

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**May 14, 2019**

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the meeting room of the Community Services Building on May 14, 2019. Commission President Gordon Fronk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT**

Attending the meeting were Commission President Gordon Fronk, Commissioner Gordon Graves, Commissioner John Pepe, Public Works Superintendent Scott Delude, Administrator/Clerk Cheryl Lewis, and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Graves motioned to adopt the minutes of April 23, 2019 as distributed. Commissioner Pepe seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

**MAINTENANCE REPORT**

Public Works Superintendent Delude reported the following:

- The community gardens are nearly completed. 21 of the planned 32 plots have been finished. Lisa will be assigning to citizens and will track with a map.
- The exiting bridges at the Causeway have had any decayed wood replaced and have been stained for the season.
- There was a water leak at the water plant at the well #2 location. The leak was isolate and repaired.
- Two PW members attended the Ocean City Maryland Rural Water conference the prior week and spent 3 days in water and wastewater training classes.

**POLICE REPORT**

Oxford Police Chief Patrick Maxwell reported the following:

- 2 – Alarms, weather related
- 15-Patrol Checks
- 6-Police Information-Service
- 1-Parking Complaint
- 2-Check the Welfare
- 1-Domestic

Chief Maxwell stated Mother's Day weekend was busy with no major incidents. Maxwell reminded residents to report any suspicious persons and to lock vehicles and homes.

**FIRE COMPANY**

Chief Graham Norbury gave a brief report stating that since the last meeting there had been 5 Fire calls, most of which were mutual aid, with 1 boat standby for an event in Cambridge. 29 miles traveled and 31 member responses. For Medical there were 6 transports, 138 miles traveled and 30 member responses. Saturday will be the annual Auxiliary Antique and Uniques sale. Breakfast had about 260 attendees.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

President Fronk requested Administrator Lewis provide a brief update on any changes to the Budget Ordinances. She provided the Commissioners with the budget worksheet listing the amended 2019 budget and the proposed

2020 budget, reminding the Commissioners that they had seen the spreadsheet at prior meetings and outlined several minor changes, which she stated were mostly grant related. \$150,000 was added to expenses in the FY 2020 Budget for the new Central Park as the town has been awarded funding from the state to start the project. In addition, she increased the interim financing expense for FY 2019 in the Wastewater Construction project to cover interest in advance of closing out the loan. She also incorporated additional expense in the amended FY 2019 budget for mini grant projects, which she is trying to close out by June 30, 2019.

President Fronk opened the public hearing on Ordinance 1905 Amending the FY2019 General/Enterprise Budget, which was published on the website. No public comment or further discussion was offered and the public hearing was closed.

Fronk opened the public hearing on Ordinance 1906 Adopting the FY 2020 General/Enterprise Budget and setting a Tax Rate of .3047 per \$100 of assessed real property value. The same tax rate as prior year. Hearing no comments, the public hearing was closed.

Fronk opened the public hearing on Ordinance 1907 Setting FY 2020 Water and Sewer Rates, stating that as in prior years and as explained in the prior meeting, a 7% increase would continue in order to reach appropriate levels to assure proper funding once the upgraded treatment plant was in full operation. Hearing no comments, the public hearing was closed.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Resolution 1904 updating the Police Manual, which was previously provided to the Commissioners by Attorney Ryan, was read by President Fronk. Ryan provided a summary of the process to date. At the previous meeting the Commissioners had requested additional time to finish reviewing the manual. Maxwell stated as of this date he was about 74% through the manual and requested additional time to finish reading the manual. The Resolution and adoption of the manual was tabled until the next meeting.

Administrator Lewis provided the Commissioners an update regarding the currently active RFP for Design of the Strand Beach and other shoreline areas. She stated the RFP had been rereleased with additional information provided by the state and the amended RFP had been provided to all interested parties and re-advertised on eMarketplace to allow for any additional participation. Lewis also provided the Commissioners with a review of the project, providing Commissioners and citizens with a picture compilation that had also been provided to potential bidders, reminding the Commissioners of the issues that were to be addressed. She explained the pictures were taken during storm and high tide events to provide designers with a clear picture of the erosion issues and threats to infrastructure found on both public and private shorelines. The state was willing to look at projects that were inclusive of adjoining private areas when attempting to build in shoreline resilience. Lewis added the state was present at the prebid meeting to express their interest in the project and to answer questions from bidders. Lewis stated once bids were reviewed, the state, the NWF and the town would each provide a recommendation, which would be consolidated into a formal recommendation to the Commissioners for their consideration. There was discussion regarding the concerns with the eroding shoreline and the need to consider beach replenishment to distance the waterline, which currently is right up to the roadway during extreme events, events of which are happening more frequently. Undermining of the roadway during a storm could cause a washout, serious infrastructure damage and potentially threaten the homes and business structures along the strand, a condition that needs to be addressed as soon as possible. This design funding will provide the necessary engineering and permitting for the town to pursue funding to complete the project in future years. Lewis stated that she would provide an update at the June meeting, but does not anticipate any decisions that early.

Commissioner Pepe stated to attendees that although when discussed in meetings the steps required to produce these projects and the accompanying grant funding seem orderly and easy, he wanted to point out that it is because of the amount of time and effort Lewis puts into the projects for the benefit of the town that makes them possible.

President Fronk commented on the progress being made on the MEWS building restoration, stating that the wood floors had been removed in the wing sections and dirt was visible. He is expecting, in anticipation of bringing in excavation equipment, they will be removing the back appendages soon, which will allow for the shoring up of the crawlspace and foundation. Once interior works is complete the back of the building will be closed up with plywood awaiting development. Fronk expects once the structure is stabilized and painted the town will be in a position to request proposals from potential developers. There is no intention in seeking profit, just funds to reimburse what the town has invested up to this point. Lewis stated if there were any additional funds, she would work with the state to roll it over into the mini grant program.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Lewis provided the Commissioners with a Resolution to submit an application to the DHCD for continuation of the Mini Grant Program, providing funding assistance to Oxford Businesses with Exterior and Interior Improvements. President Fronk read Resolution 1908, Approving a Maryland DHCD Community Legacy Grant Application for Funds to Provide Grants to Owners of Businesses Located in Sustainable Communities Designated Areas for Façade and Interior Improvements and motioned to introduce the resolution. Commissioner Pepe seconded the introduction and all were in favor. Commissioner Pepe motioned to adopt the Resolution, Commissioner Fronk seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Commissioner Graves, upon request from a citizen, reviewed the conditions of the Customs House with Lewis and Delude, and determined that it was in need of some care. Lewis has submitted a request to use Mini Grant funding to do some maintenance to the building and is awaiting a response. Graves stated that while going through the desk located at the Customs House he located some interesting items, including the original history behind the 1976 Bicentennial construction of the structure, which he read out loud and a cash box for collecting book sales fee, including \$37 that has apparently been sitting in the desk for the last ten years. The funds will be deposited into the Customs House fund. Lewis added that planned work includes the cleaning of the roof by Pat Mayock, changing of the screen door to a glass door by Public Works to allow visitors to view the interior even when it was locked, painting of the interior and exterior by Tim Moore and the addition of a mini-split to provide heating and air conditioning, preventing the current moisture damage found on the walls and ceiling and allowing for the safe display of historic items without concern of damage. Graves also noted that Pat Ingram deserves kudos for having cleaned and cared for the interior of the building over the years unbeknownst to most.

## **LETTERS AND REQUEST**

A letter was received from the Oxford Garden Club thanking Lewis, the Commissioners and citizens of Oxford for the donation and support.

Demarco sent a letter on behalf of the homes located on Morris between Caroline and W Division thanking the town for the improvements to the sidewalk and the drainage.

Lewis presented a letter of support she had provided to the Oxford Museum for a grant application they were submitting prior to the nights meeting. Fronk read the letter which was requesting funding from the Heritage Areas Fund for an online walking tour.

Stuart Parnes and Ron Walker provided the Commissioners with pictures of artwork that Walker had created on his property, depicting the threat of rising sea levels and a request to install the art structures at the living shoreline located by the ferry dock. The small houses would be mounted in the marsh of the shoreline on small post for the summer and the Museums Smithsonian's Waterways exhibition. Pepe commented that the concept was really thought provoking. Parnes stated the installation would be temporary in nature and would not cause any damage to the shoreline. The Commissioners were appreciative of the project and in favor of the installation. Lewis inquired as to whether they could leave the single demonstration piece up as she was anticipating visitors from NOAA administration and felt the art was representative of the town's concerns and efforts.

Susan Campbell, having read about a Memorial Day project in the newspaper, requested permission to work with the Rotary Club to have flags installed at Causeway Park for holiday as part of their annual effort. The flags appear to be about 3 x 5 and shouldn't be up for more than a couple of weeks at the most. The Commissioners were in favor and approved Campbell's requested to work with the Rotary Club and place the flags in an appropriate location off the road.

Lewis stated she had received a request from Pope's Tavern to again hold Rock around the Block, a charity fundraiser, including the closing of the street front area and with a request to hold the event and music until 11 pm as opposed to the prior years of 10 pm. The Commissioners stated that as it was for charity, they would consider the request as a one-time event. Commissioner Fronk motioned to approve, Commissioner Graves seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was approved.

**ATTORNEY**

No further comments.

**ADMINISTRATOR**

Lewis updated the Commissioners on the plans for the new "Central Park" replacing the unused baseball field. She reminded the Commissioners that she had requested funding to begin design of the park site, including stormwater management, and was excited the state was awarding funding to actually begin the project in FY 2020. She will bring the proposed design to the Commissioners at a future meeting for review.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Pete Dunbar request information regarding the upcoming election. Lewis stated election dates were posted on the bulletin board and on the website. The deadline for nominations is Monday. President Fronk was up for reelection and has filed for such. The election is held on the third Tuesday of June.

Capt. Bixler stated the Ferry had again passed its annual inspection and its long-standing record was intact.

There being no further business, President Fronk made a motion to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Graves, all were in favor and the motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis, Town Administrator-Clerk/Treasurer