

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2016

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the meeting room of the Community Services Building on April 26, 2016. Commissioner President Gordon Fronk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

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

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Graves made a motion to approve the minutes of April 12, 2016 as distributed, Commissioner Abruzzese seconded the motion, all were in favor, and motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Abruzzese to file the reported disbursements for March 2016 for audit, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS

Superintendent Delude presented the public works report as follows:

- The public works crew helped to rehab the Oxford Community Center's flagpole by trenching a line for electric and putting down a marble chip base with decorative pavers.
- The Town of Oxford had some patching done before Oxford Day at a cost of \$4,200 to repair 7 asphalt spots in town as a result of water leaks this year. The public works department also repaired over 50 pot holes as a result of this past winter's weather.
- The public works department rented a lift and did a days trimming in town park to get rid of the dead branches that may be a hazard. Six dump truck loads of dead branches were removed from the park.
- Oxford Day ran smoothly for the public works except for the stalling the of parade car.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Maxwell presented the police report which consisted of the following:

- 1 – 911 hang-up
- 1 – Lost property
- 5 – Property checks
- 1 – Assist the fire department
- 6 – Assist other police agencies
- 2 – Suspicious persons

Chief Maxwell reported that Oxford Day went smoothly and that the number of people attending was down, possibly due to the weather.

OXFORD FIRE COMPANY REPORT

President Fronk read aloud the Oxford Fire Company Report for the period of March 25th to April 14th, 2016, as written by David Baker, Secretary, Oxford Fire Company, as follows: During this 3 week period there were 5 fire calls: OFC was dispatched and cancelled en route on 2 of the calls; 1 was a false alarm; 1 was a building fire in Cambridge; and 1 was for an overturned vehicle on Route 50.

During the same period there were 4 calls: 1 patient transported to Easton Memorial, 2 patient refusals, and 1 for a medical device activated by mistake. There were 19 personnel participating, 2.2 hours, 11.5 personnel hours and 32 miles traveled.

The Oxford Fire Company formally announced The Auxiliary has dropped "Ladies" from its name as they have accepted several gentlemen as members. The OFC sale at the Causeway parking lot on Oxford Day was very successful. There are no statistics on how many meals were served but the company thanks all who stopped by. The Fire Company May breakfast will be Sunday, May 10th from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.; all are welcome.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Fronk revisited **Resolution 1608: Walker Annexation of Single Lot to address failing septic**. Attorney Booth addressed the Commissioners stating that at the last Commissioners' meeting the resolution had been introduced. This involves a residential property, that is already developed, which has a failing system. A public hearing has been scheduled for May 24th. Attorney Booth noted that notices have been sent to the state and county agencies and that Ray Clark, the county's engineer, has drafted for the town a water and sewer map amendment. The Talbot Co. Planning Commission will consider the annexation on May 4 and the Talbot County Council will consider it on May 12. Both agencies are required to approve it. Attorney Booth stated she would be attending both of those hearings along with the Walkers in case either group has any questions. Attorney Booth added that the county has been very helpful in working with the town.

President Fronk asked Administrator Lewis for her comments on the Causeway Park Stormwater Initiative project. Lewis presented the Commissioners with a copy of a letter which will be distributed to the surrounding residents affected by this project. The letter basically states that an application to the Wetlands and Waterways Program of the Water Management Administration for a permit to create bio retention area in the public park area near the surrounding property owner's properties has been submitted. This would involve the creation of four proposed bio retention areas, which include areas that the state has already designated as wetlands and state permits are required to work in wetland areas. The orange flags in these areas delineate where the state has identified wetlands. Currently the town only has grant funding for the engineering of the project, but the permitting process has been included in this phase in order to be ready should construction grant funding be awarded. The project itself will also include the replacement of the existing tide gate and a new tide gate at Caroline Street. The engineering of the project has not yet been completed. The purpose of this work is to try to slow the water that heads towards the Causeway parking lot and the area of the pincushion to allow for proper drainage and reduce flooding during heavy rain events.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance 1609 – Oxford Floodplain Management Ordinance was brought to the table for discussion. Attorney Booth explained that the Talbot County flood insurance rate maps will go into effect on July 20th. FEMA has done the advertising and in order to insure the town and the citizen's continue participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, the town is required to adopt a new floodplain ordinance prior to July 20. MDE took the town's existing ordinance and put in their proposed changes. Booth noted that both she and Administrator Lewis reviewed MDE's proposed language and compared the ordinance with the zoning ordinance and stormwater management ordinance for consistency. There were a few changes by the town, including changing the Flood Protection Elevation to 3' above Base Flood Elevation, which is currently between 2' and 3'. Prohibition of fill that creates adverse impacts on neighboring properties has been incorporated. This is a restriction which existed in older version but was removed by the state at the last update and the town is trying to reintroduce it. Booth stated the ordinance was ready for introduction if the Commissioners are ready, which will allow for advertising of a public hearing. Booth had created a clean version of the ordinance along with a red line version, which she reviewed with the Commissioners. Lewis added that the document also adopts the floodplain maps, which must be in approved prior to July 1, 2016 in order to meet the federal requirement or it could endanger current residential flood insurance policies. Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to introduce Ordinance 1609 – Oxford Floodplain Management Ordinance for the Town of Oxford; the motion was seconded by President Fronk; all were in favor and the motion carried. A Public Hearing on the Ordinance was scheduled for May 24, 2016 at 6 pm.

Commissioner Graves read aloud **Ordinance 1610 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD ADOPTING A GENERAL/ENTERPRISE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2016 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2017, AND ESTABLISHING A TAX RATE OF \$.2952 PER \$100 OF ASSESSED REAL PROPERTY VALUE**. Administrator Lewis explained that the .2952 was last year's tax rate and she was proposing to keep the same rate. She also presented the Commissioners with a working draft of the FY 2016 and the FY 2017 budget so the Commissioners could review them together. Lewis reviewed line items of the drafted FY 2017 Budget including Capital Improvement purchases for 2017 with the Commissioners, with the major improvement for 2017 being the repaving and replacing of water lines at Tread Avon, Caroline, and West Street, along with paving of the Tilghman Street parking lot after completion of construction of the new boat ramp. In addition, she added a new line item for Miscellaneous Donations, to allow for the small request the Commissioners sometimes receive during the year. She also point out donations to the several local non-profit entities, which the town supports on an annual bases, including the Fire Department, Community Center, and the Museum.

Lewis stated that although there appears to be a large negative balance for the FY2017 budget, most of this difference is offset by underspent funds in FY 2016 and depreciation funds, along with anticipated reimbursement of funds spent on the MEWS acquisition, resulting in no major reduction in savings. Lewis also

identified the many grants that are straddling the FY 2016 and 2017 budget, which are benefiting the town again with little reduction in savings. Commissioner Graves made a motion to introduce Ordinance 1610, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Abruzzese, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A Public Hearing on the Ordinance was scheduled for May 24, 2016 at 6 pm.

President Fronk read aloud **Ordinance 1612 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD AMENDING GENERAL AND ENTERPRISE BUDGET ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE 1506 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2015 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2016 TO ADJUST CERTAIN LINE ITEMS AND TO RE-APPROPRIATE CERTAIN FUNDS.** Lewis stated that several line items had been readjusted to represent actual expenditures and income, along with grant matches and other items throughout the year resulting in a positive at the end of the year, which would be carried forward as prior year funds. Commissioner Graves made a motion to introduce Ordinance 1612, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Abruzzese, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A Public Hearing on the Ordinance was scheduled for May 24, 2016 at 6 pm.

Commissioner Abruzzese read aloud **Ordinance 1611 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO REPEAL ORDINANCE NUMBER 1507 AND TO SET NEW WATER AND SEWER RATES FOR THE TOWN, COMMENCING JULY 1, 2016.** Commissioner Abruzzese noted that this ordinance would increase the water/sewer rate by another 7%. Administrator Lewis added that in the beginning of the WWTP upgrade funding she had sent a multiyear budget to USDA to demonstrate how the town will be able to reach the necessary rates to pay for the new plant operations. Currently the town is running about \$50,000 behind where they need to be and she expects the town will probably have to do the 7% increase for both water and sewer at least one more year as the water is still running in the negative. The town is continuing to make loan payments on the arsenic system along with having to pay for the replacement media, which is running an additional \$40 to \$50k a year. Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to introduce Ordinance 1610, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A Public Hearing on the Ordinance was scheduled for May 24, 2016 at 6 pm.

LETTERS AND REQUESTS

President Fronk read a thank you note from David Baker for the donation the Commissioners made towards Oxford Day. Commissioner Graves asked if the Commissioners should have some kind of recognition for all those who helped on Oxford Day. Administrator Lewis suggested that a resolution be made and/or an invitation sent to those involved in Oxford Day to the town's volunteer dinner.

President Fronk read aloud a letter from the young Oxford sailors who will be taking part in the exchange with a group of young British sailors as part of the "Sister City" program linking Oxford, MD with Wells-Next-To-The-Sea, England. President Fronk explained that the children are working on raising funds for their trip which is going to cost around \$4,500. The sailors, recognized as Madi Norris, Zadoc Bond, and Emma Johnson, were asking if the town would contribute to help with the airfare so that they could participate in this exchange program. Administrator Lewis stated that the children would be attending the Commissioner's May 10th meeting to talk with them. She had heard the group would also include one escort for a total of 4 people. She added that she was going to earmark some of the miscellaneous donation money in the 2017 budget so that \$1000 would be available for this request.

Lewis went over a letter that had been sent from town resident Edwin Miller who was interested in the town looking into renting an outside ice rink in the winter. His letter included some suggestions and costs involved in providing the outside rink. Lewis noted that she was not sure it was possible in the proposed budget, as the cost would be around \$11,000 for 3 days, but that it was something to keep in mind for Christmas in the Park.

Lewis went over an email she had received from area resident Heinrich Schmitz concerning the little orange flags seen throughout town, stating she had contacted Delmarva Power and discovered their environmental department was in the process of doing wetlands delineation in areas where they needed to do tree trimming, as permitting was now part of their process. They did state they intended to do tree trimming this year.

President Fronk reminded the group of last meeting's request from the OBA to help with the Plein Air event. Commissioner Abruzzese moved to donate \$1000 to the OBA for help with their expenses for the event, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

ATTORNEY REPORT No comments given at this time.

CLERK COMMENTS

Lewis gave an update on the Oxford façade program. Several requests have been received for participation in the project. The first request has been processed for the Robert Morris Inn, for the painting the exterior of their building. A portion of the work has been done, but the owner is holding off on completing the entire project waiting for approval of the grant funding. The total cost originally estimated at \$31,000 is going to be closer to

\$40,000. Information on the Robert Morris Inn project was sent to the OBA, HDC, and MD Historic Trust for their review and comments. MD Historic Trust is basically the state's review panel for the façade grant funds, but the Commissioners make the final approval. At this time, she was requesting a grant of \$15,000 from the state awarded pot of \$50,000. Lewis noted that she was working with several other commercial property owners at this time and had a running budget amounting to an estimated 50% match of grant funds for all the requested projects. Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to approve the request for \$15,000 to Ian Fleming and the Robert Morris Inn for the façade improvements, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lewis reported that the Talbot Bank called to say they have merged with CNB, a long time sister company. They had determined it would be in their best interest to house both under the same corporation and had chosen to switch both to the new name, Shore United Bank. Attorney Booth added that this would strengthen the bank and increase their legal lending amount.

Administrator Lewis requested an executive session for a contract negotiation and personnel matters.

Lewis pointed out a new painting that was lying against the wall of the meeting room. Commissioner Graves elaborated that the painting, done by Howard Lapp, was a donation made to the Oxford Museum, and that the museum felt the town building seemed was a logical place for it, as there were already several of his works hanging in the meeting room.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Local resident Toby Frey discussed the town's boat ramp and offered suggestions to stabilize the ramp before work begins this fall.

There being no further business, President Fronk made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting to go into executive session for contract negotiation and personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abruzzese, all were in favor, and the meeting was closed at 7:47 pm.

The Commissioners regular meeting reconvened at 8:15 pm. Lewis requested a recommendation on the obtaining the services of Roy Geiser, CPA and TGM Group LLC to perform the FY 2016 Annual Town Audit. Commissioner Abruzzese motioned to obtain TGM Group LLC as the accounting firm to prepare the Town's next audit, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

There being no further business Commissioner Abruzzese motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 pm, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis, Administrator - Clerk/Treasurer

“In accordance with Section 10-508(d) of the State Government Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, a written statement of the closed session is attached to the official minutes of the Commissioners of Oxford and maintained in the minute book in the Town Office.”