

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**May 23, 2023**

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Tuesday, May 23, 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, Police Lt Chris Phillips, Public Works WW Supervisor Matt Ozman, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, and Town Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Planning Officer Maria Brophy attended virtually. Approximately 31 people were in attendance and another 7 virtually.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Wells motioned to approve the minutes of May 9, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve the report of disbursements for April 2023, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

**PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

Supervisor Matt Ozman presented his report. RL Ewing has finished paving and patches through town. Public works employees have been working on replacing finger piers on town owned boat slips, with 2 completed and 4 left to go at the causeway dock. Public works located and fixed a service line water leak located on Mill Street. A new stop sign and post has been installed at Rhobes Harbor. Public works has responded to two sewer backups in town, the first on Pier Street and the other on Bayview, backups were found in the lateral sewer lines coming from each property and were resolved the same day. Additional street safety devices have been ordered, including signage, road cones, and barriers, with most having been delivered. One after hours call in at the wastewater plant for a power failure alarm on the Non-Potable Water system, upon arrival found system in alarm no pumps running. Reset control panel then reset alarm put pumps back into operation all working normal. Just a reminder it's that time of year public works will be out and about working on hydrant flushes and painting hydrants to start this week, and this is about a 2-week process. Ozman also announced that Mike Bell was awarded the Water Treatment Operator of the Year award.

**POLICE REPORT**

Lt Phillips provided the report of calls, attached here, and a progress report for the department. Review of policies and procedures continues, as does revamping of recruitment policies and procedures. The department has recently interviewed 4 officers. The speed sign/trailer has been moved to the Strand and speeding data will be analyzed, regular updates have been posted on Facebook, the Chief has attended meetings with regards to the new County Police Accountability Board, along with the County Economic Development Meeting, and lastly Coffee with a Cop will be on May 25, 2023.

**FIRE COMPANY**

Pam Baker noted an Awards Ceremony was planned at the Fire House on May 24<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm, where Mike Young will receive Maryland's Lifetime Achievement Award.

**ELECTION BOARD REQUEST**

Pam Baker, Election Board Supervisor, stated that Phyllis Rambo has a conflict on June 20, 2023 and has stepped down from her position as an Election Supervisor. Baker would like to recommend that Election Clerk Eva Smorzaniuk be promoted to an Election Judge. Eva was not available for this meeting, but would be available on June 13, 2023. Baker stated that in Smorzaniuk's place, she would like to place Jody Ware in as an Election Clerk. President Jaramillo issued the Oath of Office to Jody Ware. Commissioner Wells motioned to approve Eva

Smorzaniuk as an Election Judge, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

### **CHARTER AMENDMENT**

Attorney Ryan provided a draft resolution for the Citizen submitted Charter Amendment, stating the procedure required adoption of a resolution identifying the date and time for the referendum election within 60 days of receiving the referendum petition and that the election must be held within 60 days of adopting the resolution. She had drafted the resolution with a place holder election date of July 18, 2023, which would place the election within this window and on a Tuesday from 8 am to 8 pm, in keeping with the town's normal election process. Notice will need to be posted for 4 weeks leading up to the election. Ryan read Resolution 2306 Scheduling a Referendum Election for the Charter Amendment submitted on April 11, 2023, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Commission President Jaramillo stated the Commissioners intended to hold an Informational Meeting on July 14th to allow the citizens have an opportunity to be able to receive information on the current process for replacing a Commissioner in the case of a vacancy, and on the changes presented in the Proposed Charter Amendment for replacing a Commissioner in the case of a vacancy, and to be able to openly discuss with the members of government the reasoning behind the Commissioner's hesitancy in embracing this amendment. Further information will be posted on the website for the public to review and prepare for an open discussion on the submitted Charter Amendment. Commissioner Wells motioned to adopt Resolution 2306 Scheduling the Referendum Election on July 18, 2023 from 8 am to 8 pm, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

The Public Hearing for Ordinance 2302 - Oxford FY 2023 General and Enterprise Budget Amended was open for public input. Hearing no comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

The Public Hearing for Ordinance 2304 - Oxford FY 2024 General and Enterprise Budget and Tax rate was open for public input. Hearing no comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

The Public Hearing for Ordinance 2305 - Setting FY 2024 Water and Sewer Rates was open for public input. Hearing no comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Commissioner Wells motion to approve Ordinance 2302 - Oxford FY 2023 General and Enterprise Budget Amended, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed.

Commissioner Costigan motion to approve Ordinance 2304 - Oxford FY 2024 General and Enterprise Budget and Tax rate, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed.

Commissioner Costigan motion to approve Ordinance 2305 - Setting FY 2024 Water and Sewer Rates and Tax rate, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion passed.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None presented.

### **LETTERS AND REQUEST**

The Oxford Garden Club requested to hold their annual Memorial Day Ceremony in Town Park. Commissioner Wells motioned to approve the request, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Cameron Mactavish was present to update the Commissioners on the Talbot Thrive/Town of Oxford joint Grant Application to the MD Bike Ways Program for grant funding to explore a bike/pedestrian shared path/trail to connect the Causeway Park, Central Park, and Causeway Park, allowing for people to move between the parks without utilizing the State Road. Talbot Thrive had previously requested the Town submit a letter of intent for a joint project, and the Bike Ways Program responded positively inviting a full application for feasibility and partial design. Talbot Thrive representatives were also in attendance at the County meeting on this evening to request the same. Lewis stated the town would be the applicant and would manage the funds, but it was anticipated that

Talbot Thrive would provide the necessary research and bidding effort for the project. Following discussion Commissioner Wells motioned to have the Town submit an application on behalf of the Town, Talbot Thrive, and Talbot County for feasibility and design funding as a first step in establishing the trail, Commission Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

#### **ATTORNEY**

Nothing further.

#### **TOWN MANAGER**

Following up on the prior month's request to utilize Shore Rivers for Beach Water Quality Monitoring at \$600 for the season, which would include signage that will contain a QR code that could be scanned for the current results, Lewis stated that although she was able to find other State beach water testing sites and results, there were no sites in Talbot County and certainly none specific to the Strand Beach. She also noted in speaking with Shore Rivers, the Strand site has the most viewed results in their program. Commissioner Wells motioned to move forward with the annual testing, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lewis stated Shore United Bank had provided a Resolution to roll over the CDs held at the bank as an emergency savings fund to a six month CD at 5%. Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve the Resolution for the new CD at 5% interest, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lewis requested a closed session for Personnel and Legal Advice.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Lifetime Achievement Award to Mike Young at the Oxford Fire House May 24th at 2:30 pm; Coffee with a Cop on May 25th at the Oxford Community Center at 9:30 am; Memorial Day Service in Town Park on May 29th at 10:45 am; Oxford 2100 – save the date – Public Presentation at the OCC on June 10, 2023 at 11:30 am.

#### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Wells stated, for those who may not already be aware, the Parks and Rec Committee was running a naming contest for Central Park and request suggestions be forwarded to the Chair Karen Livingston.

Commissioner Costigan offered thanks to Karen Walbridge and her legion of volunteers who put on the 39<sup>th</sup> Fine Arts Festival this past weekend, applauding their success. Costigan also explained that for the last three months he had been participating in the Talbot County CERT program, a program that trains citizens on how they can assist during a major emergency event while awaiting the arrival of Emergency Responders. He highly recommends the program and suggested that anyone interested in the participating in the next session contact Geneva at the Talbot County Emergency Center.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Debbie Krolicki inquired as to whether a time had been set for the July 14<sup>th</sup> Informational Meeting and was told it would be a 6 pm, with a location yet to be determined, but it would be posted. Krolicki requested that Matt Ozman place his voice on the answering machine at the shop and that he respond to calls when they are left there.

Katrina Greer asked who the town uses for financial advice. Lewis stated the town consults with the town accountants on how and where town funds are kept, adding that CDs are the preferred location for funds that may be needed by the town. She also asked if the town has considered a finance committee.

Kelly Greenhawk asked if there were in fact Sheriff's officers patrolling the town overnight and received an affirmative from Lt. Phillips.

Dick Deerin asked why the minutes of the last Commissioners meetings are not posted prior to the next meeting and it was explained that minutes are not posted until they have been reviewed and formally approved by the Commissioners.

Pat Mayock inquired as to how the Ballfield decisions had been made and implied that the Ballfield had been taken away when the Wastewater Treatment Plant was under construction and it was used as a storage area for

soil from the plant, and although he assumed there were committees making decisions, etc., he wanted to know whether ceasing the use of the ballfield had gone to the public for a vote. Lewis provided the history of the field since 2010, noting that there has not been any Little League teams on the field in a long time, by 2012 the field was not being used at all, shortly after that Oxford Lawn stopped caring for the field and Public Works picked up the mowing. As the field remained unused, citizens had requested to use it as a dog park, which they did for awhile until others suggested it was not safe to have dogs and children in the same park. The town sought grant funding for a dog park and relocated the dog park use to a new park. Following that Parks and Rec had tried to stir up use of the field with kick ball and softball games, but after a few games the park again remained unused. Following citizen complaints that the property was not used and not cared for, the town sought grant funding to redevelop the park into an area for the residents to use, incorporating recreational elements that cannot be found elsewhere in town, like chess and table tennis, and cooking and picnic facilities. The concepts have been discussed numerous times over the years and the components of the park have been posted on the town website for several years. The town put out an RFP for the park in 2021 but on the heels of the pandemic, did not receive a viable bid for the work. Lewis stated that no remanent products from the Wastewater Treatment construction were ever stored on this site. The dirt was top soil removed from the Causeway when the swales were expanded and incorporated into the design of the park. The town still has grant funding for the park and intends to place a second RFP for the effort. In the meantime, landscaping and stormwater infrastructure elements have been developed through participation in joint entity grant funding opportunities. Currently a local Boy Scout is refurbishing the Dugouts and the Concession Stand as his Eagle project. These elements were left in the park as a memorial of the former use as a ballfield. Discussion continued on the process and concerns regarding the abandonment of the ballfield and it was suggested by Mr. Mayock it could have just been left as a ballfield, whether it was used or not.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Wells motion to adjourn into closed session for personnel and legal advice, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned into closed session at 6:54 pm.

