

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

November 29, 2023

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael Kline at 7:00 P.M. Present were Commissioners Hilary Crothers-Moore, Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and Commissioner Raymond Mitchell. Also present were Police Chief Stephen Yates, Water Superintendent Ron Carter, Director of Finance, Vonnie Stemen, Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator Grant Handley and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Commissioner Kelly Benson and Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell 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 October 25, 2023 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Bernard-Dutton abstained from voting because she was absent from the meeting.

Mayor Kline tabled the approval of the minutes for November 8, 2023 as presented due to a correction that needs to be entered on the document. These minutes will be presented and approved on December 13, 2023.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

Appointment of Town Attorney pursuant to the Town Charter, Article VIII; Administration Section 803. Recommendation: David A. Beste, Esquire

A motion to appoint David A. Beste, Esquire as the Town Attorney pursuant to the Town Charter, Article VIII; Administration Section 803, was made by Commissioner Mitchell,

seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore. Commissioner Bernard-Dutton is against the approval of David A. Beste, Esquire due to, their work and personal relationship.

-GUESTS-

None

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2023-11-01; Maryland Water Infrastructure Financing Administration Loan. Maximum principal amount of \$559,710.00

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board Ordinance 2023-11-01 Authorizing and Empowering the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East (the Town), Pursuant to the Authority of Sections 9-1601 to 9-1622, inclusive, of the Environment Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 19-301 to 19-309, Inclusive, of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the Sections 715 and 716 of the Charter of the Town of North East to Issue and Sell, Upon its Full Faith and Credit.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, this is for introduction only. There will further discussion at the next town board meeting on December 13, 2023.

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

-REPORTS-

Water Plant Superintendent

Mr. Carter entered into the record the October 2023 Water Report for the Rolling Mill and Leslie Plant Water Treatment Plants.

Mayor Kline asked if there were any updates from the State of Maryland regarding the Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) at the I-95 Water Tower. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated she has emailed the state, but has not heard any updated information. Mr. Carter stated he has a meeting with two of the engineers on Wednesday, December 6th and will get further information at that time.

Mr. Carter reported there was a Comprehensive Performance Evaluation (CPE) review from the State of Maryland. Mr. Carter stated he will have the results Wednesday, December 6th at 10:00 am.

Mayor Kline

Mayor Kline reported he attended the following meetings since the November 9, 2023 Town Board Meeting:

- Emergency Service Appreciation Dinner, Thursday November 9th
- Annexation meeting with town staff, Monday, November 13th
- Underwood Associates Credit Consultant and Assistant Town Administrator regarding possible MS4 projects, Tuesday, November 14th
- Cecil County Christmas Parade Committee meeting, Wednesday, November 15th
- North East Chamber of Commerce and Maryland State Highway (SHA) regarding a digital sign and location, Thursday, November 16th
- Clyde Van Dyke, Director, Parks & Recreation and town staff regarding Dredging Project and ARPA meeting with town staff, Monday, November 20th
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding with town staff regarding future projects, Monday November 20th

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

None

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Mitchell

None

Town Administrator:

Ms. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the November 9, 2023 Town Board Meeting:

- Several Department Head meetings
- Assistant Town Administrator, Grant Handley and Circuit Rider, Karen Schaeffer
- Cecil County Christmas Parade Committee meeting
- North East Chamber of Commerce on By-law amendments
- Former resident of Victoria Park and helping to assist her with BCI Management
- North East Chamber is having a contested election. They asked the town if they could help conduct the election
- Working on ongoing Water Projects
- Personnel matters
- Received drawings from Brian Morgan, Civil Engineer and Landscape Architecture regarding the North East Police Department (old library)

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie would like to schedule a Workshop for the next phase of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the projects that are currently being worked on and in the future.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the November 9, 2023 Town Board Meeting:

- The Street Replacement Project is underway as signs are being furnished from the contractor.
- The Town of North East Veterans Memorial Engraved Brick project is live. Various organizations, governments, and other entities have been contacted to promote the sale
- Town Administrator along with the Department Heads met regarding the Emergency Response Plan. Additional information will be brought to the Board in the future
- Met with Mayor Kline along with Underwood and Associates to discuss their assistance in helping the town build internal MS4 projects. They have worked with the Havre De Grace
- Met with an individual from an entity called Gordian. They have a state contract with the Maryland Department of General Services where they connect governments with contractors. Certainly some value here if we are ever scrambling for a contractor or if we have a vague project, Gordian helps facilitate design and build. They take 5% of the total job cost
- Met with Karen, Betsy, Melissa and Landmark Science regarding they conduct an environmental study for the NE Preserve. My understanding is we are still awaiting an estimate from them
- Would like to commend Lisa Rhoades, Stephanie Dean, Rich Greg, Bryce Huse, Bobby Carter, Warita Bedell, Mabel Huber, Karen Schaffer, Vonnie Stemen, Betsy Vennell, NEPD, and Melissa for assisting with the Christmas Parade Preparation in some capacity

Mayor Kline also thanked the town staff for all their hard work making the Cecil County Christmas Parade a success.

Director of Finance

Mrs. Stemen entered into the record the list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting. In addition Mrs. Stemen reported the following:

- Statement of Revenue and Expenditures ending 10.31.23
- General Fund Balance Sheet
- Audit Financial Statements
- Letter of Reports from the town's auditors, CliftonLarsonAllen LLP

Maintenance Supervisor

Mr. Gregg entered into the record the October 2023 Monthly Report for the Town of North East Maintenance Department. In addition, Mr. Gregg reported the following:

- Cecil County Christmas Parade
- Received the Storage Unit (located behind the old Maintenance Shop)

Mr. Gregg reported he is working to get the street lights fixed on Route 272 Bridge over AMTRAK. Mr. Gregg stated the town needs a company that has the equipment to assist with this task along with traffic control for safety. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie suggest the town look into a Maintenance contract, for long-term.

Chief of Police

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

- All officers completed the mandatory bi-yearly Mental Health Assessment
- Coffee with A Cop at the North East Elementary School, Thursday, November 30th
- Attended Emergency Operation Center (EOC) training for the April 2024 exercise, Tuesday, November 28th

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Rave Mobile Safety & On Solve - Alert System Companies [RAVE to make a presentation to Town Board on December 13th. No action requested on November 29th]

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated this is not an action item for tonight, just a reminder. Rave Mobile Safety and On Solve will be giving a presentation to the Mayor and Commissioners at the next town board meeting, Wednesday, December 13, 2023.

Bid Award 2023-10-01 Re: Replacement of Crouch Pavilion. Recommendation: award to AUI Power in the amount of \$36,500.00

A motion to approve Bid Award 2023-10-01 for the Replacement of Crouch Pavilion in the amount of \$36,500.00 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Water Allocation Request - North East Middle and High School; 300 Irishtown Road, North East, Tax Map 0031, Parcel 857 – Eleven Equivalent Residential Units

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board a Water Allocation Request for the new North East Middle and High School, 300 Irishtown Road for eleven equivalent units.

A motion to approve the Water Allocation Request for 2,750 gallons per day, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

North East Preserve Master Plan - Recommendation from North East Planning Commission for Adoption

Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie presented the North East Preserve Plan giving a brief history of the property. The property was previously proposed to be developed with multiple living units. However, the developer eventually donated the property to the Town February 26, 2020 which consisted of approximately 59 +/- acres. Between April 28, 2020 and October 21, 2021 the Mayor and Town staff visited multiple parks. In addition they also met with Cecil County Director of Parks and Recreation, Clyde Van Dyke. Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie reported that at this point, the Mayor and Commissioners decided to make the property a preserve and on November 22, 2021 they adopted Resolution 2021-12-01 establishing a Mission Statement. March 13, 2022 the project was put out to bid with 6 consulting firms responding to the ad. The Town staff also met with the North East Isles Homeowners Association Board of Directors on March 26, 2022 to discuss the mission statement as the community is adjacent to the future preserve. After meeting with several of the consulting firms the Town signed a contract with YSM Landscape Architects. To prepare for the first meeting with the study group Mrs. Cook-Mackenzie, Mrs. Vennel and YSM had a kick off meeting to gain some feedback on what the public would like to see in the proposed preserve. The Mayor and Commissioners appointed a study group on September 14, 2022 and on September 21, 2022 a kick off meeting was held. In addition, three public meetings were held which included one meeting at the Town Hall and two at the North East Library. Through-out 2023 the study group has met 5 times and September 11, 2023 approved the recommendation of the Final Master Plan to the Planning Commission.

A motion to Adopt the North East Preserve Master Plan with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

Town of North East 2023 Christmas Bonus

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board the 2023 Christmas bonuses are in accordance with the personnel manual. Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to approve the 2023 Christmas bonuses. Commissioner Bernard-Dutton seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Commissioner Crothers-Moore wanted to thank town staff for getting back in touch with her while she was out sick with COVID.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie asked the Board for a tentative date for the ARPA Workshop. After discussion, it will be held prior of the next board meeting, Wednesday, December 27th at 5:30 pm., dinner provided.

Mr. Handley advised the Board, he would like the town to purchase Legacy Bricks for past Elected Officials and Town Staff for our notable Veterans. Mayor Kline is completely opened to the idea, and would like the town staff to move forward.

Town Clerk reminded the Board, the Annual Residential Decorating Contest will be hold on Thursday, December 14th at 5:30 pm.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Budget Amendment 2024-007 Storage Container Maintenance \$3,645.00

A motion to approve Budget Amendment 2024-007 for a Storage Unit for the Maintenance Department in the amount of \$3,645.00 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

Requisition R4-00980 AUI Power, Crouch Pavilion Replacement in the amount of \$36,500.00

A motion to approve Requisition R4-00980 to AUI Power for the Crouch Pavilion in the amount of \$36,500.00 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

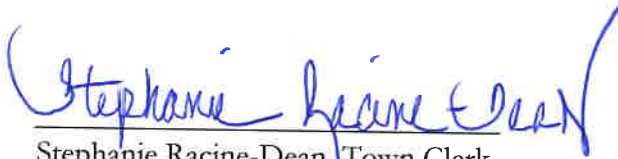
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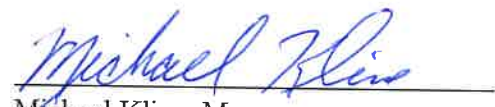
-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Michael Kline, Mayor