

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF NORTH EAST
106 S. MAIN STREET
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND 21901

August 23, 2023

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael Kline at 7:00 P.M. Present were Commissioners Hilary Crothers-Moore, Raymond Mitchell, and Kelly Benson. Also present were Police Chief Stephen Yates, Water Superintendent Ron Carter, Director of Finance, Vonnie Stemen, Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell and Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie. Commissioner Catherine Bernard-Dutton and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean were absent from the meeting.

A moment of silence was observed.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2023 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Benson abstained from voting because he was absent from the meeting.

August 9, 2023

A motion to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2023 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Benson, and approved by all. Mayor Kline abstained because he was absent from the meeting.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-GUESTS-

Mr. Mark Dobbins, President, Elk & North East Rivers Watershed Association (ENERWA)

Town Board Approved Minutes September 13, 2023

Mr. Dobbins opened by stating he has recently spent time with the Town Board in Elkton and the Town of Charlestown, and he wanted to visit ENERWA's biggest supporter, the Town of North East and to share Elk and North East Rivers Water Quality Report Card 2022. Mr. Dobbins reflected that the Town has provided several thousand dollars of in-kind contribution, as well as monetary contributions for water sampling over the last several years.

Mr. Dobbins reported that the Town provided funding for a second water quality monitoring kit which allowed ENERWA to expand their water sampling to the Elk River. At this time ENERWA has 19 sampling sites with 12 volunteers with 10 sites on the North East River and 9 sites on the Elk River. ENERWA has one site which is performing off shore sampling, allowing them to take samples which are in deeper water to see how that compares. The water sampling results have been fairly consistent, and show improvements over the past few years. The grade for the North East River in 2022 was a "C". Mr. Dobbins thanked Mayor Kline who sits on the ENERWA board and is also one of the water samplers for ENERWA.

Mr. Dobbins explained the Water Quality Report Card to the Board and reported that ENERWA mailed out 15,000 copies of the water quality report to both North East addresses and addresses around the Elk River watershed in Elkton.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported that the North East Water Department may like to coordinate with ENERWA for some additional testing. In addition, the Assistant Town Administrator will be attending the next ENERWA meeting to introduce himself and see if there are opportunities for partnership with the Town's MS-4 permit requirements.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

Resolution 2023-08-01 To Authorize Self Borrowing of Funds from the General Fund for the Stormwater Management Fund of the Town of North East, not to exceed \$33,000.00. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported that in order to meet the October 31, 2023 deadline to submit the next MS-4 report to MDE. The Town has to acquire engineering to meet the outfall and education materials requirements of the permit. There is not enough money in the Stormwater Management Fund to cover this expense which is why the Town is looking at this proposal

for borrowing from ourselves. Mayor Kline asked how we would pay ourselves back. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported that once the rate study is done, which will be done by June 30, 2024, the rate will be recalculated. When the income comes back in, by 12/31/2024, a transfer from one fund to the other will be done.

Commissioner Benson made a motion approve the adoption of Resolution 2023-08-01 to authorize the self-borrowing of funds from the general fund for the Stormwater Management Fund, not to exceed \$33,000.00. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-REPORTS-

Mayor Kline

Mayor Kline reported he attended the following meetings since the July 26, 2023 Town Board Meeting:

- Cannabis Symposium at the Maryland Municipal League regarding new legislation.
- Captain DJ. Fasick, North East Community Park Cruise and Boat Tours: Chief Yates reported that there was some damage to the tour boat and the North East Police caught the vandals on site. The Police Department will be conducting inspections of the tour boat during their routine town inspections. There was discussion about the signs which would be added to the pilings, stating “no climbing, no diving, and no swimming”.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the Unicorn Quest and the North East Triathlon.

Commissioner Benson

None

Commissioner Mitchell

None

Town Administrator:

Ms. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported she attended the following meetings:

- Personnel matters
New Hire – Erin Sewell, Billing Specialist II
Crossing Guard Interview – Aug 28th
NEPD Candidate Interview
NEPD offer within the next few days
- MML Cannabis Symposium in Annapolis {HR, Zoning, Revenue, Public Spaces} – follow-up mtg. will occur in September.
- Maryland Department of General Services – re: Electric Reverse Bid {NEFC & Tome School}

- Town Hall Staff (all departments) meeting
- Attorney General's Office re: PIA request mitigation regarding a resident in Ridgely Forest
- Tree Lighting and Santa House Removal
- Department Head meeting
- Karen Schaeffer, Grant Writer regarding various projects
Turner Park Grant Application
Loan Closing for the Mixer Project
- Sandy Turner, Cecil County Tourism Manager
Elk Neck State Park renovation
Winter Lights
Network to Freedom
- Rich Gregg, Maintenance Supervisor and Grant Handley, Assistant Town Administrator weekly meeting

Assistant Town Administrator

- Mr. Handley reported he attended the following meetings:
- MS4 Coordination meeting at Cecil County.
- KCI Engineering will be performing and will inspect storm drains and report on outfalls by the end of August so the October 2023 report can be written and sent to MDE.
- Street sign replacement project meetings
- North East Community Pavilion
- North East preserve project with Rich Gregg, Maintenance Supervisor
- Rich Gregg, Maintenance Supervisor regarding various projects
- Mascot at the Unicorn Quest.
- Installation of a power point presentation in the front lobby regarding Best Management Practices and education regarding MS-4.

Director of Finance

Mrs. Stemen entered her monthly reports into the record and a list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting.

Director of Planning and Zoning

Mrs. Vennell entered into the record the July 2023 Planning and Zoning Monthly report.

Water Plant Superintendent

Mr. Carter entered the July 2023 monthly water report into the record.

Mayor Kline inquired about the public's reception of the previously mailed MDE violation letters. Mr. Carter indicated that there were two phone calls concerning the letters.

Mr. Carter reported a load protection at the Irishtown tower was blown and has since been repaired. They are considering an alarm for notification in the future.

Mr. Carter thanked Mrs. Steman for the work she and her staff did to try and make the latest shut off process go smoother than it has gone in quite some time. Mrs. Steman reported that their office has implemented a more efficient/effective mechanism for getting payments to avoid water shut off for non-payment and also for restoring water to customers whose water has been shut off due to non-payment. Mrs. Steman commended her staff, Warita and Jill, for their hard work throughout this latest mechanism.

Maintenance Supervisor

- Mr. Gregg entered into the record the July 2023 Monthly Report for the Town of North East Maintenance Department. In addition, Mr. Gregg reported the following:
- The North East Town Park sign was blow down during the recent storm and needs to be revamped.
- He has been working on projects with the Assistant Town Administrator.
- North East Isles Bridge: To respond to the latest bridge report, he has replaced weight restriction signs that were missing, however, the signs have been re-installed.
- The RFP for the Crouch Pavilion will be out on Friday. Ms. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported that the Crouch Pavilion will continue to be called the Crouch Pavilion.
- Dock repairs should be completed by Mark McCool by the end of August.

Mayor Kline reported that he overheard a couple walking through the center of Town, talking about how great the Town looked. Mayor Kline thanked the Maintenance Department for the fine work they are doing throughout Town to make it look so nice.

Chief of Police

Chief Yates entered into the record the July 2023 Crime and Traffic Breakdown Report for the North East Police Department. In addition, Chief Yates reported the following:

- Unicorn Quest
- Tour of the Tome School and all officers have a key fob for the Tome School
- 6 officers went to Perryville for a Trauma informed care about mental health.

Chief Yates reported he will be attending a Maryland Police Chief and Sherriff Conference in September, and learning about experiences from two of the Police Chiefs in Colorado concerning their experience with Cannabis.

Chief Yates reported their "Monitoring Speed trailer" has been back ordered until October 2023

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Safe Route to School - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Ms. Cook MacKenzie reported that the MOU which had been scheduled for adoption has been replaced by the Agency giving out the grant, the replacement MOU has not been replaced by the State yet.

North East Planning Commission 2022 Annual Planning Report

Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie asked the Board if there were any other actions or studies which should be done based on the 2022 Annual Planning Report. With no comments, Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie that this will close this year out and no additional actions are required by the Planning Office. .

-NEW BUSINESS-

Site Studios Proposal - Professional Services regarding the renovation of former North East Branch Library to Police Administration Building - \$28,325.00

Ms. Cook-MacKenzie reported that the proposal from Site Studios is for the design and bidding process and to oversee the renovations of the former North East Library conversion to the Police Administration office. Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to approve the proposal for \$28,325.00, seconded by Commissioner Benson, and approved by all.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mayor Kline

Maryland Municipal League Conference which will be conducted October 15-17, 2023 is now open for registration. Mayor Kline encouraged the staff to attend.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Budget Amendment 2024-002

A motion to approve Budget Amendment 2024-002 to Requisition to in the amount of \$33,000.00 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Requisition R4-00220 - Mid-Atlantic Waste System - Pac Mac Truck \$81,231.00

A motion to approve Requisition R4-00220 to Mid-Atlantic Waste System in the amount of \$81,231.00 for the Pac Mac Truck was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Benson and approved by all.

Requisition R4-00259 - Hertrich Fleet Service - NEPD 2022 Ford F150 Crew Cab
\$43,675.00

A motion to approve Requisition R4-00259 to Hertrich Fleet Service in the amount of \$43,675.00 for the NEPD 2022 Ford F150 Crew Cab was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

None

-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:



Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning



Michael Kline, Mayor