Following the closed session, Commissioner Wells motion to approve a text amendment to the Employee Retirement Reimbursement Plan clarifying eligibility to 'retiring' employees only, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. With no further business, Commissioner Wells motion to adjourn the regular meeting, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager



***Oxford Police Department***  
***101 Market Street***  
***P.O. Box 339***  
***Oxford, Maryland 21654***  
***“Maryland’s First Port”***

*Eric M. Kellner, Chief of Police*

**Reporting Period: 5/8/23 – 5/21/23**

<b>REPORTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>ARRESTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Theft	1	2	Drug Arrests	0	0
Animal Complaint	0	1	DUI Arrests	0	0
Harassment	2	2	Criminal Arrests	1	1
Fraud / ID Theft	0	1	Warrant Arrests	0	0
Assault	0	1	Juvenile Referrals	0	1
Domestic	0	1	Other Arrests	0	0
Accident Report	0	1	<b>Total Arrests</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Suspicious Conditions	1	1			
Found/Lost Property	4	8			
Other	0	1			
<b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>COMMUNITY POLICING</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Alarm	1	11	Property Checks	54	406
Animal Complaints	0	12	Special Events	0	6
Check Welfare	0	1	Foot Patrol	3	33
Disable Vehicle	0	1	Bike Patrol	5	8
Suspicious Condition	3	4			
911 – Hang-up	0	1	<b>ASSISTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Trespassing	0	1	Other PD	2	4
Liquor Law Violation	0	1	Fire/EMS	1	6
Noise Complaint	0	1	Other Agency	0	0
Parking Violation	2	5			
Suspicious Person	0	2	<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Suspicious Vehicle	0	4	Parking Citations	1	1
Verbal Dispute	1	2	Traffic Stops	12	40
Found Property	4	7	Traffic Citations	0	1
Motor Vehicle Collision	2	3	Traffic Warnings	7	28
Traffic Complaint	0	1	PC Searches	0	0
Harassment	2	2	Criminal Citations	0	0
Rogue and Vagabond	4	4	Civil Citations	0	0
<b>TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Speeding	10	30	Cell Phone Violation	1	2
Stop Sign	0	2	Other Violation	0	3
Driving w/o License	0	2			
Equipment Violation	1	2			

**RESOLUTION NO. 2306**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD SCHEDULING A REFERENDUM ELECTION ON WHETHER THE CHARTER AMENDMENT PETITION SUBMITTED ON APRIL 11, 2023, SHALL BE APPROVED WHICH WOULD AMEND THE TOWN CHARTER TO REQUIRE VACANCIES ON THE COMMISSION TO BE FILLED BY HOLDING A SPECIAL ELECTION WITHIN 45 DAYS OF THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED COMMISSION MEETING AFTER A VACANCY OCCURS, RATHER THAN BY APPOINTMENT BY A MAJORITY OF THE REMAINING COMMISSIONERS UNTIL THE NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED ELECTION**

WHEREAS, Section C5-15 of the Town of Oxford Charter provides that a vacancy on the Commission for any reason shall be filled by the favorable votes of a majority of the remaining members of the Commission until the next regular election; and

WHEREAS, on April 11, 2023, more than 20% of the qualified voters in town signed and submitted a Petition to amend the language in Section C5-15 of the Charter to state, “[a]ny vacancy on the Commission, for any reason, shall be filled by the favorable votes of the registered voters of the Town of Oxford. The date of the election shall be set by the Commission at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting and shall be held within 45 days. The voting shall be conducted in the manner as prescribed in Sections C5-10, 12, 13, 14 under “Registration, Nominations and Elections” for Town elections” (the “Petition”); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to MD Code Ann., Local Government Article § 4-305, within 60 days of receipt of the Petition, the Town is required to approve a resolution calling for the referendum on whether the proposed charter amendment shall be approved and schedule the date for the referendum; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners have determined that it is desirable and in the public interest to hold the referendum election on the proposed Charter amendment within the Petition on **July 18, 2023 from the hours of 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.**

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD that a referendum election on the Charter amendment within the Petition is scheduled for July 18, 2023 from the hours of 8:00 am to 8:00 pm; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD that the following language shall be placed on the ballot:

The ballot shall contain the following question:

PLACE AN “X” IN THE BOX *APPROVING* OR *DISAPPROVING* THE CHARTER AMENDMENT BELOW:

**Any vacancy on the Commission, for any reason, shall be filled by the favorable votes of the registered voters of the Town of Oxford. The date of the election shall be set by the Commission at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting and shall be held within 45 days. The date of the election shall be set by the Commission at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting and shall be held within 45 days. The voting shall be conducted in the manner as prescribed in Sections C5-10, 12, 13, 14 under “Registration, Nominations and Elections” for Town elections.**

APPROVE

DISAPPROVE

RESOLVED, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jimmy Jaramillo, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Wells, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Costigan, Commissioner

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was passed by a ye and nay vote of the Commissioners of Oxford on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager  
Town of Oxford