MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

October 28, 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. Also present were, Director of Finance Deanna Ittner, Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell, 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, Neil DeMatt, Police Chief Stephen Yates and Water Superintendent Ron Carter

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 October 28, 2026 agenda as presented, was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers and approved by all.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes for the August 26, 2026 as presented, was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers.

Mayor Benson postponed the approval of minutes for, September 9, 2026, September 23, 2026 and October 14, 2026 as presented due to lack of quorum. These minutes will be presented and approved on Wednesday, November 4, 2026.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS-

Resolution No. 2026-10-02 Personnel – Revisions to the Town Clerk Job Description

- 16 Permits
- 2 Code of Ordinance Violations
- The North East Planning Commission unanimously voted to recommend the adoption of the North East Comp Plan following their public hearing on Tuesday, October 27th the recommendation is formally established under Resolution 2026-10-01. The Public Hearing for the Mayor and Commissioners will be Wednesday, November 18th
- Sign regulations that were approved a month ago, are in the process of being codified. Mayor Benson requested this project to be completed within the next several weeks

Mayor Benson complimented the Planning Office for all their hard work with the projects that have been maintaining. Mayor Benson asked the Director of Planning the outcome of the Comp Plan on zoning for the Middle School property. Mrs. Vennell stated, no action. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie stated herself along with the Director of Planning had great conversation on this topic regarding the pros and cons. Mayor Benson said he would like to be filled in where they landed.

-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 and approved by all.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Approval of On-Call Snow Removal Rates – Town of North East

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board, a notice from the Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East, are soliciting Letters of Interest from qualified and properly licensed contractors who wish to be placed on an approved on-call list for snow and ice removal services during 2026-2027 winter season.

Mayor Benson is asking for concurrence from the Board, from the information that was given regarding on-call snow removal rates for the Town, it was recommended that the administration can utilize as needed.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Vice-Mayor Davis wanted to thank the town staff for all their hard work preparing for the Annual Halloween Party. Not only do they make sure the children are having fun, put they are also making sure the volunteers are having a great time also.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie entered into the record on behalf of the Water Superintendent, Ron Carter, the September 2026 Monthly Report for the North East Rolling Mill and Leslie Treatment Plants.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported, for the Water Superintendent, the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) arranged a Comprehensive Performance Evaluation (CPE) for the Town of North East Water System. The objective of the CPE is to assist utility staff in optimizing the control of disinfection by-products through the identification of factors that may be limiting performance at the treatment plants and in the distribution system. They arrived on Tuesday, October 27th thru Friday, October 30th. Also, requested, the utility operations staff and administrator be available for individual interviews. The team is there to identify the daily operations of the plant, the relationship with herself and the Water Superintendent, budget, rate questions and policy. The overall purpose of them visiting, is to provide feedback regarding results of the evaluation with those who participated in the CPE.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the September 14, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- On October 20, I presented at the Maryland Chapter of the American Planning Association's biennial conference in Ellicott City
- On October 21, Mayor Benson, Amy, and I met with YSM and Site Studios to discuss Phase I design and engineering for the NE Preserve site
- Attended the ENERWA meeting on October 26. We are exploring a partnership to install a stormwater Best Management Practice (BMP) near the Community Garden
- On October 27, Congressman Harris visited the Town to tour the future site of the Rolling Mill Finished Water Pumping Station
- Today, attended the North East Elementary School Steering Committee meeting
- Timer modifications and other necessary repairs to the bathroom locks at the North East Community Park and Town Hall are scheduled to occur tomorrow
- The MS4 Annual Report is due October 31 and will be submitted this week

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 9.17.26 to 10.25.26
- General Fund Balance Sheet as of 9.30.26
- Statement of Revenue and Expenditures ending to 9.1.26 to 9.30.26

Director of Finance reported the Town has entered into an agreement with Santora CPA Group, Newark, Delaware, they are assisting the final audit with CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) (auditors for the town).

Director of Planning and Zoning

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

In the same afternoon I attended the meeting of the North East Board of Supervisors of Elections in order to give Oath of Office to our three current returning members. That evening, I attended The Hispanic Heritage Festival at Elkton High School to promote the ESL program I volunteer for.

- 10.3.2026 – For round two of Cecil Cares Day, I worked with Volunteers to clean up the beach area of Avalon Park in Charlestown. We also cleaned up the flower and plant beds around the Stage
- 10.9.2026 – Volunteered 6 hours to help with Open Enrollment for Medicare through State Health Insurance Assistance (SHIP) at Cecil County Department of Aging. In the evening, I attended the last Second Fridays for the season
- 10.23.2026 – Volunteered 6 hours to help with Open Enrollment for Medicare through State Health Insurance Assistance (SHIP) at Ceil County Department of Aging
- 10.24.2026 – I volunteered at the children's Annual Halloween Party at the North East Community Park. I manned one of the games and then was a judge and announcer for the Costume contest

Commissioner Crothers

Commissioner Crothers reported she attended the following meetings since the September 14, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- Splash with Seniors at the Y.M.C.A, Elkton
- 10.24.2026 – Volunteered at the children's Annual Halloween Party at the North East Community Park
- 10.27.2026 – Attended the North East Planning Commission meeting regarding the final review of the Comp. Plan

Town Administrator

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the September 14, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- 10.15.2026 - Meeting with the Town attorney regarding multiple items, these items are on-going
- 10.20.2026 - Met with the Christmas Parade Committee with another scheduled for Thursday the 29th at 5:00 p.m.
- 10.22.2026 - Continued interviewing for various positions, they are going well
- 10.22.20263 - Working with the Director of Planning on a Board of Appeals application along with their engineer to try to get the applicant in a better position
- Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie thanked the town staff and Commissioners for donating their time to the Annual Halloween Party which was held, Saturday, October 24th. It was a very well runed event
- Meeting with the Planning Commission and the Board of Appeals, Tuesday, October 27th regarding the zoning adjustment policy. This will be presented to the Board in the future

A motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-10-02: Revisions to the Town Clerk Job Description was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers and approved by all.

-INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES-

None

-REPORTS-

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported, at the request of a business owner here in Town, the town staff is looking into a resolution regarding the alley in back of West Street Village/Main Street businesses. The town administration is researching the ownership of the alley-way, which is in need of extreme repair. Mayor Benson would like to come to a solution to solve the problem for future years. The first step is to find out who actually owns the alley way and where the responsibility lies.

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the September 14, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- Met with town administration regarding the Cecil County Christmas Parade and the changes that will be occurring this year
- Various discussions regarding annexation
- Related conversations regarding the Chesapeake Club
- Several conversations regarding the North East Preserve one of which was on Wednesday, October 21st. The Assistant Town Administrator did a great job facilitating the meeting, with the Town and Engineers to figure out, methods that can be utilized to gain additional funding in the short & long term so this project can be brought to life.

Vice-Mayor Davis

Vice-Mayor Davis reported she attended the following meetings since the September 14, 2026 Town Board Meeting:

- 9.24.2026, 10.1.2026 & 10.8.2026– Friendly Visitor Program which is through the Cecil County Department of Community Services (DCS)
- 9.24.2026, 10.1.2026 & 10.8.2026– Taught English Second Language (ESL) class
- 10.2.2026 – As part of the Cecil Cares Day event I led a group of volunteers along with our Grant Writer, Amy Yackanech to make cards for our local veterans. These will be handed out on Veteran's Day at our North East VFW Veteran's Day breakfast.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported to the Board, she received a call today from a resident on Walnut Street. He wanted to let her to know, the Maintenance Department is awesome. Also, at the Annual Halloween Party, she was standing there speaking with the North East Police Officers, a resident came over and said thank you, you guys are doing a great job.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Requisition R7-00886 The Benecon Group – November Health Insurance Premiums Totally $68,895.64: Town's Portion $58,450.16 and Employee Portion $10,445.48

A motion to approve Resolution R7-00886 to Benecon for Novembers Premium in the amount of $68,895.64 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers and approved by all.

Requisition R7-00911 Republic Services $48,870.91 - Residential Services Invoice October 2026

A motion to approve Resolution R7-00911 to Republic Services for Residential Services in the amount of $48,870.91 was made by Commissioner Crothers, seconded by Vice-Mayor Davis and approved by all.

Requisition R7-00871 Elite Emergency Lights $34,628.70

A motion to approve Resolution R7-00871 to Elite Emergency Lights in the amount of $34,628.70 was made by Vice-Mayor Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers 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 and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

ATTEST:

Kelly Benson, Mayor

Town Board Approved Minutes November 4, 2026