

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 26, 2022

The Commissioners Meeting was held in person at 101 Market Street on April 26, 2022. Virtual participation was also available. 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 momentum of silence for the people of Ukraine.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President Gordon Fronk, Commissioner Brian Wells, Commissioner Jaramillo, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis and Town Planner Maria Brophy. Public Works WW Superintendent Matt Ozman, Police Chief Patrick Maxwell, and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan attended virtually. Citizens in attendance included Bob Fay, Friederikos Franke, Capt Tom Bixler, and Philip Logan, along with several who participated virtually.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the April 12, 2022 meeting minutes, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried.

President Fronk noted that a Virtual Budget Workshop was held on April 19, 2022 at 5:30 pm to discuss the Budgets as presented at the April 12, 2022 meeting. The link for participation was posted online and on the front board.

REPORT OF DISBURSEMENTS

Commissioner Wells motioned to accept and file for audit the disbursement report for the month of March 2022, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Matt Ozman stated that Public Works had been diligently working on preparations for Oxford Day, including mowing, maintenance of parks, and brush pick up. The employees put in the time and effort to get it done. Public works had multiple employees on duty for Oxford Day, and everything seem to go off without any issues.

The Commissioners expressed their appreciation, acknowledging the noticeable efforts of the staff.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Maxwell reported that he was following up on few recent incidents, including assistance provided to other jurisdictions. Oxford Day went well and with no serious issues. Traffic was managed with assistance from the volunteers and Regina Lopez who has supported the town with traffic control during this event for many years. Maxwell estimated 1800 to 1900 in attendance.

FIRE COMPANY

Chief Graham Norbury presented the following Fire Company report for the period 3/23/2022 through 4/26/2022. Fire/Rescue: 12 calls (5 first due, 7 mutual aid). Of these incidents, 8 calls were canceled while enroute. One motor vehicle accident and one lawnmower fire, 107 miles traveled, 80 member responses, 25 hours worked.

Medical: 20 calls (15 patients transported, 1 inter-facility “routine” transport, 2 citizen assists, 2 accidental medical alarm activations), 548 miles traveled, 109 member responses, 116 hours worked.

Easton Memorial Hospital has once again been experiencing longer than usual wait-times due to staffing and emergency room bed availability. COVID continues to make its appearance in the community and citizens are reminded to avoid close contact whenever possible.

Boat 20 suffered a mechanical breakdown while responding to an incident south of Tilghman Island on 4/14. As a result of a catastrophic failure of the starboard engine the boat is out of service for the foreseeable future. We are investigating feasibility of running it in reduced capacity (on one engine) but this may not be practical. Our replacement boat is currently under construction at Elzy Custom Boats Inc in Cambridge with tentative completion late this summer. The critical path for the new boat looks to be delivery of the engines which are presently on extended back-order and are not expected until late August.

Our new ambulance was ordered last winter and is still awaiting assignment of a chassis from Ford Motor Co.

Next breakfast will be on Mother’s Day, May 8.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The public hearing for Ordinance 2202: AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND THE HARBOR LINE TO ELIMINATE THE NONCONFORMING STATUS OF SEVERAL EXISTING PIERS AFFIXED TO PROPERTIES WITHIN TOWN CREEK IN THE AREA KNOWN AS CROCKETT’S COVE was opened. Lewis provided a brief explanation noting the changes would correct non-conforming issues within the cove and that the Board of Port Wardens had voted in support of the ordinance at the April meeting. She also pointed out one correction from the initial mapping, after it was determined the Harbor Line could not enter the federal Anchorage Basin, noting that the Port Wardens would be reviewing the remainder of the Harbor Line that is in conflict with private piers and will provide future recommendations. No public comment was presented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

With no further comments, Commissioner Wells motion to approve Ordinance 2202: AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND THE HARBOR LINE TO ELIMINATE THE NONCONFORMING STATUS OF SEVERAL EXISTING PIERS AFFIXED TO PROPERTIES WITHIN TOWN CREEK IN THE AREA KNOWN AS CROCKETT’S COVE, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Philip Logan came to discuss his proposals for installation of Middle Passage Marker signage at the Strand waterfront, signage which was had been discussed in prior meetings. President Fronk noted that two locations had been proposed for consideration, to the left and to the right of the Ferry landing. Logan stated he envisioned the area to be more an area of reflection than a place for a sign and as such has proposed a full design including walkways and decking. After discussion of the two locations, it was determined that the area of the living shoreline to the left of the landing would not be feasible due to multiple constraints including wetlands regulations and safety hazards presented with the proximity to the drive path to the landing. As the proposal was more significant than anticipated, the question of funding was addressed, and Logan suggested he could raise private and or grant funding for the project. It was also noted that reaching a conclusion and construction by the July 1 date for the celebration would be difficult, and it was possible the scale could be reduced or a temporary sign demonstrating the intent could be incorporated. Suggestions from the Sign Committee were also presented suggesting a simpler design and also a recommendation that the town property near the Customs House be given another review as it presented a

nice overlook opportunity. Capt. Bixler offered that the Ferry was in favor of the conceptual idea, but that he was reminding all that this landing is basically a vehicular path and presents numerous concerns, which he request the Commissioners take into consideration during their deliberation, especially pointing out that any area that would inhibit ingress and egress of vehicles would be serious safety hazard. Following discussion of the proposals and the suitability of the two areas under consideration, to the right of the Ferry landing and the grassy area to the right of the Customs House, it was suggested a workshop be held that includes the commissioners, the neighboring commercial properties, the sign committee and other players to review the proposals and determine feasibility, impacts to the area, and what would be most appropriate so that the Commissioners could prepare something to be provided to the public for review and consideration. A workshop will be setup prior to the next Commissioners meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance 2203 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD AMENDING GENERAL AND ENTERPRISE BUDGET ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE 2108 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2021 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2022 TO ADJUST CERTAIN LINE ITEMS AND TO RE-APPROPRIATE CERTAIN FUNDS, which was presented virtually at the April 12, 2022 meeting and was the subject of a workshop on April 19, 2022, was motioned for introduction by Commissioner Fronk, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was carried. A public hearing was scheduled for the regular Commissioners meeting at 6 pm on May 24, 2022.

Ordinance 2204 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD ADOPTING A GENERAL/ENTERPRISE BUDGET FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023, AND ESTABLISHING A TAX RATE OF \$.32 PER \$100 OF ASSESSED REAL PROPERTY VALUE, which was presented virtually at the April 12, 2022 meeting and was the subject of a workshop on April 19, 2022, was motioned for introduction by Commissioner Jaramillo, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was carried. A public hearing was scheduled for the regular Commissioners meeting at 6 pm on May 24, 2022. Lewis noted the tax rate was rounded up to .32 from the FY 2022 rate of .3187.

Ordinance 2205 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO REPEAL ORDINANCE NUMBER 2109 AND TO SET NEW WATER AND SEWER RATES FOR THE TOWN, COMMENCING JULY 1, 2022, which was presented virtually at the April 12, 2022 meeting and was the subject of a workshop on April 19, 2022, was motioned for introduction by Commissioner Wells, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was carried. A public hearing was scheduled for the regular Commissioners meeting at 6 pm on May 24, 2022. Lewis noted that the proposed 3% increase in rates would create a baseline quarterly increase of \$9.

Bob Rauch, representing Rodney Spring the owner of two parcels consisting of approximately 15.5 acres directly south of and adjoining the town's Public Works facility, approached the Commissioners to request consideration of annexation of the properties for development. Rauch stated the annexation is consistent with the town and counties comprehensive plans, is listed as Tier 2 for water and sewer, in the Special Flood Hazard Area, and has been a point of discussion over the years. He would like to present a petition for annexation with a concept plan, and there was a desire to determine what the town wants and do they support the idea of annexation. Current zoning is Town Residential and they would be seeking R1C or R1. Rauch provided information from the Comp Plan, and offered numerous other statements regarding the town's regulations. Following discussion of the possible annexation and process, Lewis noted that there would be multiple steps, which would include the Planning Commission and public involvement, and recommended that any proposed development should be clarified prior to annexation so that a proper Annexation Agreement would be prepared inclusive of all costs and expectations. She stated after the office completed the initial investigation, an annexation process specific to the request could be detailed. Attorney Ryan stated the town would need to review any proposed development prior to annexation in order to determine the level of services like water and sewer that would be required, along with addressing roads and fire service, etc. Further discussion was held regarding possible development and what the needs of the town

would be. The Commissioners stated they would review the prior annexation information, review water and sewer and other services availability, and a developed process, over the next month.

Lewis provided two resolutions for consideration, noting that after many years, Latitude 38 would be sold to new owners. Resolution 2206 Honoring Gretchen Gordan and Resolution 2207 honoring Wendy Palmer for their 31 years of restaurant service to the Oxford community were presented. Following the reading of the resolutions, Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve Resolution 2206 honoring Gretchen Gordan, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motioned carried. Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve Resolution 2007 honoring Wendy Palmer, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

ATTORNEY

Ryan noted that the County Council had a resolution on the agenda of their meeting this evening that basically stated when a property within a municipal incorporation wanted to go to the county for a water and sewer amendment, which is a requirement to connect new hookups or add infrastructure, the current application procedures would not apply to the county. Currently the municipality is the certifying agent of water and sewer changes within their boundaries. This new language, in effect, allows the county to initiate an amendment to the water and sewer plan within an incorporated municipality without seeking approval from the municipality. Ryan stated that the Town of Easton had submitted a letter opposing the resolution, she had submitted a letter on behalf the Town of Oxford, and a letter on behalf the Town of Trappe, and that Easton Utilities had also submitted a letter opposing the language. Ryan said she did not think the intent was to take rights away from the towns, and that it was most likely a drafting error that could be addressed, but it was important the opposition to be on the record.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis stated the Commissioners had received a letter from the Sign Committee with regards to their assigned tasks and they were proposing a trial of curb colors signifying parking/no parking in front of town park and a portion of Tilghman Street. The Commissioners were interested and would like to have more information about the concept.

Lewis stated that Planner Maria Brophy had recently passed her Floodplain Manager test and was now a Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM). A CFM is trained in implementation of the Floodplain Ordinance, assuring compliance with the town's codes, and also the town's FEMA Community Rating System program. The CRS program requires a CFM to be on staff. Maria's certification allows for continuation of the CRS program into the future.

Lewis stated that the Tom Costigan, currently Chair of the Historic District Commission, would like to step into the alternate position. Lewis was requesting to move Julie Wells from an alternate to a full member and to move Costigan to the alternate position. Commission Jaramillo motion to approve the moves, Commission Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS No further presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS None presented

Hearing no further business Commissioner Fronk motioned to close the meeting, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, and the meeting was closed at 8:03 pm.

Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager