

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**November 14, 2017**

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the meeting room of the Community Services Building on November 14, 2017. Commission President Carole Abruzzese called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

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

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Graves made a motion to approve the minutes of October 24, 2017 as distributed, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor, and motion carried.

Commissioner Fronk made a motion to accept the disbursements as emailed for October 2017. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves, all were in favor, and motion carried.

**MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Superintendent Delude reported the following:

- A water line leak was reported at 103 Riverview Avenue caused by an electric line installation that had hit the town's water main and storm water line. The public works crew is working with a contractor to cover the cost of the repair.
- A new electric gate is being installed at the public works entrance for security and controlled access to the town's water and waste water facility. The new gate will open and close automatically as needed by personnel.
- The programming system in two of the town's lift stations for the running of the pumps was replaced. The town uses a transducer to calculate the high and low water in the town's stations and this, in turn, tells the pumps when to turn on and off. These systems have been in the stations for about 10 years and were in need of replacement. Cost of the replacement system is \$1,267.
- The public works crew has started construction on a new roof for the lab in the town shop. The old roof is showing signs of leakage and is not part of the new construction project. The town will be using the lab for another couple of years and then it can be turned into storage after the new waste water treatment plant has been put online.

Commissioner Fronk asked Superintendent Delude if he could look at filling in an area of the street near the end of W. Division and Morris Street. Delude will contact SHA as it is in the states road area.

**POLICE REPORT**

Chief Maxwell reported the following:

- 16 – Police information – service calls
- 3 – Alarms
- 1 – Court
- 1 – Patrol check
- 1 – Check the welfare
- 1 – Fraud
- 2 – Assist other police agencies
- 5 – Suspicious persons (ID)

Chief Maxwell reported that Halloween evening went well with no issues and that the crowds were down significantly as compared to past years. The Chief asked that the town residents assist the Oxford Police Department in collecting toys for Toys for Tots. Toys can be dropped off at Fred Frederick Chrysler Dodge Jeep and Ram in Easton. This is a part of the Marine Corps Program. Chief Maxwell stated that his father had once been a Marine and that this particular program was close to his heart. He requested permission from the Commissioners to place his request on the town's website and facebook page as well. It was pointed out to Chief Maxwell that the OCC was also collecting toys for the Toys for Tots program and also had a drop off box at the community center. Chief Maxwell stated that either place would be appropriate to drop off toys.

#### **OXFORD FIRE COMPANY REPORT**

The Oxford Fire Company report was given by Oxford Volunteer Fireman, Thomas Ray. Mr. Ray reported that the recent Antiques Sale, held during the Waterfowl Festival Weekend, was well received. The fire company's annual Breakfast with Santa Claus has been scheduled to be held on Sunday, December 3, from 8 to 11 a.m. Also planned is an Oyster and Ham Dinner on Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

President Abruzzese revisited **Ordinance 1707 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND CHAPTER 11 OF THE TOWN CODE TITLED “HARBOR MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE: TO ADD SECTION 11.14 TITLED “CHARTER ACTIVITIES.”** She asked Administrator Lewis to give an update. Lewis stated that after her initial introduction to the Commissioners she had given this ordinance to the town's working waterfront planner for review as well as the Oxford Board of Port Wardens, who went over it at their recent meeting. Based on the feedback from both, as well as conversation with Attorney Booth, a couple of changes had been made from the drafted ordinance originally proposed. The first change comes under the definition of “Charter Activities”. Originally the definition for charter activities was written as “renting or operating a boat or vessel for commercial activities for profit...” The Board of Port Wardens suggested the word “renting” be removed and just using the word “operating.” Administrator Lewis explained that this ordinance is a recommended amendment to the Harbor Management Ordinance to address charter activities. Its purpose is not to be prohibiting or affect tourism, it is simply to permit charter activities to only operate from a commercial marina and that the marinas have to provide sanitation in the way of a dumpster to prevent items, such as bait, fish or other materials, from being thrown overboard, and prohibit charter activities from taking place on moorings off from the Strand or other inappropriate places. The idea of the ordinance is to address something before it becomes an issue. There is also additional language that would allow the town office to issue permits for services or events complimentary to the town, such as water taxis or the mooring of a vessel open to the public for historic, educational, or cultural purposes. Attorney Booth added that she thought there was a legitimate concern for regulating businesses that are being set up in the town's waterways. Commissioner Fronk made a motion to introduce **Ordinance 1707 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND CHAPTER 11 OF THE TOWN CODE TITLED “HARBOR MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE: TO ADD SECTION 11.14 TITLED “CHARTER ACTIVITIES.”** The motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Commissioner Fronk asked if the town had received any complaints about fish parts being thrown into the water at the Pier Street docks. Lewis responded that the office had received complaints including some around the Tilghman Street area. There had originally been dumpsters at the Pier Street area and this ordinance would require they be placed there again. The town provides dumpsters at the town owned docks. Lewis pointed out that the problem was not coming from the watermen as they harvest shellfish, but from the charter boats and individual people. A public hearing for the ordinance was then set for December 12, 2017 at 6 pm.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Lewis gave a brief report on the plans for the Morris Street water main replacement project, explaining that the town had received a grant to put in a new water main along the historic part of Morris Street. A request was made at the last Commissioner's meeting to investigate doing some engineering to determine exactly what the real project will entail. Lewis stated that she had spoken with USDA and their recommendation was that the town go ahead and do a PER, but that it be done for the town's water system as a whole, including such items as the water system's pipes, towers, automatic system, etc., and do a preliminary review of the whole system so we have a comprehensive replacement schedule, suggesting if the town knew what kind of funding it would need in the future, the town could then possibly do a rolling program with the USDA. USDA does require that the town match any grant money with a loan. The MDE grant is also based on a ½ loan and ½ grant process. By looking at the whole picture the town would be able to benefit by having larger grant amounts available. Lewis requested a quote from the town engineers for preparation of the PER for the whole water system, which will be \$40,000. In the 2017-2018 town budget, \$40,000 had been set aside in the water capital fund for replacement of the meter reading system, but as it turned out not to be enough for that system and as this system would be part of this study and could be grant/loan funded, Lewis was recommending the already budgeted \$40,000 be used for the PER. Lewis added that she felt the fee was in line with similar projects of this nature. Attorney Booth confirmed that it was in line with similar type of PERs from other municipal projects. President Abruzzese commented that she thought it was a good idea to have this information. Commissioner Fronk made a motion to accept the proposal from GMB to do a planning study of the Oxford water system for a cost of \$40,000, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves. Commissioner Fronk asked about the construction start date requirement of December 2018 for the Morris Street project and how the timing would work with this study. Lewis confirmed that the timing would be tight but that she would keep MDE informed to let them know that the town is serious in wanting to make the project work. Lewis added that the arsenic system would be part of this review which is something that the town is already having problems with in the way of costly replacement filters for that system and USDA may consider grant money for a new system and refinancing of a the old loan. The vote was called with all in favor and the motion carried.

Lewis gave an update on the Mews design, which has been underway since summer. The town did not receive an award of the most recently submitted application for construction grant funds, although she was recommending the town resubmit in the next round. Lewis added that during the process Maryland Historic Trust had responded with a non-favorable letter regarding the proposed project. In the interim Lewis is recommending negotiations with MHT to seek approval and determine a project they would support during the next grant round. Commissioner Fronk stated he had spoken with the architect for the project, Cameron MacTavish, and MacTavish suggested that the Commissioners meet with the MD Historic Trust in Crownsville and talk to them. His feeling was that the additional 3<sup>rd</sup> story luxury apartment was needed though it would still be feasible to just have the two levels. Lewis agreed it was worth a try. President Abruzzese suggested that Lewis and Fronk request a meeting with MHT. She was, however, hesitant about putting a third story onto the Mews building if the town didn't have a buyer commitment of some sort. Abruzzese added that she liked the idea of having two stories better because it would be similar to the original structure. Commissioner Fronk noted that the reconfiguration of six apartments, plus three storefront spaces, could generate \$9000 a month. Fronk stated he would talk to Mr. MacTavish about moving on with a set of revised plans. President Abruzzese gave her approval for Lewis and Fronk to work together to move forward to the next step of commercial drawings and to keep the Commissioners updated on the project.

Abruzzese reported that Lewis had set up a Narcan training session that the town employees had attended as well as herself and Commissioner Graves. She questioned if any type of town policy should be set up with regards to Narcan use. Chief Maxwell responded there is not much in the way of any kind of policy set up at this time with other local police forces. He explained that the rule of thumb is that if he or his staff gets a call in for possible drug overdose, they check the scene and administer the Narcan

as needed. Abruzzese asked fire department member Tom Ray if the fire company had any kind of policy. Mr. Ray responded that there had been discussion about it within all the local fire departments about adopting a model from the city fire departments. Currently the fire company's policy is if someone appears to be suffering from an overdose, Narcan is administered.

Abruzzese reported that the Commissioners attended a quarterly meeting with the Talbot County Council in which they discussed the Town of St. Michaels as being a test place for a call box to be set up whereby individuals could call and get immediate help for medical attention or treatment facilities through different resources. She added that she would like to see Oxford build a similar policy that. Administrator Lewis clarified that, training wise, the police staff would be different from the town staff and that for some of the town staff this was considered personal training as they are and are not to be regarded as first responders.

#### **LETTERS AND REQUESTS**

President Abruzzese noted that information had been received regarding an upcoming presentation by Robert Messick at the OCC who will be talking about his recent Appalachian Trail adventure. All proceeds will benefit the Talbot Interfaith Shelter.

#### **ATTORNEY**

Attorney Booth reported that there had been a change in the law in April that now requires one person on the commission to take the open meetings computer course and requested that one of the Commissioners take the course. Commissioner Graves noted that he had already been asked to do it by Lewis. Commissioner Fronk stated that he would like to take the course as well.

Booth stated that Lewis had requested a closed session for some legal advice as well as a matter of an existing business in town and a personnel matter.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR/CLERK COMMENTS**

Lewis reported the 2020 census is underway and that the town was signed up to review its own data.

The Oxford Town Office will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday on Nov. 23 and 24.

#### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

None at this time.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Tom Ray reminded all of the location of the Oxford Fire Boat at Pier Street, so consideration would be given with placement of any dumpster.

Commissioner Fronk made a motion to adjourn and go into executive session for legal advice on a personnel matter, a contract matter and a matter regarding a business. The motion was seconded by President Abruzzese and unanimously carried with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl A Lewis, Town 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."*