

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

October 23, 2024

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kelly Benson at 7:00 P.M. Present were Commissioners Catherine Bernard-Dutton, Hilary Crothers-Moore and Kim Davis. Also present were Police Chief Stephen Yates, Maintenance Supervisor Richard Gregg, Water Superintendent Ron Carter, Director of Finance Vonnie Stemen, Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell, Assistant Town Administrator Grant Handley and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Absent from tonight's meeting, Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie.

A moment of silence was observed.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2024 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Commissioner Bernard-Dutton abstained due to her absence from the October 9, 2024 meeting.

-APPOINTMENTS & OATH OF OFFICE-

None

-GUESTS-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2024-10-01 – Amending the Town of North East Code of Ordinances Chapter 2
To amend the Code of Ordinances - Chapter 2. Government Organization, Article 5. Economic Development Commission Section 2-502 Composition; Appointment; Terms and Section 2-503 Organization and Procedures for the purpose of amending the maximum

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number of members to ten, for the purpose of amending the standard term to two (2) years and for the purpose of amending the chairman and vice-chairman shall be appointed by the Mayor and Commissioners.

A motion to approve Ordinance 2024-10-01, to amend the Town of North East Code Ordinances Chapter 2 was made by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-REPORTS-

Water Plant Superintendent

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

Mr. Carter gave an update on the Irishtown Tank Mixer regarding the Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) and Rejuvenating Hydrator (HA5's). Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) completed their quality water report and the town met or surpassed all Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.

Mr. Carter and the Assistant Town Administrator, Mr. Handley reported, the Town of North East conducted work to remove a Pressure Reducing Valve (PRV) Pit from the town's water system due to several inefficiencies and future growth plans. Homes in the Northwood's Community were not expected to be impacted, as the town's regulations require each household to have its own PRV. However, after the work was completed, several homes have been affected, reporting water damage due to the absence of PRVs, which resulted in leaks and breakages. Mr. Handley advised the Board, several water customers have called to make a claim regarding damages, this information has been referred to the town's Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT).

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the October 9, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- North East Economic Development Commission meeting, Wednesday, October 16th
- Friday, October 25th, the Town of North East will welcome former Maryland Governor Larry Hogan as he tours Main Street. He will be in downtown from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM.
- Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Bikeways meeting along with town staff, Wednesday, October 23rd
- Met with town staff regarding America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- Attended the Maryland Municipal League Quarterly Dinner, Thursday, October 17th location, Donald Brown Center, 200 Mount Ararat Farm Road, Port Deposit, Maryland

Mayor Benson reported he spoke with Karl Fockler, President of the Martha Lewis, Chesapeake Heritage Conservancy, located in Havre de Grace, Maryland. Mr. Fockler would

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like the Skipjack, Martha Lewis to be docked at the North East Community Park Pier in the near future for students to experience the Skipjack as a living classroom, to study the Bay, surrounding rivers, regional marine life and the environment. The Skipjack is now residing at the Havre de Grace Marine Center. This request was originally addressed to the Board, June 13, 2018.

After discussion, the Board is requesting Mr. Fockler to address the Board at a future Board meeting regarding the future of the Skipjack, Martha Lewis and the request of residing at the North East Community Park Pier.

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton reported she attended the following meetings since the October 9, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Attended, “National Coffee with a Cop Day”, Wednesday, October 2nd
- Attended the 50th Year Time Capsule Ceremony as part of the 350th Anniversary Celebration, Monday, October 21st
- Attended the Maryland Municipal League Quarterly Dinner, Thursday, October 17th location, Donald Brown Center, 200 Mount Ararat Farm Road, Port Deposit, Maryland

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the Maryland Municipal League Quarterly Dinner, Thursday, October 17th location, Donald Brown Center, 200 Mount Ararat Farm Road, Port Deposit, Maryland.

Commissioner Davis

Commissioner Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the October 9, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Mediator with Mrs. Dawn Rodenbaugh, Program Administrator, Cecil County Neighborhood Youth Panel
- Attended the Maryland Municipal League Quarterly Dinner, Thursday, October 17th location, Donald Brown Center, 200 Mount Ararat Farm Road, Port Deposit, Maryland

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Grant Handley reported, Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie will not be attending tonight’s meeting due to a previous scheduled meeting at the Cecil County Circuit Court Building. This meeting is with the Cecil County Planning Commission, regarding the Chesapeake Club Golf Course development and the surrounding area.

Mr. Grant Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the October 9, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Friday, October 25th, the Town of North East will welcome former Maryland Governor Larry Hogan as he tours Main Street. He will be in downtown from 1:30 PM to 2:30 PM. The Town is honored and looks forward to his visit

- Hosted the State Fire Marshal's Office for an inspection of the meeting room
- Friday, October 11th, traveled to Crownsville for Community Block Development Grant training along with the Town's Grant Writer
- Making progress on the Powder Activated Carbon upgrades at the Leslie and Rolling Mill Water Treatment Plants (WTPs)
- Wrapping up the town's annual MS4 report, which is due on October 31st
- Next week, will be a guest teacher at the North East Elementary School (NEES) to educate students about runoff and stormwater management on both Monday and Tuesday
- Progressing through the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Bikeways grant process
- Door replacement and interior renovation project is almost completed
- Next week, Town Hall will be closed on Monday the 28th and Tuesday the 29th as the roof replacement project begins. Staff will be working remotely and have ensured that their VPNs and phones are functional from home

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 to 9.1.24 to 9.30.24
- General Fund Balance Sheet as of 9.30.24

Mrs. Stemen reported the audit is in the final stages, the filing date is Thursday, October 31st.

Director of Planning and Zoning

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

- Major Facility \$77,900.00
- Connection Fees \$15,150.00
- 6 Occupancy Permit Issued
- 1 Deck Permits
- Code of Ordinance Violations – 7 friendly reminders

Mrs. Vennell briefly reviewed the September 2024 Planning Report. In addition, Mrs. Vennell reported that there are approximately six Traffic Impact Studies going on concurrently in and around Town. The proposed projects will impact the Maryland Route 40 and Route 272 corridor, therefore MDOT/SHA will be offering comments on each of the projects. The goal is to work closely with the other agencies to make sure that there is coordination to address future traffic concerns with the proposed growth.

Maintenance Supervisor

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

- Handicap ramps have been put in at 2 pavilions at the North East Community Park along with upgrades at the restrooms
- Still waiting for materials to finish Crouch Pavilion
- Pumping Station will start renovation tomorrow, fence has been received
- Aqua Boost Pressure Washing Company cleaned the playground equipment at the North East Community Park, free of charge
- Sign project will start again on Mauldin Avenue, Thursday, October 24th. This is the last stage of the project

Mayor Benson reported to the Board, the areas at the living shore-line at the North East Community Park are in the process of getting renewed. After discussion with town staff, they have determined the town needs to communicate to the community by placing signs in the workplace areas.

Chief of Police

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

- Attended Spooktacular along with Officer Kelty at the Town of Rising Sun on Saturday, October 12th
- Trunk or Treat at North East Elementary School, Thursday, October 24th
- Annual Halloween Party at North East Community Park, Saturday, October 26th along with the Elkton Coalition
- Shipwrecked, Town of North East, Thursday, October 31st

Chief Yates reported he submitted his 2 nominees, Lieutenant Hickey and Patrol Officer Lee for the First Responder Appreciation Banquet. The event will be held November 12, 2024 from 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM, Sandy Cove Ministries.

Chief Yates reported he met with Chris Bradley with Vigilantes on Monday, October 21st regarding the security cameras and getting them enabled to capture the views. Also, met with the Strayer Contracting Inc. they will be renovating the North East Police Administration building. Chief Yates thanked, Assistant Town Administrator, Grant Handley and Grant Writer Amy Yackanech for all their hard work getting this project moving forward.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

None

-NEW BUSINESS-

None

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mayor Benson reported after the monthly North East Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting on Wednesday, October 16th, Chairman Thomas Lofland sent a letter resigning from the Commission. Mayor Benson thanked Mr. Lofland for his service to the EDC and wished him well.

Assistant Town Administrator asked the Board if they would like to consider re-scheduling 2 Board meetings, due to the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays:

- (Thanksgiving Eve) - Wednesday, November 27th to Wednesday, November 20th
- (Christmas Day) - Wednesday, December 25th to Wednesday, December 18th

After discussion, it was agreed to speak with the Town Administrator to get her consensus prior of making the decision to re-scheduling the meetings in November and December.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Requisition R5-00669 – Edmonds Government - \$32,431.43 – 2025 Software and Hardware Maintenance

A motion to approve Requisition R5-00669 to Edmonds Government for the 2025 Software and Hardware Maintenance in the amount of \$32,431.43 was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Davis and approved by all.

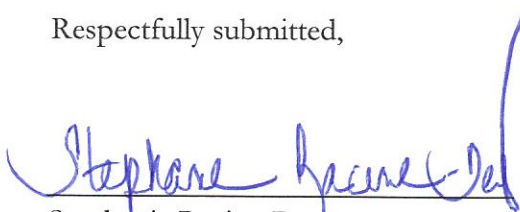
-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

None

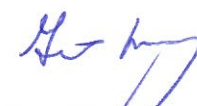
-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk *on behalf of*

ATTEST:

 *Assistant Town Administrator*

Kelly A. Benson, Mayor