

**MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS**

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

**May 28, 2025**

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kelly Benson at 7:05 P.M. Present were Vice-Mayor Kimberly Davis, Commissioners Catherine Bernard-Dutton, Hilary Crothers-Moore and Neil DeMatt. Also present were Chief Stephan 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 to give thanks to all the men and women that protect and serve us.

**-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-**

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025 Executive Session as presented, was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, and seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2025 regular meeting, as presented, was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, and seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

**-GUESTS-**

None

**-PROCLAMATIONS-**

Proclamation – Juneteenth 2025

Mayor Benson presented to the Board, a Proclamation for Juneteenth 2025, a Day of Observance.

**-APPOINTMENTS & OATH OF OFFICE-**

None

**-INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES-**

Ordinance 2025-05-02 Adopts the Authorize and Empower the Major and Commissioners to issue and sell, upon its full faith and credit, a general obligation installment Bond in the original

Town Board Approved Minutes June 11, 2025

Principle amount not to exceed \$42,000 to be designated “Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East Drinking Water Bond Series 2025 (Taxable)”

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, this is for introduction only, there will be further discussion at the next town board meeting on June 11, 2025.

**-ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES-**

Ordinance 2025-05-01 Adopts the General Fund Budget, Capital Projects Budget, Enterprise Fund Budget (Water Fund) and also Establishes Water Service Charges, Stormwater Management Fund Budget, Quarterly Stormwater Management Fees, Connection Fees, Major Facilities Fees, Ready-To-Serve Fees, Bulk Fees, Water Service Charges for in-town and out-of-town, etc.

A motion to approved Ordinance 2025-05-01 was made by Commissioner DeMatt, and seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

**-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS-**

Resolution 2025-05-03 Adopts the Amount the Town will contribute toward premiums for Medical Insurance for Fiscal Year 2026

Resolution 2025-05-04 Adopts the Amount the Town will contribute toward premiums for Dental and Vision Insurance for Fiscal Year 2026

Resolution 2025-05-05 Adopts the Amount which the Town will contribute toward a Life Insurance Policy for each full time employee for Fiscal Year 2026

Vice-Mayor Davis made a motion to adopt Resolutions: 2025-05-03, 2025-05-04 and 2025-05-05, Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion was approved by all.

Resolution 2025-05-06 Adopts the disposal of a 2008 Ford F3500 Stake Body Maintenance Vehicle

Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution 2025-05-06, Vice-Mayor Davis seconded the motion was approved by all.

**-REPORTS-**

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the May 14, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- Various meetings with the Town’s Administration:
  - a. 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday Event, various solutions for parking where the event is going to be held, etc.

- b. Innovated solutions to address the traffic issues for the 272 Route Study is reviewing and trying to come together to create short-term goals and plans to address some of those issues while continuing on working on a long-term plan
- c. Working on the second half of the Wayfinding Signage. This will direct the community to various areas of the town including additional parking to the waterfront and Main Street District etc.
- d. Keeping up with ongoing projects throughout the Town

Vice-Mayor Davis

Vice-Mayor Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the May 14, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- 5.15.25 & 5.22.25 Taught English, “Second Language” classes for Cecil County through United Redeemed Church. The last class will be held on June 5th
- 5.16.25 & 5.22.25 First of 2 sessions 55 Plus Volunteer Leadership Program that is offered through Cecil County. This is making me aware of the needs in our County
- 5.22.25 Attended the Maryland Municipal League webinar regarding the different caucuses that will be at the 2025 Summer Conference in June
- 5.28.25 Participated in the Annexation Workshop prior of tonight’s Board Meeting

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton reported she attended the Annexation Workshop prior of tonight’s Board Meeting.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the following meetings since the May 14, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- Attended the Comprehensive Plan Workshop on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Attended the Planning Commission meeting, Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>
- Attended the Annexation Workshop prior of tonight’s Board Meeting

Commissioner DeMatt

Vice-Mayor Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the May 14, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- 5.15.25 Participated in the Board of Realtors Corn-hole Tournament, this is to raise money for Chex Foundation (Housing for Veteran’s)
- 5.22.25 Taught an AI Course along with Russell Polo at the North East Chamber Membership meeting. In the evening attended the new First Cecil County Young Professionals Network (YPN) meeting with the Assistant Town Administrator

Town Administrator

Mrs. Melissa Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the May 14, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- Various meetings with Mayor Benson and town staff:
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday Event, various solutions for parking where the event is going to be held, etc.

- Innovated solutions to address the traffic issues for the Route 272 Study is reviewing and trying to come together to create a short-term goals and plans to address some of those issues while continuing on working on a long-term plan
- Working on the second half of the Wayfinding Signage. This will direct the community to various areas of the own including additional parking to the waterfront and Main Street District etc.
- Attended a meeting with WILMAPCO and participated in the meeting with the consultant along with the WILMAPCO staff
- Participated in a County Partnership ZOOM meeting with Sandra Edwards, Director of the Cecil County Economic Development and local Municipalities
- Participated in a meeting with Mayor Benson along with business community
- Participated in several Annexation meetings along with the one prior of tonight's Board meeting
- Had a Department Head meeting as a group
- Participated in several Comprehensive Plan meetings

#### Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Grant Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the May 14, 2025 Town Board Meeting:

- Turner Park will be having gravel installed to serve as an overflow parking lot. We have temporary signage to use for large events with the permeant signage to follow
- Façade Grant Application for North East Businesses has been finalized and released in June
- Legacy Bricks was the front page story in the Cecil Whig last Friday 5/23/2025
- New Town Logo will be placed on the wall in the Town Hall meeting room to serve as a better forum for photographs
- April 22nd attended the comprehensive plan workshop
- Trial run on Main Street camera installation tomorrow (Weather permitting)
- Other Various Meetings with Administration and Mayor
- Attended the new First Cecil County Young Professionals Network (YPN) meeting with the Commissioner DeMatt

#### Director of Finance

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

- Check Register as of 4.17.25 to 5.21.25
- General Fund Balance Sheet as of 4.30.25
- Statement of Revenue and Expenditures ending to 4.1.25 to 4.30.25

#### Director of Planning and Zoning

Mrs. Betsy Vennell entered into the record the April 2025 Planning and Zoning Monthly report. In addition, Mrs. Vennell reported the following:

- Major Facility Fees \$57,400.00

- Connection Fees           \$39, 550.00
- Permit Fees                 \$445.00
- Escrow Fees  
  (Bedrock Phase 4)         \$5,000.00

Mrs. Vennell reported she received a 200 page, draft from the Critical Area Regulations and the town's attorney's office is reviewing the document. There is a rush on this, due to the gentlemen who is preparing the document is under a grant with the State of Maryland Critical Area Commission and he is leaving the State in July 2025.

Mrs. Vennell reported there was a Comprehensive Plan Workshop on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> updates with the land use plan were discussed, nothing has been formalized but there was good discussion.

Mrs. Vennell reported the Critical Area Annual Report has been prepared, town staff will be reviewing the report tomorrow with the revision by the state.

Mrs. Vennell reported the Assistant for Planning, Lisa Rhoades received a call from the Cecil County Department of Public Works this afternoon. They signed off on the capping of the water and sewer main at 104 Water Street (yellow house). A permit will be released in the next week so the town can continue with the demolition.

Mayor Benson wanted to compliment the Planning Department regarding a prospective tenant that is looking to locate on South Main Street. They had several questions and asked the Planning Department to address what is needed to move through the approval process. Mayor Benson stated the proactive approach and transparency the Planning Department gave, does go a long way for someone relocating to the town and how much he appreciates their quick turnaround.

#### Maintenance Supervisor

Mr. Richard Gregg entered into the record the April 2025 Maintenance Monthly report. In addition, Mr. Gregg reported the following:

- Recorded number of people at the park, Memorial Day weekend and everyone was enjoying the new facilities
- Enjoyed working with the North East Middle School. They helped pick-up trash and mulch the playground area
- Working with an Eagle Scout to possibly refurbish the picnic tables and the small pavilions
- New generator will be set up in the new shop
- Trying to come up with a solution regarding the Main Street banner system

#### Chief of Police

Police Chief Yates entered into the record the April 2025 Maintenance Monthly report. In addition, Police Chief Yates reported the following:

- Attended the Flower Market at St. Mary Anne's, Friday May 2<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Attended the Maryland Cruzin for a Cause Saturday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Calvert Park
- The Cecil County Health Department has received a block grant for Juvenile Cannabis and Chief Yates is on the committee with the first meeting the beginning of May
- Attended a Maryland Chief's Quarterly meeting at Great Wolf Lodge. Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>
- Department of Emergency Service (DES) is looking at a new CAD System. This system is connected with reports and dispatch. Chief Yates is on the committee to help with the new system and recruit a vendor to assist with this request
- Moving into the new Administration Building this week with the help of the town's IT person, Mike Devine.

Water Plant Superintendent

Mr. Ron Carter entered into the record the Aril 2025 Monthly Report for the North East Rolling Mill and Leslie Water Plants. In addition Mr. Carter reported the following:

Mr. Carter reported the (PAC) Project, Poly Aluminum Chloride, should be installed within the next couple of weeks. This will provide the water treatment plants an effective solutions for industrial water purification.

Mr. Carter gave an update regarding the notice that was received, from the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) regarding the (TOC) Total Organic Carbon reduction for this month. 35 percent of the town received a 44.7 percent at 1200 gallons a minute, great news. Mr. Carter stated Manganese is still the primary concern along with the slug that goes through the basin. He is considering/thinking converting to green sand filters.

**-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-**

None

**-NEW BUSINESS-**

None

**-APPROPRIATIONS-**

Budget Amendment 2025-008

A motion to approve Budget Amendment 2025-008 for ARPA General and Water Fund Revenue, Fixed Assets and Stormwater Fund Revenue was made by Commissioner DeMatt, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all.

**-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-**

Mr. Ben Brewerton, 2053 B Chesapeake Ridge Lane, North East. He wanted to introduce himself to the Board and ask a few questions. He is a scientist and trained in analytical chemistry and engineered trained in laboratory instrumentation, author for African and Black History and moved to the North East from Downingtown Pennsylvania. He works as a scientist at the DuPont in Wilmington at the experimental station. Mr. Brewerton would like see if there is any innervation zones, such as regional, institutional, strategic enterprise zone or any grants for minority's or small business. And also, how he can contribute and give back to the community. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated she would suggest he have a conversation with Sandra Edwards, Director of the Cecil County Economic Development regarding state grants. Mayor Benson also recommended several institutions along with the local library for Mr. Brewerton to volunteer per his opening dialogue.

**-MISCELLANEOUS-**

Cecil County Economic Development

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised the Board, Assistant Town Administrator Grant Handley will be the representative from the Town to serve on the Cecil County Economic Development. A confirmation letter will be sent tomorrow to Sandra Edwards, Director of the Cecil County Economic Development.

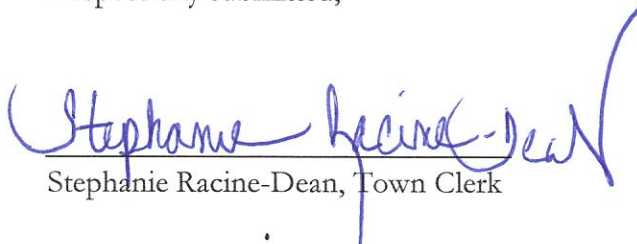
Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported Finance Associate II, Warita Beddell will be leaving her position here at the Town of North East. Her position will be posted in the Cecil Whig.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported to the Board, Billing Specialist II, Erin Sewell had 200 water customers on the shut-off list. She took it upon herself to call these customers directly to advise they have a water bill due or their water would be shut off. After payments were received by the due date, the list dropped to 40 customers.

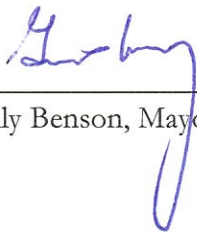
**-ADJOURNMENT-**

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

ATTEST:

  
Kelly Benson, Mayor Assistant Town  
Admin  
On Behalf of  
Mayor Benson