

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

February 28, 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, Raymond Mitchell, and Kelly Benson. Also present were Town's Attorney, David Beste Esq., Police Chief Stephen Yates, Maintenance Supervisor, Richard Gregg, Water Superintendent Ron Carter, Director of Finance, Vonnie Stemen, Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell, Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator, Grant Handley and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean.

A moment of silence was observed.

-SUMMARY OF EXECUTIVE SESSION FEBRUARY 15, 2024-

A Closed Meeting of the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East, was called to order by Mayor Kline on February 15, 2024 at 7:13 P.M., pursuant to the State of Maryland, Annotated Code, General Provisions Article 3-305 (b)(7), "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice". Topics: 1.) Can the Board waive Charter & Ordinance regulations, 2.) Can the Board waive the connection fee, 3.) Can the Board waive the major facility fee, 4.) Can the Board require property owners to install a water main where needed, 5.) Can the Board offer a payment plan re: connection fee, 6.) Can the Board offer a payment plan re: major facility fee.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2024 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

A motion to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024 Executive meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

Mayor Kline administered the Oath of Office to Commissioner Hilary Crothers-Moore. Her term expires, March 11, 2026.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

Town Board Approved Minutes March 13, 2024

None

-GUESTS-

Jeff Riley, Freedom Development, LLC: Stonebridge Community, 33 Single Family Lots
Jeff Riley from Freedom Development, LLC gave a brief history of the Stonebridge Community. The parcel is off Bethel Church Road and the property was purchased in the year, 2020. The property received final subdivision approval in the early 2000, in the agreement, these properties would be serviced by public sewer and private wells. The ground appropriation permits have been kept up to date for the private wells up until the year 2018. The applications have now expired, Mr. Riley, stated he was informed the property is now reflecting in the Cecil County Master Water Plan, which this would now require public service for water. Mr. Riley is requesting at this time, the Boards consideration for interim wells for the 33 single family homes at the Community of Stonebridge.

After discussion, the Board agreed they would consider Mr. Riley's request after they consult with the town staff and the town's counsel.

-APPOINTMENTS-

None

-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 February 14, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Executive Session, Thursday, February 15th

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton reported she attended the Executive Session meeting, Thursday, February 15th.

Town Board Approved Minutes March 13, 2024

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the Executive Session meeting, Thursday, February 15th.

Commissioner Benson

Commissioner Benson reported she attended the Executive Session meeting, Thursday, February 15th.

Commissioner Mitchell

Commissioner Mitchell reported she attended the Executive Session meeting, Thursday, February 15th.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Grant Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the January 10, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Began Cecil Leadership Institute, Cecil College
- Razor Strap and Irishtown Water Pumping Stations should have their doors/windows replaced within the next two weeks, as the project is now under contract. Thank you to Director of Finance and the Water Superintendent
- Street signs are continuing to be installed, was a productive week with the contractor.
- In the near future, there will be enrollment for our community to the Rave Mobile Program
- Mixer Project at the I-95 Water Tower is completed, training and inspections will be in the near future
- The SCADA Project is set to start the month of March
- The Legacy Brick Project has moved to the next step. All orders have been sent to the contractor for engraving, with a total of 207 bricks. Special thanks to the Director of Finance for ensuring no order was left behind.
- Parking lot lights have been repaired and are now all under one photocell
- The AMTRACK bridge, coming into town, all lights have been repaired
- Crouch pavilion construction contract has been signed and sent to AUI Power for a final signature
- Contract agreement with Underwood & Associates, the MS4 Consultant for the North East Preserve
- Worked from home the week of February 12th due to being sick with COVID. While working from home he earned the Maryland Open Meetings Act certification, joining the Town Administrator and the Town Clerk

Director of Finance

Mrs. Stemen entered in 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 1.1.24 to 1.31.24

- General Fund Balance Sheet as of 1.31.24

Mrs. Stemen reported the revenue and expenditures are staying within budget and going as planned for the fiscal year budget 2025.

Director of Planning and Zoning

Mrs. Vennell entered into the record the January 2024 Planning and Zoning Monthly report. In addition, Mrs. Vennell reported the following:

- 4 Occupancy Permit Issued
- 3 Deck Permits
- 2 Sign Permits
- 2 New Home Construction – Ridgeley Forest
- Ridgeley Forest Total Occupancies – 521
- Code of Ordinance Violations – 19 friendly reminders

Maintenance Supervisor

Mr. Gregg entered into the record the January 2024 Monthly Report for the Town of North East Maintenance Department. In addition, Mr. Gregg reported the following:

- 4 brand-new salt boxes, the old ones will be taken to Richie Brothers
- Electric has been completed at the North East Community Park
- Removing the lights at the North East Community Park from Winter Lights/Cecil Nights
- New Dump-truck will be in within a week

Mayor Kline asked if the town would benefit from getting a pre-treatment plan for the roads in town prior of snowfall and ice. The Town Administrator asked Commissioner Crothers-Moore what the former Maintenance Supervisor, Phil Meekins bought from Benjamins Lumber to help with the roads. She advised Phil and staff mixed sand and calcium chloride flack.

Chief of Police

Chief Yates entered into the record the January 2024 Crime and Traffic Breakdown Report for the North East Police Department. In addition, Chief Yates reported the following:

- North East Police Department received the Kid Print machine. Instead of doing fingerprinting on cards, this machine will allow ID cards with thumb scanning finger printing.

Commissioner Mitchell asked Chief Yates if he has received any information regarding the opening of Bay Shore Liquor Store. Chief Yates stated he has not, but he will check with Earl Bradford from the Cecil County Liquor Board.

Water Plant Superintendent

Mr. Carter entered into the record the January 2024 Monthly Report for the North East Rolling Mill and Leslie Water Plants. In addition Mr. Carter reported the following.

Mayor Kline asked for an update on the man-lift. Mr. Carter stated it has been received and is located at the Rolling Mill Plant.

Mayor Kline requested an update on the CAFOs Federal Regulation. Mr. Carter stated he has not heard anything as of yet, but both treatment plants are in good standing.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Annexation Proposal Presentation- Continuation

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie gave a presentation regarding the Town of North East Annexation Proposal which would include proposed properties that are currently not served water. This would include the cost, revenue and the cost to the water customers. It is not a large area for annexation, some properties bordering Route 272, Route 40 and North Main Street Extended. Each lot would have to be surveyed and put on a plat and advertising the legal notice. This doesn't consider any land to the south of Town.

A motion to move forward with the Annexation Proposal as proposed in the Executive Session and the conversation year to date was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Mike Devine, Devine Computing – Presenting VOIP Project with OnSIP equipment

Mike Devine, Devine Computing gave a presentation regarding OnSIP's integrated systems. This will allow for direct communications intra-offices via free extension-to-extension dialing, between the Town Hall, Leslie Water Plant, Rolling Mill Water Plant, Public Works and the North East Police Department.

A motion to approve VOIP Project as described was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

Presentation on upcoming American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie gave a presentation regarding upcoming (ARPA) projects and items that will eventually be purchased and completed:

- Westover Place Development Distribution System, replace 2 inch plastic line along with resurfacing
- Leslie Water Treatment Plant, siding repair
- Water Treatment Plant, secure a vehicle for personnel through a Baltimore County State bid

- 2 Handheld Communication devices to enable to read meters in the field was initially on the list for purchases. With the help of the Director of Finance there is a cheaper and a more productive way to communicate to read meters. Each staff member will now have an Android cell phone with an app that will allow each member to read meters, operation of the town's gas pumps and SCADA.

Requisition R4-01169 – EN Engineering LLC – Westover Place Development, Water Main Replacement Project \$38,000.00

A motion to approve Requisition R4-01169 to EN Engineering LLC for Water Main Replacement Project in the amount of \$38,000.00 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Requisition R4-01670 – Apple Ford – 2024 Ford F150 \$48,413.88

A motion to approve Requisition R4-01670 to Apple Ford for 2024 Ford F150 in the amount of \$48,413.88 was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

Leslie Water Treatment Plant, Siding Repair

A motion to concur with town staff to continue with obtaining prices for the Leslie Water Treatment Plant was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

Request for Proposal: North East Comprehensive Plan-Updates and Refinements – Award Recommendation

A motion to approve Request for Proposal North East Comprehensive Plan Updates and Refinements, Awarded to EPR, P.C., 902 East Jefferson Street, Suite 101, Charlottesville, Virginia, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Benson and approved by all.

Water Allocation Request: North East Developers LLC: Chesapeake Club Apartments, 1500 Chesapeake Club Drive, North East – 224 Apartments; Swimming pool proposed: Requesting 227 Equivalent Residential Units per day

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board a Water Allocation Request for North East Developers LLC, 1500 Chesapeake Club Drive North East for two hundred twenty seven equivalent residential units.

A motion to approve the Water Allocation Request for 56,000 gallons per day, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved by all.

Water Allocation Request: North East Commerce Center IV LLC for DA Duie Pyle Cross Dock Facility and Maintenance Shop proposed to be located on 10 Center Drive, North East, Maryland. Requesting 7 Equivalent Residential Units per day

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board a Water Allocation Request for North East Commerce Center IV LLC, 10 Center Drive North East for seven equivalent residential units.

A motion to approve the Water Allocation Request for 1667 gallons per day, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Town Administrator:

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported to the Board, PFC Fabbri gave his recognition, his last night shift was, Monday, February 26, 2024. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie along with Chief Yates, did have an interview with a valuable candidate. There will be additional information given at the next board meeting whether or not this position has been filed.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the Executive Session meeting, Thursday, February 15th.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the February 14, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Department Head
- Several meetings, Grant Rider/Project Manager, Karen Schaeffer
- President & Vice President of the North East Chamber
- Team meeting Senator Von Hollen's & Senator Cardin's office regarding the finished water pump station and applying for \$500,000 through either an EPA project or a FEMA project
- President of the North East Chamber and the Director of Cecil County Tourism
- North East Chamber of Commerce is working on promoting, Main Street North East, Memorial Park Bench Fundraiser. These benches will be placed throughout the town to memorialize friends or loved ones. The style of the bench will be 54" long and the bench color options are Patriotic Red or Nautical Blue.

Mayor Kline wanted to thank Commissioner Raymond Mitchell for his dedicated service to the Town of North East and his friendship. Tonight is the last meeting for Commissioner Mitchell to sit on the Town's Board, Best Wishes Ray, you will be missed.

Commissioner Benson made a request to the town's administration, a summary of what has been spent by the town regarding the ARPA funds. Commissioner Benson also asked if the town could supply marketing data regarding the visitors who have visited our town. He gave an example on how the City of Wilmington gathers their information. Assistant Town Administrator along with Town Administrator stated this would be a good project for the Town of North East Economic Development Commission.

Commissioner Mitchell wanted to express his gratitude to the Board and town staff. It has been a great time in his life. Thank you to all who mentored me, friendships he has made over the years, and he wishes the town all the success in the coming years.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Budget Amendment 2024-011

A motion to approve Budget Amendment 2024-001 was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Benson and approved by all.

Requisition R4-01168 – Allied Control Services, INC. – Control Systems Installation \$725,754.00

A motion to approve Requisition R4-01168 to Allied Control Services, INC. for Controlled Systems Installation in the amount of \$725,754.00 was made by Commissioner Benson, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

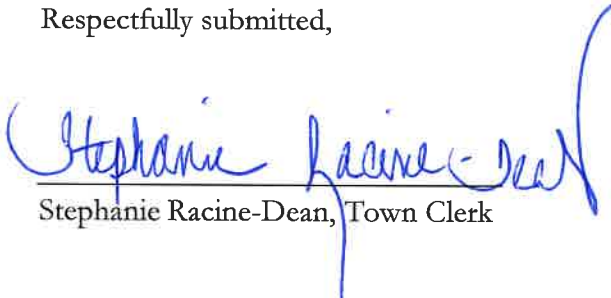
-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

Michael Devine, Devine Computing asked the Board if natural gas will be coming to the North East area. The Town Administrator advised Chesapeake Utility has no plans to do so at this time and advised Mr. Devine she would get an update from them directly.

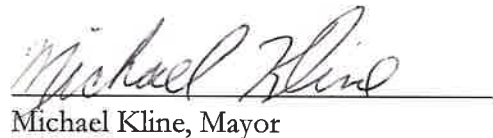
-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Benson and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

ATTEST:


Michael Kline, Mayor