

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2015

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the meeting room of the Community Services Building on September 22, 2015. Commissioner President Gordon Fronk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President Gordon Fronk, Commissioner Gordon Graves, Commissioner Carole Abruzzese, Town Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Lewis, Chief Patrick Maxwell, Public Works Superintendent, Scott Delude, and Town Attorney Brynja Booth.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to approve the minutes as distributed of September 8, 2015, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and motion carried.

The report of disbursements for August 2015 were distributed prior to the meeting. Commissioner Graves made a motion to file the disbursements for audit, Commission Abruzzese second the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS

Superintendent Delude presented the following public works report:

- Well #1 had an electric surge caused by a squirrel that had shorted out a transformer on Tilghman Street. The surge protector was damaged and power to Well #1 was lost for about 2 hours. The new surge protector will cost \$800.00.
- The Public Works Department has done an evaluation of the signs in town. Some were straightened and others were replaced. At least 100 signs needed some sort of repair.
- Tower #2 had a water leak in the past week caused by electrolysis on the bolts that hold the pipes together. The pipe bolts that failed were from the mid 1930's.
- A new culvert pipe was installed by public works at the Water's Church parking lot bordering Banks Street as the old pipe had holes in it and was no longer functional for drainage.
- The public works crew attended a class at the Trappe fire hall on pump maintenance and uses in reference to the town's water and waste system. The town's public works employees must complete 16 hours of training in both water and wastewater every year to keep their MDE licenses up-to-date.
- A neighboring town that is in the process of demolishing a small out building have come across the red, historic Oxford bricks. The manager of the town has offered to donate them to Oxford's fire department, if they can use them.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Maxwell presented the Police Report, which consisted of the following:

- 20 – Police information/service
- 1 – Alarm (set off by owner)
- 1 – Check the welfare of an individual
- 1 – Theft
- 3 – Assist the Fire Department

- 4 – Property checks

Chief Maxwell reported that the recent yacht club regatta went off without any problems and that the crowds were down due the inclement weather. He stated that he wanted to remind the town's residents that phone scams are still on the rise, with new ones coming out every day, and that no one should ever give any personal information out over the phone or by email. President Fronk also reminded everyone that IRS and tax authority notices are always in writing and are never conducted over the phone.

Chief Maxwell also reported that he and Superintendent Delude attended a meeting with the State Highway Administration in Easton in the past week in which they discussed the speed signs going into town and replacing the old, small speed signs with new, regular sized ones.

OXFORD FIRE COMPANY REPORT

President Fronk read the Oxford Fire Company report for the period of August 27 to September 10, 2015 as follows:

During this period, there were 5 fire calls: 1 building fire in Trappe, 2 boat rescue calls in Trappe, 1 dryer fire in Oxford and 1 transformer explosion in Oxford. 44 personnel participated with 30 personnel hours. During the same period there was 1 medical call for fire standby.

The Oxford Auxiliary Fall Rummage Sale will be Saturday, September 26. Clean out your closets, attics, and garages, and bring items to the fire station on Friday from 9 until 4. Then stop by on Saturday from 9 until noon to buy the treasures your neighbors donated.

The next Fire Company Breakfast will be Sunday, October 11, from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m.

OATH OF OFFICE

President Fronk invited Karen Livingston to come forward to be sworn in as a new member of the Oxford Parks and Recreation Committee. All warmly welcomed Karen to her new position.

NEW BUSINESS

President Fronk presented the opening of Bid #16-01 for a Skid Steer Loader. Commissioner Graves read aloud the following results: MidAtlantic Machinery \$41,747 and Folcomer Equipment \$42,300. Because the two bids were so close in price, it was agreed by the Commissioners to let Superintendent Delude review the two bids and report back to the Commissioners at their next meeting scheduled for October 13, 2015.

President Fronk presented the opening of Bid #16-02 for a Mini Excavator. Commissioner Abruzzese read aloud the following results: MidAtlantic Machinery \$58,054; Folcomer Equipment \$52,363; United Rentals \$62,385. It was again agreed upon by the Commissioners to allow Superintendent Delude to review the results of this bid as well and report back his finding to the Commissioners at their next scheduled meeting.

LETTERS AND REQUESTS

Lewis stated that she had received a request from the Oxford Business Association to hold a Polar Bear Dip in the Tred Avon River, sometime in January or February of next year, as a possibility of bringing in business to the town. The Tred Avon Yacht Club has been approached and has agreed that the OBA could host the venue on their property. The OBA has asked what approval would be necessary from the town to hold the event. If the event were to be held on an area such as The Strand, the OBA would need to provide a certificate of insurance for the event. However, since it looks like the event is going to be held on the private property of the yacht club, and not government property, permission from the town would not necessarily be needed for the event, but the town would like the OBA to provide a copy of the certificate of insurance prior to the event.

ATTORNEY

Attorney Booth reported that she had sent out requests of proposals to the local banks for the interim financing of the WWTP project, in which she is seeking an 8.8 million dollar line of credit, the proposed cost of the upgrade. She added that she worked with the town's bond council to add public finance requirements to the proposal in order to make sure the banks that are competing are knowledgeable in this area and to insure that they understand the obligations. While the project is underway, local financing through a line of credit is going to be necessary, which in turn would be reimbursed through the grant and loan process, funds of which have already been committed by the USDA and MDE. Attorney Booth stated she would have the proposals from the banks to present at the next Commissioners meeting in October.

Attorney Booth also reported that she had attended a workshop with the Historic District Commission in the past week. The HDC has been discussing the concept of demolition by neglect. Many states have addressed this issue which allows enforcement in the historic district whereby there is willful or voluntary neglect of properties. The commission had turned to Attorney Booth for her thoughts on the subject. Attorney Booth stated she had put together a draft ordinance based on Maryland law for the commission to look at and discuss. The draft ordinance, if proposed by the Historic District Commission, would be an amendment to the current Zoning Ordinance, and as such would come before the Commissioners for review, public hearing, and approval through the normal ordinance adoption process. The ordinance would act as a supplement to the property maintenance code, only applicable in the Historic District, and work as a mechanism that would allow Administrator Lewis to interact with the owners of any property in question. Grant funding may be available to help property owners who may not have the funding to keep up their property. The Historic District Commission would work as an advisory board only. Any problems would have to go through Administrator Lewis and any legal enforcement would have to go through the Commissioners. Administrator Lewis added that the purpose for adopting something like this would be to prevent a building from being intentionally neglected to the point of needing demolition.

CLERK COMMENTS

Administrator Lewis reported that in reviewing her paperwork, it was found that the minutes of June 9, 2015 did not include a paragraph identifying a vote that was taken on Ordinance 1507 to Repeal Ordinance Number 1405 and to set the new water and sewer Rates for the town, commencing July 1, 2015. The audio of that meeting was reviewed by herself and Booth and the following was found to be left out of the minutes: "President Abruzzese asked if there was a motion on Ordinance 1507. Commissioner Fronk made a motion to adopt Ordinance 1507: An ordinance of the Town of Oxford to repeal Ordinance Number 1405 and to set new Water and Sewer rates for the Town, commencing July 1, 2015. Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. President Abruzzese request the Clerk address the rate breakdown in upcoming town communications." Lewis asked the Commissioners to approve this paragraph amendment to the June 9, 2015 minutes. Commissioner Graves made the motion to approve the amendment to the minutes, which was seconded by Commissioner Abruzzese, and unanimously carried, with all in favor.

Lewis gave an update on the recent staff visit from the Maryland DHCD concerning the three grants that were submitted for economic development. They came to look at the potential projects and she felt the visitor was receptive to the proposed grant requests.

Lewis stated the town is still waiting on permit approval from the MDE and Army Corp of Engineers for the new boat landing and with any luck the town will hear something in the next two months. Once that has been received, the town can go ahead and put out a bid for construction of the landing.

Lewis announced that she had submitted a small grant to the Department of Transportation as they have a chunk of money available to anyone who applies for it and will use for roads. Any possible money received from this grant could be used towards paving one of the streets in town.

A Request for Proposals for the development of a Strategic Economic Development Plan for the Historic Commercial District has been advertised in the local paper and eight requests for the bid package have been received. September 30th is the last date sealed proposals will be accepted. Administrator Lewis

noted that she would have 12 days to review any proposals received and would present her findings at the Commissioner's next meeting by way of a spread sheet.

Lewis reported that she had received an announcement that grants are being accepted for strategic planning for working waterfronts, with a deadline of October 30. Lewis stated she would research the grant and work on a proposal for economic planning for the town's waterfronts and marinas. Any funding received is for studies only, not construction.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Graves reported that he had attended a recent OBA meeting. Ian Fleming has been elected as the new President of the OBA and Susan Campbell the Treasurer. Commissioner Graves also reported that he had attended the Healthy Waters Round Table meeting on September 10, 2016.

In reference to the Oxford Museum, Commissioner Graves noted that \$11,000 was raised at the recent and very successful Piga-Figa-Licious... The museum will be hosting a WWII exhibit beginning in October with photos from past resident and war photographer, Norman Harrington.

President Fronk reported that the John Wesley Church on Oxford Road has come to life with lots of activities. However, he was concerned about the 50 mile per hour zone on Oxford Road and its effect on the people getting in and out of their cars in front of the church. Chief Maxwell stated he would talk with David Edwards of the State Highway Administration as to if anything can be done to reduce the hazards in that area.

President Fronk also reported on the twinning/sistering relationship between the Town of Oxford and Wells Next to the Sea, a small village located on the Norfolk Coast of England. He noted that he and Ian Fleming met with Ian Scott, via skype, who was in Wells at the time, along with Alison Cracknell, a resident of Wells who is active on the Wells twinning committee and reported that they have four young sailors who are looking to travel to the US and take in some culture along with doing some sailing. Though the committee will be paying for their round trip fare, the children will need to contribute by doing work to earn money to apply towards their trip. Host families here in Oxford will provide room and board. The plan is to begin the project in July of 2016 in hopes of tying the project into the young sailor's schooling while their school is still in session, as this way they can be insured under their school's policy. The intention is for students from this area to be able to visit Wells towards the end of the summer. The Oxford committee will be working on an application for students in this area, seeking young sailors with sailing experience. An exchange of chefs is being coordinated by Ian Fleming; also an exchange of triathletes is being considered.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Peter Dunbar stated that the next Talbot County Economic Development meeting would be held on Thursday, October 1, at the Robert Morris Inn and encouraged the Commissioners to attend. He asked about the status the WWTP project and was told by Attorney Booth that the design work is 90% completed and is still on schedule to begin construction next summer.

Mr. Dunbar also announced that the Oxford Conservation Park would be holding a bidders meeting on Sept. 23, with fall construction of the park still anticipated.

Resident Toby Frey asked about the possibility of having the local UStar bus available to pick up Oxford residents as he had seen in the local newspaper a request from someone living in Oxford who was seeking transportation into Easton. Both Commissioner Abruzzese and Administrator Lewis said they would look into it.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis