

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 10, 2016

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the meeting room of the Community Services Building on May 10, 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 26, 2016 as distributed, Commissioner Abruzzese seconded the motion, all were in favor, and motion carried.

President Fronk stated that following the regular meeting of April 26, 2016, the Commissioners convened a closed session for contract negotiation and a personnel matter. Those present were Commissioners Abruzzese, Graves and Fronk, Clerk Lewis and Attorney Booth. A written statement setting forth the vote of the Commissioners and the topics that were discussed will be filed within the minute's book of the Commissioner meetings.

GUEST

The three members representing the Oxford/Wells Sailors exchange, Madi Norris, Zadoc Bond, and Emma Johnson, along with family members and Oxford/Wells Sistering representative Ian Scott were introduced to the Commissioners. The youngsters briefed the Commissioners on their individual sailing experiences and the opportunities they felt this program would afford them. They explained their funding needs to support their trip to England, along with the current fundraising efforts and their intent to be able to leave funding for the next generation of young sailors in 2018. The Commissioners offered assistance with their travel cost. Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to support the Oxford/Wells Sailors with \$1000 towards their goal of \$3300, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. Ian Scott remarked that he has been overwhelmed by the enthusiasm, energy, and skills of the young sailors and added that the Port of Wells supported their sailors with a similar amount.

PUBLIC WORKS

Superintendent Delude presented the public works report as follows:

- The fire sprinkler system has been improved with replacement of all inferior piping, which has had two recent leaks. The new piping is 400 percent thicker than the original and should last for 50 years.
- The 2015 Consumer Confidence Report has been done for the water system. Everything reported is within EPA guidelines and no corrections are needed at this time.
- Public Works in conjunction with the Town office have developed a process to do water audits on an individual meter that will identify excess use at specific time in helping to identify why a user has an excessive usage on their quarterly reading. The proposed budget for 2017 includes replacement of our outdated computer system, which currently must be driven around town to register the readings. The new system will be totally automated and will feed readings from the water tower installed equipment directly to the office, removing the need to drive through town with a computer and allowing for instant

water audits, which will further reduce the time necessary to identify major water leaks. When looking at replacement cost for the computer, it was determined switching to a reading system mounted on the water towers was similar in price and more cost effective.

- Public Works has requested estimates to replace trees at Town Park. At least 8 large trees have been removed over the last 10 years due to aging or damage. In an effort to rebuild the canopy, we have requested large trees that will thrive in the park.

POLICE REPORT

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

- 10 - Police Information & Services
- 2 - Assist other Police Agencies
- 1 - Check the Welfare
- 3 - Assist the Fire Department
- 1 - Intoxicated Person
- 2 - Property Checks
- 1 - Suspicious Vehicle (ID - Resident)
- 1 - Aid to Sick & Injured

Chief Maxwell reminded residents that there are numerous ongoing scams by phone and email and cautioned providing any responses to these request and recommended blocking the phone number or email address.

OXFORD FIRE COMPANY REPORT

President Fronk read aloud the Oxford Fire Company Report for the period of April 15 to 28, 2016, as written by David Baker, Secretary, Oxford Fire Company, as follows: During this 3 week period there were 6 Fire calls: OFC was dispatched and cancelled en route on 3 of the calls; 1 was a False Alarm; 1 was a gas leak in Cambridge; and 1 was for medical assist. During the same period there were 4 Medical calls: 2 patient transported to Easton Memorial, 2 patients treated and refused transport. The Fire Company breakfast Sunday May 8th had 217 customers; the next breakfast will be Sunday June 12th from 8:00 to 11:00 AM.

Lewis added that there was a substantial commercial fire in Cambridge recently and if you look closely at picture found in the newspaper, you will see three of our Public Works employees, responding as Oxford Fire Fighters, working the fire from the roof.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Attorney Booth gave an update on **Resolution 1608: Walker Annexation of Single Lot to address failing septic**, stating all state and county agencies have been notified, we received a favorable recommendation from the Maryland Department of Planning, we have received unanimous recommendation from Talbot County Planning Commission to waive zoning which is a legal requirement to put it in Oxford's R1 zoning, and she attended the Talbot County Council meeting today where they have agreed to grant the waiver and will be preparing a resolution for this purpose. In addition, Ray Clark, Talbot County Engineer, is working on an amendment to the Water & Sewer Comprehensive Plan, another requirement. Booth said everyone involved has been very cooperative, Talbot County has expedited everything in an effort to get this done, and it has been a very pleasant experience. Booth will attend the Oxford Planning Commission meeting scheduled for May 17 and reminded the Commissioners they have a Public Hearing scheduled for May 24 on the resolution. In response to a question, she stated all cost including legal fees concerning this process are covered by funds deposited by the annexation requestor and there is no cost to the town citizens in association with the annexation.

Regarding **Ordinance 1609 – Oxford Floodplain Management Ordinance** which is scheduled for a Public Hearing in front of the Commissioners on May 24, Lewis noted the Planning Commission would be reviewing this ordinance at the same meeting as the resolution above on May 17 and that both she and Booth would attend.

President Fronk asked Lewis to provide information in regards to revisions previously circulated to **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**, which is also has a scheduled Public Hearing on May 17th. She noted that an advertisement was placed for a potential hire of a Public Works operator with a 5a WWTP license in anticipation of the construction phase of the WWTP upgrade and the cost for this position has been incorporated into the budget. Additionally, she moved the acquisition funds for the MEWS from the proposed budget for FY 2017 to FY 2016 as it appears the closing might take place prior to yearend.

It was noted that both President Fronk and Commissioner Graves could possibly have a conflict with the meeting scheduled on May 24, 2016. As there are several advertised scheduled hearings for that evening, it was decided the hearings would be held and in addition, the Commissioners would preemptively schedule a second meeting on May 26 with an assured quorum to address the ordinances. The Public Hearings on the ordinances would remain open until the second meeting and action of the Commissioners.

President Fronk stated that **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** was also scheduled for a Public Hearing on May 24, 2016.

Fronk asked Lewis if she had any comments with regards to **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**, also scheduled for a Public Hearing on May 24, 2016. Lewis stated that in reference to the items in 1610 above, that she had shifted a few items between current year and proposed year, mainly because we had several grant items straddling the June-July time frame, with the only substantial item being the acquisition funds for the MEWS to accommodate the possible closing in June.

Attorney Booth updated the Commissioners with regards to the MEWS, stating the town had received final approval on the grant funds from the state and as there is no loan involved, she intends to schedule the closing as soon as possible, based on availability of the seller or her representatives. Booth will coordinate with President Fronk on the closing date once the title company has contacted the seller.

Commissioner Abruzzese, with regards to the budget, noted that the Town makes annual contributions to several of the Oxford non-profits, and although she realizes it is appreciated, she would like to have some communications from the organizations regarding both the need for and the use of the funds received. Lewis stated that she does receive request from some organizations and others provide their annual reports, in addition, she thought it might be appropriate in the future to invite them to a meeting in the early spring prior to budget time to discuss their individual needs. Abruzzese stated that she was concerned that the possible reduction in funds for the Community Center might be unexpected, as she believed it funded general operations. Lewis stated she would get some clarification and in the meantime recommended increasing the amount back to a \$10,000 contribution within the budget to assure necessary funding was in place.

Commissioner Abruzzese asked staff if they had done any further research on the proposal that had been presented concerning a temporary fix at the Tilghman Street boat ramp. Lewis stated that she and Delude has looked it over and realized the work would most likely require a DNR permit, and as we currently have a good permit to do the proposed construction it did not make sense to attempt to acquire another, endangering the first permit and it would be unlikely we would receive the permit before fall as the last one took nearly six months to acquire.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Abruzzese explained that the volunteers currently rehabbing the John Wesley Church on the Oxford Road have requested assistance from the town by way of a donation of culvert piping. The farmer behind the church is providing some land for parking off Evergreen Road and the county has offered to install the culvert in order to allow access to the area. Lewis stated she had discussed it with Delude and there was surplus plastic piping that is used on occasion, but it is something that has been around for a while. Lewis added that the current parking situation was a hazard to Oxford residents and assisting them in moving the parking off the state road would benefit all involved. The Commissioners agreed that parking along the state road in this area was dangerous for both the volunteers and people driving the road and approved the in-kind donation of culvert pipe as requested.

Lewis presented a Resolution for The Premium Only Plan to approve the currently used Cafeteria Plan for the employee benefits, which is the program that allows for pretax deductions per federal and state standards. Commissioner Abruzzese made a motion to approve the resolution, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

LETTERS AND REQUESTS None at this time.

ATTORNEY None at this time.

ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK-TREASURER

Commissioner Fronk inquired into the current plan to stabilize the MEWS building after acquisition. Lewis stated that there was \$30,000 in the FY 2017 Budget for this purpose, with the intention of first securing the building to prevent small animals from entering and then doing cosmetic painting to the façade to improve the street view. Fronk requested that planning for repairs to the columns and façade painting be put on the forefront so the town would be ready to take action once the closing is final. Lewis stated they had the original quotes for the columns and would update those along with seeking quotes for façade painting immediately.

Lewis stated that she had been contacted by Popes Inn requesting to hold a fundraiser for Hospice at their location on June 3, 2016. Due to space restraints on their lot, they would like to close the road in front of their property, using it and a small portion of the adjacent parking lot for the 3 hour event. Lewis reminded the Commissioners she had circulated a map, along with the concept and required steps and regulations they would be responsible for, by email prior to the meeting and had spoken with Chief Maxwell regarding procedure. All Commissioners were in agreement with the temporary road closing for the purpose of holding the Hospice fundraiser.

Lewis added that in addition to the advertisement currently running for the Public Works position in preparation for upgrade to the WWTP, that an RFP had been advertised for replacement of the HVAC in the current building, which is scheduled in the FY 2017 budget and partially funded with grant money from Maryland Energy.

Lewis requested a future closed session meeting to discuss personnel prior to June 30, 2016.

PUBLIC COMMENTS None presented.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis, Administrator - Clerk/Treasurer