

**MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS**

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

February 12, 2025

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kelly Benson at 7:06 P.M. Present were Vice-Mayor Kimberly A. Davis and Commissioner Hilary Crothers-Moore. Also present were Police Chief Stephen Yates, Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator Grant Handley and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Commissioner Bernard-Dutton was absent from tonight's meeting.

A moment of silence was observed to give thanks to all the men and women that serve and protect us.

**-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-**

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2025 meeting, as presented, was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, and seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

**-GUESTS-**

None

**APPOINTMENTS & OATH OF OFFICE-**

Justine Paterson, Appointment to the Board of Appeals, two year term, expires October 8, 2026

Mayor Benson asked for the appointment of Justine Paterson to the Board of Appeals, be tabled until the next town board meeting so the Board can review the application package prior of approval. The next meeting will be held, Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>.

**-PUBLIC COMMENT-**

None

**-PUBLIC HEARING-**

None

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**INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-**

None

**-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-**

None

**-REPORTS-**

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the January 22, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- 12.29.24 Met with the new Cecil County Executive, Adam Streight and staff to discuss various development projects that are happening in the Northern & Southern part of town
- 1.5.25 Met with town staff regarding funding for restoration of the Old Town Lockup
- 1.5.25 Bikeways Kickoff meeting with Wallace Montgomery, this is a grant funded study to find better access ways to town.
- Met with the Chesapeake Bayways Committee, this was a follow-up from the Conference in Annapolis
- 1.12.25 Met with the town's Grant Writer regarding, potential grant funding after the Bikeways study
- Met with President, Kathy Jamison of the North East Chamber of Commerce along with the Town Administrator regarding businesses on Main Street
- Town Election was Monday, February, 10<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Benson announced, he will be serving another 2 years, as the Town of North East Mayor
- 1.10.25 Gave a tour of our town to the Representatives of the Maryland Municipal League. They also witnessed the process of the town's election process, and saw the North East Community Park

Vice-Mayor Davis

Vice-Mayor Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the January 22, 2025 Town Board Meeting

- 1.24.25 Met with the Town Administrator to go over the history of the Charter of The Town of North East
- 1.25.25 Attended the Hot Chocolate Social, "On the Green" and spent time with Russell Polo and family. Leo's Smash Burger & Dogs were there along with Les Petits Bisous dessert truck
- 1.30.25 Attended Coffee Day at the North East Town Hall and spent quality time with staff
- 2.3.25 Attended the Funeral Service of Mrs. Pauline Carter, the mother of Water Superintendent, Ron Carter
- 2.10.25 Attended a class for LinkedIn at the North East Library

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- 2.10.25 Voted at the Town of North East Election
- 2.12.25 Reviewed the 2025 Student Scholarship Application Form given by the Cecil-Harford Chapter Maryland Municipal League. The applicant who wins, receives \$500.00, which will go towards their college education
- 2.12.25 Reviewed the packet for annexation that the Assistant Town Administrator put together

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the following meetings since the January 22, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- 1.30.25 Attended Coffee Day at the North East Town Hall
- 2.4.25 Attended the North East Planning Commission meeting. Discussed, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) 2025 Request Letter along with adopting a traffic study format
- 2.10.25 Voted at the Town of North East Election

Town Administrator

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she met with the Maintenance Supervisor along with the town's Landscapes, Jodi Shivery of Ecologically Sound. Unfortunately she has taken a full time position at another Municipality in Harford County. However, she will be our general contractor and hire someone underneath her.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie entered into the record her reports since the January 22, 2025, Town Board meeting:

- Several interviews for the North East Police Department
- Met with the Vice-Mayor regarding the Charter of the Town of North East
- Several conversations with Stacy Dahlstrom regarding the North East Comprehensive Plan/Route 272 Study
- Had a meeting with the Planning Director and Kimberly Isenhour, the new owner, formally known as lots 98, 99 and 100. Just to let the Board know, it is now considered a one lot at North East Isles Community
- Met with the current and past President of the HOA from North East Isles
- Participated in a meeting with the Cecil County Executive, Adam Streight and staff to discuss various development projects that are happening in the Northern & Southern part of town
- Virtual meeting with Five Town Partnership
- Met with Mayor Benson and town staff regarding the restoration of the Old Town Lockup
- Bikeways Kickoff meeting with Wallace Montgomery
- Chesapeake Bayways Committee, this was a follow-up from the Conference in Annapolis
- Town Election set-up, went very smoothly

- Meeting with the Town Attorney and McCrone regarding the parcel on West Cecil Avenue
- Met with President, Kathy Jamison of the North East Chamber of Commerce along with the Mayor Benson regarding businesses on Main Street

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she along with the Board of Supervisors of Elections, would like to enter into the record, a copy of the Official Ballot results of the February 10, 2025 town election to the Town Clerk, in accordance with Section 613, Vote Count of the Municipal Charter of the Town of North East.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Handley entered into the record his reports since the January 22, 2025, Town Board meeting:

- Attended the State of the County Breakfast hosted by the County Executive and the Cecil County Chamber of Commerce
- Met with the Maryland Municipal League executive team along with Mayor Benson and the Town Administrator to briefly showcase our Town and discuss legislative concerns
- Attended a meeting related to the Chesapeake Gateways initiative
- Over the past couple of months, have submitted various press releases to the Cecil Whig to inform the public about the Town's ARPA purchases for parks, water infrastructure, police, and civil infrastructure
- To ensure the information is easily accessible, have created a section on our Town Website where all press releases are hosted, allowing citizens to stay informed about how we've spent our ARPA funds
- The bikeways feasibility study has commenced following a kickoff meeting last week
- Turner Park stormwater infrastructure design is now underway
- Working on getting electricity to the Main Street pedestrian poles, which is the first step for future cameras and additional lighting
- The North East Nature Preserve Committee will reconvene tomorrow at 4:00 PM to discuss the next steps for the project now that the environmental study is complete
- Obtained approval from the Maryland Historical Society to restore the exterior of the old lock-up, which will be discussed at tonight's agenda meeting
- Melissa and I previously reached out to the Arts Council for a potential mural at the park bathroom. There's finally some traction on this idea. We will present more information as it becomes available. One idea being considered is for artists to submit "ideas/proofs," and then the board would decide on the final design

**-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-**

North East Town Charter Proposed Amendments

Mrs. Mellissa Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board at the last town board meeting, North East Town Charter Proposed Amendments. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie requested for the Board to review the document and present any questions, preferably by email prior of tonight's board

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meeting. Mayor Benson along with the Board gave their input regarding meetings held by the Board along with compensation. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie will follow-up with their suggestions and get back to them.

Lease – Skipjack Martha Lewis

Mr. Grant Handley gave an update on the Martha Lewis Skipjack. The Town's attorney, David Beste along with Karl Fockler, President of the Martha Lewis, Chesapeake Heritage Conservancy have met and made final adjustments to the lease agreement. A copy was uploaded to the Board's tablets for review prior of tonight's meetings.

A motion to approve the Lease Agreement for the Skipjack Martha Lewis was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, and seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

**-NEW BUSINESS-**

Deed of Conveyance to accept Public Improvements: Ridgely Forest, Section 5A North

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board Deed of Conveyance for Public Improvements at Ridgely Forest Section 5A.

A motion to approve the Deed of Conveyance for Public Improvements, Ridgely Forest, Section 5A North, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all.

Maryland Department of Transportation Annual Tour 2025: Priority Letter Introduction

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board Maryland Department of Transportation Priorities 2025 Request Letter.

A motion to approve the Transportation Priorities 2025 Request Letter was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Water Allocation Request Con S. Lin, North East Plaza Associates, 111 North East Plaza, North East: 2 Equivalent Residential Units Out of Town/Commercial

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board Water Allocation Request to Con S. Lin, for North East Plaza Associates, North East for 2 residential units, 500 gallons per day.

A motion to approve the Water Allocation Request for 500 per day, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Office was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all.

**-MISCELLANEOUS-**

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, there will be an Executive Session prior of the next town board meeting, Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. The following items will be discussed:

- Cyber Policy Coverage & Cost
- Report to the Board an update regarding a previous personnel matter

Mayor Benson gave a follow-up regarding the impromptu meeting with the President of the North East Chamber of Commerce, Kathy Jamison earlier today. The sentiment that she discussed, the business community on Main Street and the slow end of the year business environment with the concern of the viability of their businesses. Mayor Benson along with the Town Administrator gave a short bullet list of items that need pursuit before it would get introduced to the Board.

**-APPROPRIATIONS-**

Budget Amendment 2025-005 & Budget Amendment 2025-006

A motion to approve Budget Amendment 2025-005 in the amount of \$773,095.21 and Budget Amendment 2025-006 in the amount of \$60,917.00 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, and seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Requisition R5-01470 – Old Lock-Up: Exterior Restoration

A motion to approve Requisition R5-01470 to Susquehanna Contractors, LLC for the Old Lock-Up, 102 West Cecil Avenue in the amount of \$60,917.00 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, and seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

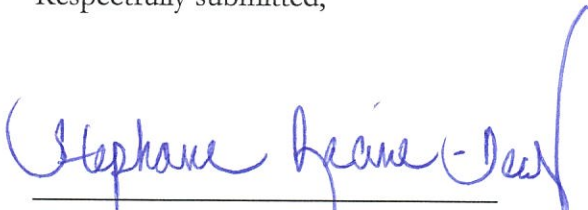
**-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-**

Marybeth Appio, 18 Bayberry Drive, Elkton advised the Board, she toured the Rolling Mill Water Treatment Plant with Water Superintendent, Ron Carter. Ms. Appio also asked for information regarding the extension of sidewalks and street lights from the Ridgely Forest Community, East Old Philadelphia Road to the Town of North East. The Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie directed Ms. Appio to Maryland State Highway (MDOT) and Cecil County Government. The Town Administrator and town staff will also follow-up by looking at the North East Comprehensive Plan.

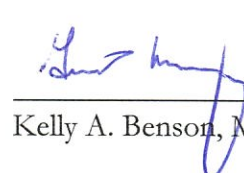
**-ADJOURNMENT-**

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

ATTEST:

  
Kelly A. Benson, Mayor

*a/arias*  
Genl Ass-ntd Town Admin