

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2020

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Commissioners Meeting was held virtually in a Zoom Meeting Room on Tuesday, November 10, 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 town website. President Pepe called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President John Pepe, Commissioner Gordon Fronk, Commissioner James Jaramillo, Police Chief Pat Maxwell, Public Works Supervisor Scott Delude, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Citizens Liza Ledford, Julie Wells, Gordon Graves, Norman Bell, and several citizens by phone were in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the October 13, 2020 meeting minutes, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the Disbursements for August and September to be filed for audit, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Water/Wastewater Supervisor Delude gave a brief update for Public Works: The Counting House has been moved to its final destination at the Causeway, electric has been installed, and a winch has been added. During some work on the water system there was a break that caused an outage for a good portion of town, the issue was resolved within a few hours. There was a stormwater blockage identified near the corner of South St and South Morris, apparently due to some changes made by a resident, which has been cleared and should help with drainage. Delude reminded people that it was time to unhook exterior hoses before freezing weather hits.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Patrick Maxwell gave a brief update for the Police Department: All agency members were qualifying on the range. The warmer weather has people out utilizing the parks and beaches. The Social Café has seen increasing traffic with their opening. Halloween had a low turnout of 30 to 45 kids and leftover candy was sent down to the Coast Guard. The John Fox Memorial Fishing Tournament was held at Docs with a good turnout for their last weekend of the season.

FIRE COMPANY

No report available.

PRESENTATION

Representatives from FEMA, MEMA, and MD DNR were available to present Oxford with their FEMA Community Rating System Award plaque. Julius Lockhart from FEMA Region 3 introduced Kristen Jones, Richard Sobota, and Sean Cannon from FEMA, Kevin Wagner from MDE and Jennifer Sparenberg from MES. Julius gave a brief explanation of the CRS nationwide program, including noting that only around 5% of the communities in FEMA's Flood Insurance Program qualify to enter into the Community Rating System, which are communities that have a higher standard, thereby providing a safer community that is better prepared for a flood event. Julius stated that as of May 2020 the Town of Oxford has entered

the CRS program as a Class 7 (out of 10), and is one of 16 communities in Maryland that qualify to participate in the program and one of 7 that qualify as a Class 7. The relevance to the citizens of Oxford is for those within the mapped floodplain, a savings of 15% off their flood insurance policies, providing an average of \$141 off individual premiums, and totaling \$ 32,575 in savings for the town's citizens annually. Julius recognized the town's entry into the program on behalf of Federal Insurance Administration, National Flood Insurance Program, and FEMA Region 3. Kevin Wagner MDE stated he had worked with Town Manager Lewis for many years, and it takes someone who is passionate about the issues in preparing for the CRS program, and while this program is about flooding, it connects to stormwater management and community outreach and benefits the town in many ways.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Attorney Ryan reminded all of the current MEWS RFP for Construction Drawings process, and that three proposals had been received at a prior meeting: Fisher Architecture LLC \$41,250, Voith & Mactavish Architecture LLP \$ 77,800, and Rauch Inc. \$199,560. Ryan stated, as discussed at the last meeting, due to receiving bids much higher than anticipated and concerns that the job was not clear to the bidders, the Commissioners held a meeting with all bidders in attendance, to assure that all understood the expectations, after which all were invited to revise and resubmit their bids should they choose. All three bidders resubmitted: Fisher Architecture LLC \$29,805, Voith & Mactavish Architecture LLP \$55,400 (which included a design build option, which would bring the bid down to \$40,400), and Rauch Inc. \$75,775. Ryan recommended the Commissioner look at the two lowest bids, which demonstrated the two bidders both exhibited an understanding of the project and were qualified to perform the project. Commissioner Fronk stated that he felt the Commissioners had reviewed the bids thoroughly, and although Voith & Mactavish, having participated in the prior phase of construction for the MEWs, did have a good understanding of the project, Fisher Architecture had submitted the lowest bid, provided good references and had been highly recommended outside of this RFP. For these reasons, Fronk motioned to award the contract to Fisher Architecture for the price of \$29,805, Commission Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. Jaramillo stated that in voting in favor he was recognizing they had done commendable work on similar projects and presented a fair price.

Ryan stated she had prepared a draft contract prior to the meeting for the Commissioners to review and had received comments back and would be working on a final contract for them to review prior to presenting to Fischer Architecture.

Commissioner Pepe had reminded all that the town had received a request from OCC for additional funding for FY 2021 due to impacts they were feeling from COVID. Pepe stated that there was an understanding that all of the community non-profits were experiencing similar impacts and asked Lewis to provide budget information, prior to Commissioner discussion. Lewis stated that under new business this evening she would be presenting a recommendation to increase the Miscellaneous Donation line item by \$10,000, that would then provide additional funding should the Commissioners decide to address some of the concerns expressed by the OCC. Fronk stated that although a letter was not received from other organizations, that Liza Ledford had presented the OCCs position well, and it was understandable that all organizations would be in the same situation and it would be appropriate to consider all the organizations when determining what would be appropriate funding. All Commissioners were in agreement that it would be reviewed following the Budget Amendment.

Lewis said she did want to pointed out that, with Liza's assistance and OCC sponsorship, she would be providing a Virtual Town Talk on Hurricane Preparedness on November 19th at 5 pm. Liza thanked the Commissioners for addressing her request and added that the OCC has been working with the local organizations, and gave examples of projects in which the OCC was using their larger infrastructure to support multiple organization projects during these difficult times.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Jaramillo read Resolution 2015 honoring former Oxford Commission Albert (Al) Rudolph Gibson, who had passed on November 2, 2020. Commissioner Fronk requested that the name of Al's beloved boat be added to the Resolution. Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the Resolution with the addition, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lewis presented Ordinance 2014 amending the FY 2021 General and Enterprise Budget, explaining that back in April and May during the early stages of COVID she had presented an operational budget with estimated incomes and expenses necessary to continue operations until sufficient time had passed for a better understanding of the impacts. At this time, she felt a six-month review would be appropriate so that normal expenses and capital projects could be incorporated. The budget worksheet, including the current and the recommended changes, was presented online as Lewis pointed out the major changes to the budget on a line-by-line basis. Following detailed discussion of the changes and other items found within the budget, Commissioner Fronk motioned to introduced Ordinance 2014 Amending the FY 2021 General and Enterprise Budget, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A public hearing on the Ordinance will be held on December 8, 2020 at 6 pm. The scheduled Public Hearing, along with the Ordinance and Budget will be posted on the Town website.

LETTERS AND REQUEST

None presented.

ATTORNEY

Attorney Ryan provided an update on the title process for the abandoned boats, stating that two had been completed and additional information had been forwarded to the state for the third.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis provided the holiday schedule for staff for November, reminded all that the next Commissioner's meeting would be December 8, 2020, and announced there would be a Shred date on December 11th from 9 to 11 am outside of the OCC. She stated that Hogan had announced earlier in the day that there was a new opportunity for restaurants to apply for additional grant funding to offset the impacts of COVID and the local restaurants were encouraged to apply to Talbot County for the grant.

COMMISSIONER COMMENT

No further comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Former Commissioner Graves thanked the Commissioner for the nice sendoff following his exiting of office.

Being no further business, Commissioner Fronk motioned to close the meeting at 7:20 pm, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

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