

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**April 13, 2021**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Commissioners Meeting was held virtually in a Zoom Meeting Room on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 6 pm. 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 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PRESENT**

Attending the meeting were Commission President John Pepe, Commissioner Gordon Fronk, Commissioner James Jaramillo, Police Chief Pat Maxwell, Public Works WW Superintendent Matt Ozman, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Multiple residents, including the Murrs, the Wells, Stuart Parnes, Madge Henning, Larry Mekulski, Tom Bixler, Tom Costigan, Mac Sommerlatte, Louisa Zendt, Stephen Selden, Cathy Bitter, Dana Fitz, David Poe, Tome Cain, Dale Benson, and others were in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the March 23, 2021 meeting minutes, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

**MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Matt Ozman, WW Supervisor, provided the following: Fire Hydrants at Bachelor's point and behind the fire house have been replaced. Air compressors have been fixed and are back in service at the wastewater plant. Parkson is now in the monitoring phase of the secondary performance testing with no new results at this time we are awaiting test results from the lab to back up the changes that have been made to the wave ox plus. The majority of the patches on the state road have been paved in preparation for milling. The new patch in front of Popes Tavern was also paved. The state will be investigating the storm water pipe that runs under South Morris Street at West Division. Paving of the state road is anticipated in July. The town will be putting an RFP out for street paving due to WWTP construction in May, which will include JL Thompson, Riverview and part of S Morris. The large stump in town park was removed. Last week public works repaired a water service line on Market Street near the park ditch. The old equipment shed has been removed at the old ball field and has been replaced with one that was donated to the Town by a town resident. This shed is the same size and in much better shape. Public works responded to two sewer backups due to clogged pipes, both of which were jetted out. One backup led to a partially collapsed sewer lateral which was replaced. Ozman detailed the Wave Oxidation Process which is a component of the new wastewater operations.

**POLICE REPORT**

Chief Patrick Maxwell gave a brief update for the Police Department: A lot of the businesses are opening back up, streets have been busy, and plenty of foot and bicycle traffic. Increase in check the welfare and false alarms, but nothing serious. Commissioner Fronk inquired as to whether the Police bike is in use, Chief stated they would start up as soon as the weather breaks.

**FIRE COMPANY**

Will provide a report next meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

With continued discussion on the Strand Coastal Resilience Design, Town Manager Lewis introduced Chris Hilke and Amanda Poskaitis of the National Wildlife Federation and Bhaskar Subramanian of Maryland DNR, who were available to answer questions on the final version of the Strand Beach design. Lewis reminded the Commissioners and attendees of the prior meeting design reviews, public discussions, and educational outreach. The final design was displayed for participants to view and changes, based on citizen input, were discussed including reduction of the width of the berm to allow for walking along the

roadside and reduction in the height of the hooks in the water. In addition, elements were added to the design drawing that provided information regarding the wind and water action that was used to determine the design needs in order to preserve the beach and protect the road. The purpose of the different design elements was explained in reference to the protection each provides. Cross-sections from a few areas of the beach were displayed and discussed to provide a better idea of the elevations of the different elements in comparison to water level and road level. It was noted the distance from the shore to the marshy islands would be around 50'. Maintenance and adaptive management funding mechanisms were discussed, including support from the engineering firm and the state in the success of the project. Bhaskar detailed the purpose of the hooks located at the east and west end of the living shoreline, stating they hooks hold the elements in place, preventing future shoreline erosion, based on crescent shaped shoreline elements found in nature. Chris Hilke stated that the hooks are an evolution of prior beach management, which basically was to continually add sand season after season, by creating an element that keeps the sand in place. Bhaskar provided actual locations of created shorelines that people could visit locally, stating that the concepts are not new, what is unique is the combination of these concepts and the materials and vegetation to be used. Lewis stated that there were several examples on the town website, including work from Bhaskar and work from Underwood and Associates. Bhaskar stated that the intention from the beginning was not to remove any of the elements that currently exist, including 13,000 square feet of useable beach, but to add to the natural elements to build in resilience. Tom Campbell added that he had a dredging permit for Bachelors Point and if there is any use for the dredge materials, he was willing to help. In response to timing, Bhaskar estimated several months before permits would be released, hoping by the end of 2020, with construction possibly starting in the winter. Lewis stated that the current goal was to make sure everyone was aware of the Strand Beach design and that the Commissioners were satisfied so that engineers and funders could proceed with this plan. There will be opportunity to discuss other elements, including the boardwalks and signage, along with designs in the other areas of the north end of Oxford as we move forward. The Commissioners requested this design be on the agenda for final approval on the next agenda. Both Larry Mekulski and Mac Sommerlatte stated, following their original hesitancy, they felt the design was worthy of approval at this stage. Dave Poe asked if boat wakes had been taken into consideration. Bhaskar stated that shorelines are designed for predictable elements like wave and wind, as this has proven to be most successful method of design. Pepe explained that in his experience, grassy shorelines held up very well against boat wake impacts, but that there is also mechanism for addressing boat wakes with the state.

Commissioner Jaramillo provided an update on the Speed Camera Legislation, stating that the Senate Judicial Committed did not review the legislation before the session ended. He appreciated Johnny Mautz's efforts with the bill and was disappointed that it did not make it to the Senate, but will follow up on what should be done next year.

Lewis virtually presented a Sign Review Committee Proposal "detailing the Committees responsibility to provide a basic overview of the permanent signage located in town and provide a report to the Commissioners." Details of which consisted of a request to prepare a current permanent sign inventory, an understanding of the current size specifics for town signage, multiple links to educational information regarding sign reviewing, sign psychology, and signage reduction, and also consideration of recommendations for other alternatives to signage. Visual examples of sign reducing, consolidation and coordination were provided as part of the package. The sign Committee will consist of Ray Stevens, Dick Deerin (representing the HDC), Liz Hasbrouck and John Tochko. Tom Campbell was complimentary of the ideas presented including the incorporation of uniform directional signs. Dick Deerin stated he felt the committee purpose as proposed was well thought out and agreed there is a need to take a good look at the town signage and to bring back recommendations to the Commissioners. Other participants were also complimentary of the committee outline and expressed their approval with moving forward. After discussion and citizen input, Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to establish a Temporary Sign Committee, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Resolution 2101 establishing the R Gordon Graves Community Service Scholarship was introduced, following prior meeting discussions of the creation of a program. Following review of the Scholarship Program and Resolution and a recommendation from a citizen to allow for future increases. Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve Resolution 2101 with the inclusion of “no less” than \$500 for the annual grant, to add opportunity for increased grants in the future and continuation of the program. Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion as proposed, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

The Commissioners announced that the three abandoned boats would be auctioned at the Oxford Community Center, in coordination with the OCC, on May 22, 2021. The boats are currently parked just inside the Public Works fencing and can be viewed from the street. The proceeds, after covering cost, would be available to be set aside in a dedicated bank account for the R Gordon Graves Community Service Scholarship. The intent will be to take bids in advance, and then by phone and live bids on the 22nd. There will be an opportunity for a limited number of people to register to participate in person.

## **LETTERS AND REQUEST**

The Oxford Museum is currently working on an outdoor display and have requested Commissioner support for their grant application to the Heritage Areas Grant Program. Commissioners approved the prepared letter of support.

Tom Campbell, as the Commodore of the TAYC, opened discussions on the possibility of having the annual 4th of July Fireworks, stating they still have a deposit for the fireworks in place from 2020, along with a reserved barge. At this time the TAYC is just notifying the town that they are interested in working with the town, realizing it is really a community event and want to make sure the Commissioners and the community are part of the final decision. He would like to revisit by mid May to determine how to move forward.

## **ATTORNEY**

Ryan stated that she has received the 2021 International Building Codes, including Residential, Energy, Existing and Property Maintenance and would be providing adopting Ordinances at an upcoming meeting.

## **TOWN MANAGER**

Lewis requested consideration of applying for additional funding as a match towards the beach work, which would add the ability to do SAVs - sub-aquatic vegetation and oyster restoration in the area between the Strand Beach and the Ferry Parking lot along the rock revetment. The Commissioners were in favor of the letter of intent to apply to the funder.

## **COMMISSIONER AND PUBLIC COMMENT**

Commission President Pepe announced that he did not intend to seek re-election in the next term, stating it has been his extreme pleasure to work with the Commissioners, the staff and the town.

Being no further business, Commissioner Fronk motioned to close the meeting, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager