

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**March 22, 2022**

The Commissioners Meeting was held in person on March 22, 2022. The public was invited to participate in person and was also provided an option to view the meeting virtually. 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 were Commission President Gordon Fronk, Commissioner Brian Wells, and Town Manager Cheryl Lewis; Commissioner James Jaramillo was unable to attend. Attending the meeting virtually were Public Works WW Superintendent Matt Ozman, Police Chief Patrick Maxwell, Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan, and Planning Officer Maria Brophy. There were two residents in attendance and several residents attending virtually.

Commission President Fronk opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the March 8, 2022 meeting minutes, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Wells motioned to approve and file for audit the January 2022 disbursements, Commission Fronk seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried. Commissioner Wells motioned to approve and file for audit the February 2022 disbursements, Commission Fronk seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried.

**MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Matt Ozman provided the following report: Public works has replaced a bad culvert pipe on South Morris Street across from Pleasant Street, along with a bad culvert pipe on Tilghman Street. Public works has been actively mulching around town, we have completed Town Park, Ferry Dock flower bed, and Banks Street flower beds. We have also mulched around several trees that have been recently planted. All wastewater treatment plant preventive maintenance on the new equipment has been completed for the first half of 2022. Public works has completed the spring lawn mower maintenance, and mowing will begin in spots this week. Public works is still actively cleaning ditches as we progress into the wet season, we have jetted several so far and are working our way through town. Public works has been diligently working on preparing for Oxford Day. The commissioners praised the staff for their efforts picking up brush and their attention to town property.

**POLICE REPORT**

Chief Maxwell reported that with the nicer weather traffic in town has picked up and they have been out in public and visible. He stated he had been busy with administrative issues involving the vehicle theft earlier in the month.

**FIRE COMPANY**

No report submitted.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

President Fronk read Ordinance 2201 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND SECTIONS 19 AND 32 OF THE OXFORD ZONING ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE A PROCESS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN ACCESSORY BUILDING ON A LOT WITHOUT A PRINCIPAL USE WHEN NONCONTIGUOUS LOTS ARE IN COMMON OWNERSHIP AND ARE DIVIDED BY A PAPER STREET OR PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY, stating that the ordinance was scheduled for a public hearing on April 12, 2022 and that it would also be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their April meeting.

Lewis provided an update on HB 1262 Speed Camera Bill, stating that she had provided verbal testimony at the House Committee hearing and that Senator Eckhardt intends to cross file the bill.

Lewis asked to revisit the MD Low Income Household Water Assistance Program that was discussed at the prior meeting, stating that she had spoken with the sponsors and confirmed that there would be no effort if we had no participants and only minimal if we did have a few residents who were able to take advantage of the program. With the new information, she was requesting approval, realizing the program may not be needed but it would be best to approve the State's MOU for participation, in the event we did have a resident that needed to access the program. Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve the MOU and the ability of the Town Manager to sign any necessary documents, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried.

MEMA had responded to the Notice of Interest, approved by the Commissioners at the last meeting. The notice requested financial assistance to address elevation of several private properties prone to flooding and to address stormwater management issues to mitigate flood impacts in low-lying areas of town. MEMA stated they were interested in the projects and requested the town submit to separate applications for the identified efforts. MEMA would be choosing, from the applications submitted, those they think will rank best at the federal level and submitting them on behalf of the state. Lewis requested approval to continue with preparation of two applications, to be submitted by May 31, 2022, for federal funding to assist with private home elevations and to seek assistance in design and construction of stormwater management projects that will mitigate flood impacts to low lying neighborhoods. She noted that the funding was only available for 'new' infrastructure and could not be used to address maintenance and repair of existing infrastructure, explaining that the increased impacts from tidal flooding and increasing storm intensity are going to require investigation of more intense infrastructure like pumping systems to reduce damage to property. Commissioner Fronk motioned to move forward with the application for residential elevations if the staff was able to within the time constraints presented, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried. Commissioner Fronk motioned to move forward with the application for stormwater infrastructure mitigation, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lewis stated to the Commissioners, following up on discussion at the prior meeting, that the town had commissioned GMB to prepare a study of the current and future needs of the town's water system, resulting in a Preliminary Engineering Report, which was submitted as an application to USDA when the town was seeking funding for the Morris Street project. USDA has informed the town that they are receptive to the proposed work and are reviewing the PER and the town's water system financials to determine the loan or loan/grant offer that they intend to propose for the identified projects. Lewis stated that the estimated cost for Phase One was \$4,400,000, and covered several needs including an upgrade to the Arsenic Removal System, introduction of a Fluoride Removal System, incorporation of water components into the wastewater SCADA system, replacement of the Water Meter

Equipment and Billing System, and upgrades to existing Water Lines. She noted that the replacement of the main water line on Morris Street was a component of the PER, but the town had taken advantage of the MDE Water Quality Loan/Loan Forgiveness Program and completed that work in 2021. The total estimated cost of the identified effort is \$26,274,000. Lewis stated at this time, the only portion they were reviewing for funding was Phase One, although she felt that 100% loan was more than the town may want to consider and that she was still working with USDA in an effort to have a portion grant funded. She said at this time in order to move forward with the potential loan/grant funding was a Public Notice of Intent to file an application for funding, identifying the full \$26,274,000 as identified in the PER. A prior Notice of Intent had been published when the Morris Street project was under review, but with the grant/loan funding from MDE, the USDA money was not needed. Commission Fronk motioned to move forward with the Notice of Intent, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried. The Notice of Intent will be advertised and the Commissioners will receive public comments at their April 12, 2022 meeting on the proposed projects.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

A proposal for placement of the Middle Passage Signage was received from Barbara Paca, citing the sign along the edge of the living shoreline at the Ferry Dock, which was reviewed in detail. Lewis expressed concerns with the nearness to the tidal wetlands and state regulations. The Commissioners also noted concerns with current and future tidal flooding, and safety issues presented by vehicular traffic in this area, noted other possible locations, and requested further investigation. Lewis said she would speak with Philip Logan regarding a location with fewer impacts and would also ask that the Sign Committee focus their initial efforts on the Ferry Dock location in order to provide some feedback.

Lewis reminded the Commissioners that she had provided a draft of Ordinance 2002: 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 at the last meeting, recommending consideration of adoption in order to address a current owners situation, and to also resolve several issues within the Cove, similar to a prior amendment to the area surrounding John Shannahan's property in 2012. Lewis provided requested feedback from the Port Wardens, including their recommendation that the Commissioners consider moving forward with this ordinance, while they pursue a further review of the remaining areas that include non-conforming structures. After discussion Commissioner Fronk motion to introduce Ordinance 2002, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried. A public hearing will be held on April 26, 2022 at the regular Commissioners meeting.

### **LETTERS AND REQUEST**

None received.

### **ATTORNEY**

Ryan had no further comments.

### **TOWN MANAGER**

Lewis requested realignment of the Historic District signage located at the Pin Cushion, which was somewhat hidden by a grown tree and not facing those entering town on the State Road. She said that she had spoken with Historic

District Commission members and they were in favor of the relocation within the Pin Cushion and the Chair Tom Costigan had staked out the new location. The Commissioners were agreeable to the move.

Lewis requested consideration of asking Cameron McTavish to represent the town in his work with the efforts to establish trails along the old railroad throughout the county. As the trails will be outside of town, instead of utilizing town staff time, she felt the McTavish would be a good liaison. Commission Fronk motion to approve the request, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, both were in favor, and the motion carried.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None presented.

#### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Fronk noted that Holy Trinity and the OCC were coordinating an effort to provide assistance to Ukrainian refugees.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Julie Wells reminded all of the Oxford Fire Companies upcoming Rummage Sale.

Being no further business, Commissioner Fronk motioned to close the meeting, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned.

Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager