

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

August 12, 2026

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kelly Benson at 7:00 P.M. Present were Vice-Mayor Kimberly Davis and Commissioners Hilary Crothers-Moore, Catherine Bernard-Dutton. Also present were, Melissa B. Cook-Mac Kenzie, Town Administrator, Director of Planning, Betsy Vennell, Assistant Town Administrator Grant Handley. Absent from tonight's meeting, Commissioner Neil DeMatt, Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk.

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

-ROLL CALL-

Grant Handley called Roll Call. Neil DeMatt was absent from the meeting.

-APPROVAL OF AGENDA-

A motion to approve the August 12, 2026 agenda as presented was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers Moore and approved by all.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 22, 2026 regular meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Crothers Moore and seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis. Catherine Bernard-Dutton abstained from voting because she was absent at the July 22, 2026 meeting. The motion was approved.

-GUESTS-

None

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

Town Board Approve Minutes August 26, 2026

-PUBLIC HEARING-

None.

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None.

-INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2026-07-01: Code of Ordinance & Amendments

Cover Letter Code of Ordinance Updates

Chapter 1 – Edits

Chapter 2 - Edits

Chapter 4 - Edits Public Conduct Code

Chapter 5 - Edits Code Security and Provisions

Chapter 6 - Edits

Chapter 7 - Edits Code

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Renumbering

Grant Handley, Assistant Town Administrator reported that he and the Town Administrator have been working on revisions to the Code of Ordinances of the Town of North East. Ms. Cook-Macenzie gave the Board a draft of Ordinance 2026-07-01 and reported that on August 13, 2026, she would send to the Board's T-Drive, a brief introduction of the Ordinance and a revised draft of Ordinance 2026-07-01 with corrected format. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported the amendments will be forwarded to the Town's Attorney for verification on August 13, 2026 and are scheduled for adoption at their August 26, 2026 meeting.

-REPORTS-

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the July 22, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- Many annexation meetings
- Meetings regarding legal matters
- Meetings regarding various ordinances
- Human resources related meetings
- Toured the North East Middle School and North East High School.
- National Night Out: Special thanks to Police Chief Yates.
- North East Strolling Guide: Special thanks to the Assistant Town Administrator who has worked on this project for over six months.

Vice-Mayor Davis

Vice-Mayor Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the July 22, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- July 23, 2026, and July 30, 2026: Friendly Visitor Program
- Three dates serving lunch at the North East Branch Library to children
- National Night Out
- August 6, 2026: Participated at the 55+ EXPO held at Elkton High School
- August 8, 2026 Grand opening of the morning Glory Cafe

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the following meetings since the July 22, 2026 own Board Meeting:

- Worked at her regular job, and at the YMCA
- National Night Out
- Cecil County Fair
- Planning Commission meeting

Catherine Bernard-Dutton

- Ms. Bernard-Dutton reported that she has had many overtime hours working for Cecil County

Town Administrator

- North East 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan-Working with Town Staff, Mayor to address several agency comments which have come in regarding the Draft 2040 North East 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission has scheduled a meeting on August 31, 2026 to review the comments with the Town Board. Ms. Cook-MacKenzie forwarded the agency comments to the Town Board and let them know they should contact either she or the Director of Planning with any questions.
- Meeting with the Assistant Town Administrator for future staffing for the Town Hall.
- Water Plant Superintendent: Projects
- Finance Director: Getting ready for the audit
- Director of Planning: working on setting a fee schedule and application for underground utility permits, for utilities related to electric, telephone, fiber-optic and cable. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported that maintenance department, water department and town engineer will have key roles in the processing of these permits, as they typically affect the town roads, and water utility. It is hoped that a fee schedule can be proposed at the next Town Board meeting.

Assistant Town Administrator

- North East 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan-Working with Town Staff, Mayor to address several agency comments which have come in regarding the Draft 2040 North East 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan.
- Strolling Guide Maps: 2500 have been distributed
- Local Government Insurance Trust: A meeting with them to review Town compliance with insurance requirements, and to review the are of the damaged Town of North East sign.
- Old Town Lockup: Two visitors have requested a tour which he has met the visitors on site. Elk and North East River's Watershed Association will utilize the building for storing their supplies, and to have their monthly meetings at. Mr. Handley reported that he has been talking to a 4-H group about use of the building.
- Attended the North East Planning Commission meeting on August 4, 2026 for the Façade Grant applications, and to report on projects to the Planning Commission.
- Attended National Night Out
- Completed a Capital Funding Request to the State of Maryland for the North East Preserve
- Distributed the July 2026 Newsletter
- Worked on a sidewalk project.
- Payton Hardy, our summer intern, has completed her work with the Town.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Water Allocation Request: North East Developers, LLC., Chesapeake Club – 498 Equivalent Residential Units (ERU)

A motion to postpone Water Allocation Request, to North East Developers, LLC. was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Catherine Dutton and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

None

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Town Administrator

1. Mrs. Mac Kenzie thanked Betsy Vennell for attending this evening's meeting, and reported that Stéphanie Racine-Dean was absent due to being called out of town for an emergency.
2. Board Meeting Schedule: Months of November and December 2026

A motion to approve the following changes in the November 2026 Town Board schedule was made by Vice-Mayor Kim Davis:

The previously scheduled meeting Town Board meetings on Wednesday, November 11, 2026 and Wednesday, November 25, 2026 have been rescheduled, as follows:

1. Wednesday, November 4, 2026 First Town Board meeting in November
2. Wednesday, November 18, 2026 Second Town Board meeting in November.
3. The December meetings will remain as scheduled, with no changes.

The motion was seconded by Catherine Dutton and approved by all.

Mayor Benson

1. Cameras:

Mayor Benson reported that in an effort provide transparency and to curb rumors concerning whether the cameras installed in Town are flock cameras, Mayor Benson provided a Fact Sheet concerning the cameras in Town. Mayor Benson reiterated that the cameras installed along Main Street in Town are NOT flock cameras. Mayor Benson invited the public to pick up a "Fact Sheet" after the meeting closed.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

None.

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

Russell and Trista Polo, 4 North East Main Street, shared concerns regarding the delay in the opening of Morning Glory Cafe and stated that negative dialogue regarding Town processes was mentioned at the ribbon-cutting event. Ms. Polo stated for the record that she would prefer the Town to be more transparent in advertising the "good" that the Town is accomplishing.

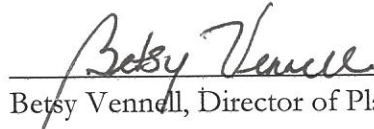
Mayor Benson replied that the Town has undergone a significant cultural shift toward becoming a more proactive player in the community, and that some community members may choose to overlook that shift. Mayor Benson stated that the Town was incredibly proactive in assisting with the opening of Morning Glory Cafe but is not at liberty to discuss the details of the process.

Russell and Trista Polo complimented the Town's maps and fee waivers and provided suggestions for additional map locations

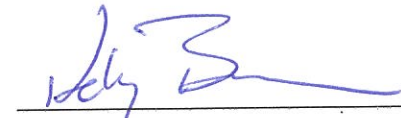
-ADJOURNMENT-

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 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Betsy Vennell, Director of Planning

ATTEST:


Kelly Benson, Mayor