

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2023

The Commissioners Meeting was held at the Oxford Community Center on Tuesday, April 11, 2023. Commission President Jimmy Jaramillo called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President James Jaramillo, Commissioner Brian Wells, Commissioner Tom Costigan, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Approximately 100 people were in attendance and the meeting was live streamed on the Oxford Community Center's YouTube channel.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

OATH OF OFFICE

Commission President Jaramillo issued the Oath of Office to the new chief, Eric Kellner, after which Captain Elliott of the Talbot County Sheriff's office provided him with his badge. Chief Kellner expressed his gratitude for those in attendance, thanking the many allied officers for their support for both him and the citizenry, the Commissioners for the opportunity to be a working Chief, one who will be able to work with the citizens, and finished by speaking to the citizens in attendance, assuring them of his commitment to serve the community.

Commission President Jaramillo issued the Oath of Office to Phyliss Rambo as a new Election Board Member.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Wells motioned to approve the minutes of March 28, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

President Jaramillo noted that following the March 28, 2023 Commissioners Meeting a Closed Session was held for legal advice and for a personnel discussion.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Town Manager Lewis summarized Supervisor Matt Ozman's report as submitted and attached to these minutes.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Kellner provided a report of calls for the prior period, which is attached to these minutes.

FIRE COMPANY REPORT

Lewis read the report for the period 3/15/23 thru 4/11/23 as submitted by Fire Chief Norbury, with 13 fire/rescue calls, mostly mutual aid including support for working fires in St Michaels, Queen-Anne Hillsboro, Easton and Cambridge; 4 medical calls; 2 with patient transport, 2 patient refusals; 118 member responses; 180 hours worked. They have been experiencing lower call volumes than normally anticipated, but some of the calls have been long duration. As an example, yesterday they assisted with a fire at the Talbot County Repurposing Center, were on scene over 3 hours, and pumped in excess of 130,000 gallons of water. Hospitals appear to be experiencing somewhat less congestion in their emergency rooms recently. Most probably this is thanks to seasonal reduction in cold & flu cases. There will be no firehouse breakfast during April.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Attorney Ryan provided an update on the Request for Qualifications for the Water System Improvement project. Following last meetings determination to move forward with request of cost proposals from two of the four bidders, Ryan stated that although the cost proposals had been received, she was not ready at this time to make

a recommendation, and would prefer to proceed with interviews of the bidders for clarification on the proposals, and make her recommendation at the next meeting. The matter was tabled until next meeting.

Lewis provided an update on the grant application to FEMA for elevation of 14 private homes, which the town had submitted through Maryland Emergency Services, noting that the current grant match is 10% from the homeowner. She stated that she received notice that FEMA would like, among other things, to see new elevation certificates for 10 of the 14 homes, for which she received a quote of \$4500 from a local surveyor. At this time, she was requesting \$4500 from the town to be able to have the elevation certificates completed, explaining that although these were private homes, the ability to elevate and reduce the overall economic impact during a disaster and experience a quicker recovery would benefit the whole community, and if awarded the funds would be covered by the grant. Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve the \$4500 as requested, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS None proposed.

LETTERS AND REQUEST

Lewis noted that she had received a few requests for the budget, including one from the Community Center, the Library, and the TYAC, which she would provide during the budget process.

ATTORNEY

Ryan requested that the Public Hearing to be held for Resolution 2301 – For the Temporary Moratorium on Manufacturing or sale of Cannabis, which was scheduled for April 28, 2023, be moved to May 9, 2023 to allow a longer period of time for notice. Ryan gave a brief overview of the purpose for the moratorium, as provide at the prior meeting, which will allow the town to adopt zoning regulations to address the manufacturing and sale of Cannabis, which is currently not address in the town zoning.

Ryan stated the town has filed the brief in the Keegan/Hauk matter and currently are waiting on a scheduling for oral arguments, which looks to be sometime in September.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis reminded all that the Planning Commission was working on the update to the Comprehensive Plan, after which they will be reviewing the Zoning Code. She also noted there were several board openings coming up and if citizens were interested, they should send an email expressing such and also note if they are interested in a specific board. As was done six months ago, interviews would be arranged for the interested citizens and information would be provided to the Commissioners. She did say that anyone who remained on the list for September would still be on the list for review.

The OCC was thanked for their generosity in providing the room and also for providing the live streaming video option for this evening's meeting. Moving forward the town is looking into the options to live stream meetings at the town hall as opposed to the zoom component currently in use.

On the fourth effort requesting legislation from the General Assembly to allow the town the ability to install a speed monitoring/ticket issuing system on the Oxford Road in town, the legislation passed through both chambers and has been forwarded to the Governor's office. This is only a first step, and the town will continue the process. A thank you was extended to Senator Mautz for his continued support of this legislation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Oxford Day will be on April 22, 2023.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Costigan expressed his concerns with the Poplar Hill Farm development that is slated on the Oxford Road in Easton, noting the number of units and the volume of anticipated traffic. He, along with several other Oxford residents, attend a joint Talbot County/Town of Easton meeting at the Avalon Theatre. He stated that it was not his intent as a commissioner to influence Easton town officials, but if other Oxford citizens were as concerned as he was, they can find information on the Talbot County website, and should contact the Talbot County Council members with their concerns regarding the proposed approval to extend growth allocation for this project. Council member emails are listed on the county website.

President Jaramillo expressed his gratitude to Chief Kellner for coming onboard and thanked Sheriff Gamble and all the officers in attendance for their support of Kellner and the town.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dick Deerin read a letter that was provided to the Commissioners on April 1, 2023, which is attached to these minutes, and pointed out that they were requesting policies not individual details regarding personnel.

Corrina Poppi would like to have a 25-mph sign installed on Bank Street. She would also like to see waste receptacles installed near the doggie waste bag stations.

Susan Botkin, as the local representative to the school board, pointed out that currently Easton Schools are at maximum capacity, and the development under consideration on the Oxford Road would potentially create a situation where students would be shifted from Easton to White Marsh Elementary, thereby creating a crowding situation at White Marsh. She also noted that currently the county is experiencing a tremendous health care personnel shortage and adding another major development on top of the developments already underway in the county, is going to impact health care availability. She asked that these concerns be noted in any correspondence to the county regarding the Poplar Hill Farm development.

Dan Kordell stated following his previous request, that the Police Officer hiring notice does not contain the possibility of subsidized housing as a benefit and would the Commissioners be adding it. Lewis stated they were reworking the advertisement, but that she could not say whether that would be included.

Patricia Greer provided a petition containing 215 signatures to amend the Town Charter with regards to the procedure for filling of Commissioner vacancies, which was turned over to the Town Attorney for review.

Phil Livingston provided a lively persuasive demonstration on the potential impacts of the large development under consideration on the Oxford Road. Having attended the presentation at the Avalon, he stated should this high-density development happen, it would change Oxford forever.

With no further business, Commissioner Wells motioned to adjourn the meeting, Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager

BOARD MEETING:
2ND AND 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
(410) 226-5122



101 Market Street
P.O. Box 339
Oxford, Maryland 21654

Commissioners of Oxford

Maintenance Report

4/11/2023

1. Public Works has finished cleaning and sealing all teak wood benches around town.
2. Public Works has fixed and cleaned all plastic outdoor benches around town.
3. The speed trailer sign has been fixed, delivered and installed by Public Works and was activated by me and Chief Kellner with the help of Traffic Logix. This sign is not only a speed sign but doubles as a message board.
4. Public Works have now started painting picnic tables and stationary benches around town please if you see a wet paint sign avoid that bench or table until the sign has been removed.
5. Just a reminder that we will do a special brush pickup before Oxford Day, we just want to make sure the parade route is clear and the rest of town is ready for the big day.
6. R.L. Ewing is to start paving possibly this week before Oxford Day they will mainly be in front of Market St. to Oxford Market store then will be jumping to small patches around town so expect some delays with on lane operations.
7. Bridges in the causeway park walking track are due to be rehabbed this coming week before Oxford Day. We will have bridges coned off while work is performed, work being done is decking and installing new hand rails.
8. Public Works was able to safely take down a large broken branch out of tree on North Morris.

Respectively submitted by:
Matthew Ozman

OXFORD POLICE REPORT

REPORTS	Month	YTD
Theft	0	0
Burglary	0	0
Drug	0	0
Alcohol	0	0
Assault	0	0
Other	0	1

ARRESTS	Month	YTD
Drug Arrests	0	0
Traffic Arrests	0	0
Criminal Arrests	0	0
Warrant Arrests	0	0
Other Arrests	0	0
TOTAL ARREST	0	0

CALLS FOR SERVICE	Month	YTD
Alarm	1	7
Animal Complaint	1	7
Check Welfare	1	1
Disabled Vehicle	1	1
Suspicious Condition	1	1
Assist EMS	0	1
Assist PD	0	7
Liquor Law Violation	0	1
Noise Complaint	0	1
Parking Violation	0	1
Suspicious Person	0	1
Suspicious Vehicle	0	2
Verbal Dispute	0	1

COMMUNITY	Month	YTD
Property Checks	17	267
Special Events	1	1
Foot Patrols	0	22
Bike Patrols	0	0
ASSISTS	Month	YTD
Other PD	0	0
Fire/EMS	0	1
Other Agency	0	0
ENFORCEMENT		
Parking Citations	0	0
Traffic Stops	0	0
Traffic Citations	0	0
Traffic Warnings	0	0
PC Searches	0	0
Criminal Citations	0	0
Civil Citations	0	0

Chief Eric Kellner 4/10/23

April 12, 2023

Commissioner James Jaramillo, President
Commissioner Brian Wells
Commissioner Thomas Costigan

Dear Oxford Commissioners:

This is one of our “repeated inquiries” seeking information on town policies, if any, relating to the use of non-disclosure agreements (“NDA”). As you know, we sent a letter, dated April 1, 2023, to the Commissioners asking for 6 items of information. The request was not specific to any former or present town employee and did not seek any information that would be considered “confidential”, but rather sought general information regarding town policy on use of NDAs and employment agreements. The response, provided by email on April 10, 2023, was “[O]n behalf of the Commissioners” and once again refused this legitimate request for information under the guise that it somehow related to “confidential personnel matters.”

At last evening’s commissioners meeting the April 1, 2023 letter and the email response were read into the record. It was pointed out that the information requested related only to policy and statistics, and did not request any information that could conceivably be considered confidential in nature.

This letter renews our request for the information listed as items 1 through 6 of the April 1st letter and we ask that it be provided in a timely manner. We would hope that this requested information could be provided without requiring us to go through a formal legal process.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Warren Davis
Dick Deerin
Madge Henning
Mark Lacey
John Pitman
Henry Hale
Dorothy Fenwick