

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 24, 2021

The Commissioners Meeting was held Virtually in a Zoom Meeting room on August 24, 2021. With recent increase in COVID cases locally, all town meetings switched to a virtual setting 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.

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 Tom Bixler, Art Murr, Norm Bell, Julie Wells, and Bart Eckhardt were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the July 27, 2021 meeting minutes, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the July disbursements, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

President Fronk made the following announcements: On Thursday, August 5, 2021 at 5 pm the Commissioners of Oxford held a special meeting for the purpose of holding a Closed Session to discuss acquisition of real property for a public purpose and finalizing of WWTP project and to receive legal advice regarding the same. On Monday, August 23 at 8 am the Commissioners of Oxford held a special meeting for the purposes of holding a Closed Session to discuss a Personnel matter and a Public Health matter.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Matt Ozman provided the following report: Public works is now preparing to repaint hydrants around town. In the last month they had repaired a water leak on South Street replacing all 3 valves in the middle of the road, with 27 residents affected during repair and 9 man hours; repaired water service line at 207 South Morris Street; repaired water service line at 200 North Morris Street and repaired bad check valve at the Main lift station, with a total of 4 after hours call ins for the Main lift station low level alarms, this issue has since been resolved. Update on the wastewater plant: we are now preparing to run sludge through the sludge press for the first time. A member of the BDP team will be on site in the coming week to help startup and dial in the machine. The reserve old wood from the MEWS has been removed from the storage container and is now being stored at the town shop. A new bench in honor of David Webster, purchased by his son, has been put together and has been placed in Town Park. A dead tree was removed from the soccer field and the wet area next to the walking track has been regraded. A rough area in the new park was graded to improve drainage. Employees have taken online training this past month for continuing education for licenses. Matt has taken training and tested for pesticide application.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Maxwell reported that the Regatta was busy but nothing like prior years and beach traffic was heavy during this time. We did experience excessive speeding during the Regatta weekend with one vehicle cited for going 49 mph and a second doing 35 mph. The department is investigating a fraud case and is working with the FBI. Chief reminded all that there has been theft issues in the county and to be alert.

FIRE COMPANY

Nothing this meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING

President Fronk opened the public hearing for **Resolution 2116 - A resolution authorizing an application for financial assistance with the USDA to finance 1 Public Works Truck and 1 Police Vehicle and authorizing the Town Manager to execute documents related to said application and grant and/or loan.** Manager Lewis briefed the Commissioners on the resolution, the acquisition of the two vehicles as identified in the Capital Improvement Plan, and explained the 35 USDA / 65 Town match identified in the resolution. No public comment was offered.

Following the Public Hearing, Commission President Fronk motion to approve Resolution 2116, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Lewis stated that the town had been notified that they would be receiving \$597,067.25 from the American Rescue Plan Act Recovery Funds, with the initial payment of \$298,533.63 deposited a week ago. She stated the town would be waiting for the finalization of the Interim Final Rule which will provide instructions for implementing the spending of the recovery funds. At this time, she is requesting issuance of two RFPs with the intention of utilizing these funds. The first one is for stormwater engineering and then construction to provide better management of stormwater in a few areas that flood or have standing water regularly, including the Willows Road area from Public Works to the Pier Street tide gate. This area has been of real concern to the citizens over the last few years. The improvements are intended to reduce environmental impacts to our waters and also reduce damaging stormwater/flood impacts to private property. The second would be for replacement of the towns outdated water metering and billing infrastructure. Our residents do not become aware of water leaks and similar water consumption issues until their quarterly bill shows up in the mail, often resulting in huge water losses. The new system will be mounted on the water tower, receive live data from meters, provide daily data to a central computer, and will notify the staff of potential issues allowing us to work with the user. This too has been a real concern of the citizens and this improvement will enable our users to have better control over their water consumption and promote water conservation. The Commissioners were in favor of soliciting proposals for both suggested projects.

NEW BUSINESS

Lewis presented a Budget Amendment addressing the acquisition of the prior mentioned vehicles for \$100,000 and receiving a grant funding of approximately \$35,000, utilizing prior year reserves to cover the town's match of \$65,000. Commissioner Wells motion to approve the amendment as presented, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. Lewis noted the amendment would be included in the mid-year review and budget revisions.

Lewis stated she would also like to prepare and publish three additional RFPs in the near future. One for the finishing park components at Oxford Central Park, one for the planned fall paving of JL Thompson, Riverview and S Morris, and one for the Strand Shoreline Improvements in preparation for state and federal permitting. Commissioners were in agreement with the request.

A draft version of an updated Adverse Weather Emergency Operations Plan had been provided to the Commissioners prior to the meeting. Lewis stated she had drafted the plan as an updated to the 2007 plan in order to have a plan that was in line with the current County Emergency Management Services protocols. She also stated that there was an opportunity to work with the OBA to potentially create a Business Emergency Plan similar

to one she had identified in Annapolis. At this time, she would like to publish the draft online so the public could review it while the Commissioners were doing the same, and would recommend adoption by resolution at a future meeting. The Commissioners were fine with publishing a draft on the town website.

LETTERS AND REQUEST

A thank you card was received from R G Gordon Grant awardee Katherine Chapple. The Commissioners extended a thank you to Margaret Anderson and the Oxford Museum for their generous donations to the R Gordon Graves Scholarship Program. A request to close Market Street on September 25, 2021 for the annual book sale was received from the Oxford Library. The sale would be from 7 am to 1:30 pm and safety protocols would be in place for staff and visitors. The Commissioners granted permission for the street closure.

ATTORNEY

Ryan stated that she would be on leave until late September or mid October.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis requested approval to submit a grant application to the Maryland Parks and Playground Grant Funding Program for improvements to the Pickleball/Basketball courts for the 2022 round. Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to approve the application submittal, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Lewis requested a Closed Session for personnel discussions and legal advice regarding a contract.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

President Fronk requested updates on several projects. Regarding progress with the MEWS, Lewis stated that the building permit had been issued and the tenant was waiting on his contractor, PWs was working on restoring water and sewer lines that were removed during demolition, and that there were posters in the window promoting spring rental opportunities. The Sign Committee was in the process of doing an inventory of all signage in Oxford in the spring and it is expected they will pick back up with their efforts in the fall. The creation of an Oxford Sustainability or Resilience Committee is still in the planning stages and Lewis will come back with a written description of the proposed committee at a future meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Nothing presented.

With no further business, Commissioner Jaramillo motioned to adjourn the meeting into closed session at 6:55 pm, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned. Following the closed session, Commissioner Wells motioned to close the regular meeting, Commissioner Jaramillo seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting closed at 7:15 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".