MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

August 26, 2026

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kelly Benson at 7:01 P.M. Present were Vice-Mayor Kimberly Davis and Commissioner Hilary Crothers-Moore. Also present were, Police Chief Yates, Director of Finance Deanna Ittner, Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell, Water Superintendent Ron Carter, Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator Grant Handley and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Absent from tonight's meeting, Commissioners Catherine Bernard-Dutton and Neil DeMatt.

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

-ROLL CALL-
Town Clerk

-APPROVAL OF AGENDA-

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

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

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

-GUEST-

None

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2026-08-02: To Amend North East Zoning Ordinance. Article 7. Signs
Mrs. Betsy Vennell gave a presentation regarding Ordinance 2026-08-02; to amend the North East Zoning Ordinance Article:

- Article 3. Definitions: adding definitions pertaining to signs
- Article 7. Sign Regulations
- Amending off Premise Sign Regulations
- Adding Wayfinding signs to the Village Marine District
- Amending Reader Board signs to include both electronic and non-electronic regulations
- Adding Sign height regulations in the Village Commercial, Village Marine and Residential Office Districts
- Increasing the square footage allowance for ground signs in the Highway Commercial District

Mrs. Vennell stated after Ordinance 2026-08-02 is introduced at tonight's meeting, there will be a Planning Commission meeting, Tuesday, September 8, 2026 with a public hearing regarding Ordinance 2026-08-02. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation for approval, denial or approval with conditions. It then will be referred back to the Mayor & Commissioner's regular scheduled meeting, Wednesday, September 9, 2026, a public hearing is scheduled.

-ADOPTION 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, Table of Contents and Renumbering

A motion to postpone, Ordinance 2026-07-01, was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. Ordinance 2026-07001 will be presented at the next scheduled Board meeting, Wednesday, September 9, 2026.

-REPORTS-

Mayor Benson reported he was on a family vacation the week of August 16, 2026. He wanted to thank town staff for taking care of town matters while he was absent.

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the August 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- 8.26.2026 – Catching up with town staff on multiple conversations, highlights, human resources, annexation along with advertising & tourism. The town has a lot of different projects in the works right now. Mayor Benson thanked the town staff for their consistent effort and commending them on their ability to continue to produce on these projects, not to mention their daily workload

Vice-Mayor Davis

Vice-Mayor Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the August 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- 8.13.26 & 8.20.2026 – Friendly Visitor Program which is through the Cecil County Community Services
- 7.14.2026 – Served the final Summer 2026 free lunch to children at the North East Library Branch. Later in the evening, attended 2nd Fridays
- 8.21.2026 & 8.23.2026 – Attended English Second Language Program (ESL) preparation meetings. The new enrollment will start, Thursday, September 10th

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

Commissioner Crothers-Moore reported she attended the following meetings since the August 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- Daily job duties
- Working at the Y.M.C.A., "Splashing with Seniors Program"

Town Administrator

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the August 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- Attended the Civic League 75th Anniversary Luncheon, Monday, August 14th
- Attended a meeting with Yancey Hernandez, Director of Planning, Betsey Vennell and McCrone Engineering, David Strauss regarding Ms. Hernandez property at 107 West Cecil Avenue, Friday, August 18th. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated, Ms. Hernandez has a path moving forward
- Met with the town's attorney, David Beste along with the Director of Planning, Friday, August 26th on a number of topics. Later in the day, had an interview along with Chief Yates and Lieutenant Hickey with a potential candidate for the North East Police Department. He will be eligible to enter the Harford County Police Academy, October 26th
- Meeting with State Highway Administration (SHA), Thursday, August 24th regarding a flow-up with the North East Retail. There was a draft letter received on Monday and the town responded by Tuesday afternoon, this is progressing
- Responded back to Artesian Water Co. Inc.
- A lot of work regarding the Comprehensive Plan and the responses
- Working with the Director of Finance

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported to the Board, at the next town board meeting, Wednesday, September 9th, the Election Board is up for re-appointment. They have all agreed to serve on the committee for another term. This will be added as an agenda item.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported there will be guest at the next town board meeting, on behalf of the North East Fire Company, their attorney will be presenting bond documents. They are asking for the same, as the Board agreed to in 2013. This was the renovation of the fire

hall/ball room. The bond documents that will be presented, is for the new structure in Bay View, the corner of Theodore Road and Biggs Highway.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the August 12, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- Wonder Map distribution continues throughout the community
- MS4 outfall inspection processes are expected to begin next week
- August Newsletter completed and distributed
- Continued work on the North East 2040 Comprehensive Plan
- The Old Town Lock-Up continues to see increased use and interest
- Applied for a Maryland Arts Grant to support the creation of a mural at the North East Community Park Restroom
- Assisting the Mayor and Town Administrator as needed

Director of Finance

Director of Finance, Ms. Deana Ittner entered in the record the list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting:

- Check Register as of 7.20.26 to 8.20.27
- General Fund Balance Sheet as of 7.31.26
- Statement of Revenue and Expenditures ending to 7.1.26 to 7.31.26

Director of Planning and Zoning

Mrs. Betsy Vennell entered into the record the July 2026 Planning and Zoning Monthly report. In addition, Mrs. Vennell reported the following:

- Permit Fees: $535.00
- Escrow Fees: $8,000.00
- Public Hearing Annexation Resolution No. C-2026-05-01-A and Annexation Plan Resolution No. C-2026-05-02-A; P.L.L. Corporation, Lums Road. The Annexations were in effect this past week. There were notifications sent on Monday and the town has received feedback from the State of Maryland and Cecil County
- Elk River Manor Apartments are renovating the interior and exterior, sidewalk repairs, deck repairs or replacement, parking lot renovations and EV charging stations

Mrs. Vennell reminded the Board, the Comprehensive Plan meeting, Monday, August 31st at 6:30 p.m. with the North East Planning Commission.

Chief of Police

Police Chief Yates entered into the record the July 2026 North East Police Department Monthly Report: Chief Yates also reported:

- Very busy month of August with National Night Out, Triathlon & 2nd Fridays
- Friday, Augst 28th, North East Police Department will be giving out free school supplies at the Town of North East Police Department parking lot from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m., teaming-up with Lisa Tome from Chris's Community Cup

- Saturday, August 29th, Unicorn Quest from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Corporal Kelty will be doing the kid-print in front of Town Hall handing and Officer Jones will be walking down Main Street

Chief Yates reported he will be leaving at 12:00 p.m. Saturday, August 29th for Minneapolis, MN to represent the State of Maryland National Highway Safety Conference until Wednesday, September 2nd.

Water Superintendent
Mr. Ron Carter entered into the record the July 2026 the Jule 2026 Monthly Report for the North East Rolling Mill and Leslie Water Treatment Plants.

- All water filters are back on line, rebuilt and done
- SCADA is 93 percent range finished, going through odd and ends like alarms and verifying
- There was a leak on East Cecil Avenue/Mechanics Valley. The leak was in the middle of Cemetary Road. The water line that goes to Mechanics Valley Road, was running inside a pipe and rerouted into the storm drain which made it come running down the roadway of East Cecil Avenue
- Leslie Water Treatment Plant is still waiting on the poles to finish the fencing

-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 Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

North East Police Department – Promotions: Officer H. Custis to Corporal & Master Patrol Officer M. Kelty to Corporal
Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board, 2 promotions to Officer Hussan Custis and Master Parol Officer Matthew Kelty to Corporal.

A motion to approve the promotions of Officer Hussan Custis and Master Police Officer Matthew Kelty to Corporal, was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all.

Walter Allocation Request: LSM, LLC, 102 Riverside Drive, Elkton, Maryland: Requesting allocation for proposed Texas Road House, Sycamore Drive, North East, Maryland for 29 Equivalent Residential Units
Mrs. Cook-Mac-Kenzie presented to the Board, Water Allocation Request, to LSM, LLC for a proposed Texas Road house, Sycamore Drive, North East.

A motion to approve Walter Allocation Request to LSM, LLC., 29 equivalent residential units was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Melissa Cook-MacKenzie wanted to thank the Assistant Town Administrator for staying on the Cecil County Arts Council. This was a project that she initiated when the building next door was done. After discussing with the former EDC, she thought it would be awesome to have this done at the North East Community Park.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Requisition R7-00323 Republic Services $46,984.28 for Residential Services – Invoice June 2026

A motion to approve Resolution R7-00323 to Republic Services for Residential Services in the amount of $46,984.28 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Requisition R7-00324 Republic Services $48,870.91 for Residential Services – Invoice July 2026

A motion to approve Resolution R7-00324 to Republic Services for Residential Services in the amount of $48,870.91 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

Requisition R7-00400 Local Govt. Insurance Trust (LGIT) $104,.928.00 – Invoice Fiscal Year 2027

A motion to approve Resolution R7-00400 to Local Govt. Insurance Trust (LGIT) in the amount of $104,928.00 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis. Seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore 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 Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

ATTEST:

Kelly Benson, Mayor