

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**July 28, 2020**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Commissioners Meeting was held virtually in a Zoom Meeting Room on Tuesday, July 28, 2020. The public was provided call in information for the purpose of listening, watching, and participating in the meeting, notice of which was posted on the bulletin board and the website. President Pepe called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Attending the meeting were Commission President John Pepe, Commissioner Gordon Graves, Commissioner Gordon Fronk, Police Chief Pat Maxwell, Public Works Superintendent Scott Delude, Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Lewis and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Citizens Julie Wells, Art Murr, Cathy Bitter, Jimmy Jaramillo, and Dale Benson were in attendance by phone or video.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the July 14, 2020 meeting minutes, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

**MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Water/Wastewater Supervisor Delude gave a brief update for Public Works: Delude stated the Chlorine Pump System had been refurbished including replacing the pump with a cost of about \$2500; the rusty vent on the Causeway Lift Station had been replaced; they are working through the startup kinks of the new wastewater system, having answered multiple alarms in the past week and are still working on the bugs in the new generator; they are keeping a close eye on the potential storm in the Atlantic and keeping the lagoon low; and bids had been received for the landscaping and fencing at the Causeway pump station as they wait for the contractors to complete their work. Lewis stated she was working with USDA for potential grant funds for the improvements and would be incorporating the projects into the FY21 budget amendment. She said she was researching alternatives for the Tennis Court backboard, as the quote of \$20,000 was high and this was another item that is not in the current budget.

**POLICE REPORT**

Chief Patrick Maxwell gave a brief update for the Police Department: The police have been contacting residents along the Morris Street Water Main project as needed for each step and have had no issues; compliance checks continue with respect to COVID-19 requirements; residents with medical concerns were contacted during the recent power outage to assess any needs; the power outage was the result of a transformer melt down; although the department now has their Police Bike, due to the extreme heat it has not be put in use yet; the Chief remarked on the verbal abuse the officers were receiving from visitors when approached regarding town policies for the beach area.

**FIRE COMPANY**

No report available for this meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Lewis put the drafted version of an ordinance to amend the Short Term Rental Regulations as found in the Town Code, that she had provided the Commissioners at a prior meeting, on the screen for all to view. She stated as she is working with the current regulations, she felt that the ordinance could be improved upon with clearer requirements and specific criteria for the permitting of short term rentals. The changes presented were discussed individually and recommendations were made for each change. The discussion included minimum occupancy, minimum vehicles, inspections requirements, insurance requirements, and other items of concern. After lengthy discussion, public comment was solicited. Art Murr offered some comments, based on personal experience, including the need to define a specific number of people, issues that already exist with shared drive ways, on street parking, trash trucks, responsibility of trash removal and that the town should provide a set of rules to be included on short term rental agreements, so renters see a consistent list. Julie Wells inquired as to who was responsible for enforcement and who keeps track of the properties being rented and also felt there should be a cap on the number of short term rentals in town.

Attorney Ryan will take the items as discussed, incorporate the recommendations, and create a redlined version of the original, which would show the original text and the changes recommended as a result of this conversation, for the Commissioners to review at the next town meeting.

Pepe reminded all that Public Hearings were scheduled for the August 11, 2020 meeting on, Ordinance 2006 Removing Special Exception for Fences from the Oxford Zoning Code and Resolution 2007 Fee Schedule - Establishing new rates for connection to the Water/Sewer System.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Lewis stated the she would like to submit a grant application to the Chesapeake Bay Trust for additional funding to be utilized in the Strand Beach Construction Project. The funding is available for both outreach and construction, and she felt that it would compliment the large funding anticipated from the state and potential funding recently applied for from the NFWF. Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve submittal of a grant application to the CBT, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

#### **LETTERS AND REQUEST**

Lewis stated she had received an email from Art Murr with concerns over the new speed limit signs prior to entering town and concerns that going from 50 mph to 35 mph with the Sheriff's officers issuing tickets could create a negative reputation of Oxford being a speed trap, and requested consideration of a speed reduction ahead signage. Chief Maxwell stated the Sheriff's vehicles running radar in this area, were actually running it on vehicles exiting town and exceeding the 35 mph before reaching the 50 mph sign. All agreed that once people were aware of the expectation that the speed limit would be enforced, traffic should calm down both entering and leaving town.

#### **ATTORNEY**

Ryan stated after discussions with GMB, as follow up to Commissioner's discussion on Change Order #6 at the July 14, 2020 meeting, GMB has agreed to extend the inspection and project management agreement amendment through the end of the project, August 31, 2020 for the original amount of \$61,607. Commissioner Graves approved acceptance of the agreement for \$61,607 to extend inspection and management services through August 31, 2020, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Ryan requested a closed session for the purpose of discuss public security including implementation of an emergency plan and to obtain legal advice regarding a real estate matter to be held on July 29, 2020 at 8:30 am.

#### **ADMINISTRATOR**

Lewis stated that the Town has been awarded grant funding from the DNR Coastal Program to do the Oxford 2100 study, a study of what the town will look like in 2100 taking sea level rise into consideration. Additionally from the same program the town will be receiving funding as part of a joint grant application, with other eastern shore jurisdictions, that will provide trees, meadow grass and stormwater pond plantings at the former ballpark, now known as Oxford Central Park.

Lewis also provide information from Sandi Pepe, the Oxford representative on the Talbot County Economic Board, regarding the recent Cares Act Funding opportunity and that four businesses in Oxford had in fact been awarded financial assistance grants, along with businesses in the other municipalities in Talbot County. Pepe also mentioned concerns expressed by the Economic Board with the cancellation of the Waterfowl Festival and the financial impacts to the communities.

Lewis said that Talbot County was currently discussing the possibility of a new Emergency Declaration addressing COVID concerns and enforcement in an effort to control the spread within the community.

#### **COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

Commissioner Graves requested information regarding the holding of a Shred Day.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No further comments.

Being no further business, Commissioner Fronk motioned to close the meeting at 7:50 pm, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cheryl Lewis, Town Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer