider Program

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board, Maryland Town Manager Circuit Rider Program, SFY 22 Program Information. The purpose of this document is to provide grant funding to assist eligible municipal governments to build their administrative capacity with the assistance of professional, managerial staff. The eligible participants are small municipalities with a population of 5,000 or less. The eligible sponsors would be municipal governments, county governments, regional governmental organizations or private organizations.

A motion to approve the Circuit Rider Program was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Benson and approved by all.

-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 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Michael Kline, Mayor