

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2021

The Commissioners Meeting was held Virtually in a Zoom Meeting room on December 14, 2021. With the continued HIGH transmission rate for COVID cases in Talbot County, all town meetings have remained in virtual settings temporarily as a precautionary measure. The public was invited to participate in the virtual meeting. This information was posted on the town bulletin board and the town website. President Gordon Fronk called the meeting to order at 6 pm.

President Fronk requested a moment of silence for the victims of the recent mid-west tornado disaster.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting virtually were Commission President Gordon Fronk, Commissioner James Jaramillo, Commissioner Brian Wells, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, Public Works WW Superintendent Matt Ozman, Police Chief Patrick Maxwell, Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan, and Planning Officer Maria Brophy. Citizens Art and Denise Murr were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the November 9, 2021 meeting minutes, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

REPORT OF DISBURSEMENTS

Commissioner Wells motioned to file the November 2021 report of Disbursements for audit, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Matt Ozman provided the following report: Public works has put up all Christmas lights around town and the Christmas tree lighting went off with no problems. Public works assisted with delivering dock tree lights. Bartlett tree service was out to inspect the tree in question on the strand, Mark felt as if the tree was still healthy, and his suggestion was to start treating for ash borers as they are showing sign. We are still awaiting the proposal. The Mews water main installation has been completed. Number 2 ENR pump is back in service at the ENR pump station at the wastewater plant. We have recently purchased a spare ENR pump station pump, which is being stored at PW. Two new Maple trees, resident replacement mitigation, were provided to the town and Public Works will be planting them this week, one will be planted behind the basketball court and the other in Town Park. Last Wednesday leaf pick up will be on December 15th. Public Works will conduct both brush and bulk trash pick up next week before the holidays, we will be around starting Tuesday the 21st for Bulk pickup only and then Wednesday the 22nd we will start brush pickup only, with the final day being on the Thursday the 23rd for Brush only.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Maxwell reported that the Christmas Tree lighting was well attended, he and Officer Philips were on call that night. The department assisted allied agencies with a domestic outside out side of town. The Chief reminded citizens they should always report any suspicious activity they see in town.

FIRE COMPANY

Chief Norbury reported that the call volume has been light for both fire and ambulance. He will be Chief another year and the remaining officer positions will be voted on in January.

PROCLAMATION

Commissioner Fronk read the prepared Proclamation honoring Dale Benson. Following reminiscences, Fronk motioned to approve the Proclamation, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Fronk reminded all that there will be a public hearing for January 11, 2022 at the Commissioners meeting at 6 pm for Ordinance ~~2114~~2019 Acquisition of Certain Properties located at 101 High Street/200 Market Street.

NEW BUSINESS

Manager Lewis requested approval of a letter of support for a grant application to the DNR Coastal Gateway for potential funding of the Strand Road, Parking Lot and Living Shoreline improvements. The application is being prepared by the National Wildlife Federation on behalf of the town. The request is for \$ 320,000 in grant funding to be matched by a town commitment of \$200,000 in funds to be provided from General Funds or raised through other opportunities by the town. Following discussion of the project, design of which was previously approved as part of the larger Strand Shoreline Improvements project, Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the letter of support and application to DNR, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion was carried.

Manager Lewis requested approval of a resolution to adopt the previously approved Retiree Insurance Reimbursement Plan. The Commissioners had requested creation of the plan in 2019 and approved the adoption of a plan by resolution with an amendment to the Employee Manual in 2021. This resolution is the formal approval of the reimbursement plan for retirees who have met the qualifications as found in the employee manual, and which at this time will provide up to \$4000 of reimbursement for actual expenses a retiree has incurred for their post employment health insurance costs. Lewis noted that the reimbursement amount was an appendix to the plan and could be modified in the future to account for changes in insurance costs, etc. Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the resolutions as presented within the plan, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

LETTERS AND REQUEST

None presented.

ATTORNEY

No further comments.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis noted that the Maryland Dept of Health was recently impacted by ransomware and that there has been no available Covid data since December 3rd, presenting a dilemma for planning purposes. it is

assumed that the Covid rating for Talbot County remains at High Transmission based on the increased Covid hospitalization statewide and also specific knowledge of numerous cases in the county.

Lewis requested a closed session for personnel discussion.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Office will be closed on December 24, 2021 through January 2, 2022 for the Holiday Season - select staff will come in daily to assure continued operations.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Jaramillo stated he had attended the recent Economic Development meeting, had provided an update on town business, and mentioned the recent town talk at the OCC.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Some general discussion regarding current events took place.

Commissioner Wells motion to adjourn the meeting into a closed session for personnel discussion, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned in to closed session at 6:45 pm. Following the closed session, Commissioner Fronk motioned to close the regular meeting, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting closed at 7:03 pm.

Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager

“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”.