

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

February 14, 2024

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael Kline at 7:00 P.M. Present were Commissioners Catherine Bernard-Dutton, Hilary Crothers-Moore and Raymond Mitchell. Also present were Police Chief Stephen Yates, Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-MacKenzie, and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Commissioner Benson and Assistant Town Administrator, Grant Handley were present, virtually at tonight's meeting.

A moment of silence was observed.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

Mayor Kline administered the Oath of Office to Colleen McCandless, she was appointed to the Board of Appeals on January 10, 2024. Her term expires in October 2024 (mid-term appointment).

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 Workshop 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 January 31, 2024 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Bernard-Dutton abstained due to her absence from the meeting.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-GUESTS-

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Michael Maker, Partner of NewGen Strategies & Solution LLC – Water Rate Study Presentation

Mr. Michael Maker, Deputy Director Water Practice, NewGen Strategies & Solutions gave a presentation regarding, Water Rate Study and findings along with guiding Principles & Objectives. Recommendations:

- Adopt the recommended water rates for FY 2025 through 2029
- Adopt the recommended water major facility fees
- Establish a fund balance policy (operating and capital)
- Review rates, charges, and fees on an annual basis and revise as needed
- Consider a full cost of service study for all rates, charges, and fees every three to five years

The objective is to ensure rates are stable through sound financial management and system maintenance.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-REPORTS-

Mayor Kline

Mayor Kline reported he attended the following meetings since the January 31, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- February 2nd met with town staff, Vice Mayor Benson, Chris Becraft and Keith Binsted from Underwood Associates regarding a site visit at the North East Preserve. This would establish what they can propose for development of the project along with credits for the MS4 Permit

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

None

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Benson

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Commissioner Benson reported he attended a meeting along with town staff, Mayor Kline, Chris Becraft and Keith Binsted from Underwood Associates regarding a site visit at the North East Preserve. This would establish what they can propose for development of the project along with credits for the MS4 Permit.

Commissioner Benson reported he has participated in several wagon rides for, Winter Lights-Cecil Nights. He thanked town staff along with Cecil County Tourism, for making this event a success.

Commissioner Mitchell

None

Town Administrator

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie entered into the record her reports since the January 31, 2024, Town Board meeting.

- Department Head weekly meetings
- Final meeting with Michael Maker, Partner of NewGen Strategies & Solution LLC along with Director of Finance
- Election results from Monday, February 12th. Commissioner Crothers-Moore held her seat with 16 votes. The remaining vacancy, the Board will be making an appointment in March 2024
- All matters with Emergency Response Protocol Security Company (ERP) Security have been concluded. Chris Bradley from Vigiles Life Safety Security visited town hall on Tuesday, February 13th to start the punch-out-list that was not completed by the previous contractor, ERP

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Handley entered into the record his reports since the January 31, 2024, Town Board meeting:

Happy Valentine's Day & Ash Wednesday

- Thank you to the Town Administrator and the Director of Finance for their hard work on the Water Rate Study.
- As of Monday, February 12th, the mixer project has begun on the I-95 Water Tower. Town staff will continue to monitor their progress and once completed, an inspection will be conducted pursuant with the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) guidelines.
- Met with Rich and Ron along with various contractors on various projects. Estimates have been received:
 - a.) Doors/windows at two of the pumping stations
 - b.) Exterior doors at Town Hall
 - c.) Tin siding at the Leslie Water Treatment Plant

- Met with the Town Administrator and Grant Rider/Project Manager on Community Block Development Program projects
- Wrote several letters in regards to House Bill 538 and Senate Bill 484 that will be addressed later in tonight's meeting
- Obtained my certification in the Maryland Opens Meeting Act. This will allow to ensure the Town will follow proper meeting procedures
- Began the Cecil Leadership Institute, this course focuses on Cecil County Leadership Development

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

None

-NEW BUSINESS-

Public Works Agreement Extension: First Maryland Holdings

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board a Public Works Agreement Extension Request, Expiring July 30, 2024 for First Maryland Holdings.

A motion to approve the following items as listed, with the recommendation by the Town Administrator and the Planning Office was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

- H-3 Lots 314-331
- H-3 Lots 204-206, 208-249 and 289-310
- H-2 Lots 188-203, 250-288, 311-313 and 332-343

Variance Request VFW to Cecil County Board of Appeals

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board a Variance Request from the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the US (VFW) Post 6027, 815 Turkey Point Road, North East, Maryland.

After discussion, the Board reviewed the Variance Request from the VFW, Post 6027, at this time, they have no objection with them moving forward with the project as presented.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Letters regarding re: Town of North East 21901: Written Testimony Unfavorable on House Bill 538 and Senate Bill 484

A motion to sign and submit both letters of opposition regarding House Bill 538 and Senate Bill 484 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Chief Yates advised the Board, he received a call from the Cecil County Sheriff's Office regarding a group that will be marching down Route 7/Route 40 from Philadelphia to
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Washington DC on Saturday, February 17th. These individuals are protesting the Palestine War. There will be a meeting tomorrow, Thursday, February 15th to discuss details.

Assistant Town Administrator reported the deadline for the Legacy Brick Fundraising Project had ended, with a total of 210 sold. The focus will be the next steps to complete the project by Summer 2024.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

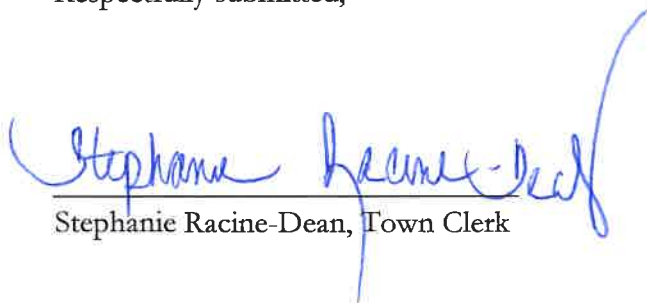
None

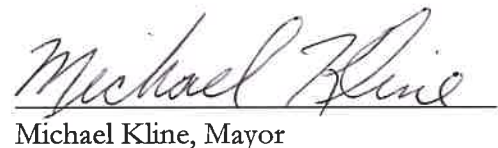
-ADJOURNMENT-

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 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ATTEST:


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk


Michael Kline, Mayor