

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2023

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Tuesday, June 13, 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 Chief Eric Kellner, Public Works WW Supervisor Matt Ozman, and Town Manager Cheryl Lewis. Planning Officer Maria Brophy attended virtually. Approximately 40 people were in attendance and another 10 virtually.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Wells motioned to approve the minutes of May 23, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve the minutes of the Special meeting held June 8, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

It was noted, the Commissioners of Oxford held a Special Meeting Virtually at 5 pm on June 8, 2023 to address the immediate consideration of a Lease with the United States Postal Service. The meeting was posted on the town website and bulletin board with information for the public to join. The town was notified on May 26, 2023 that the prior lease, held by a third party, would expire on June 30, 2023 and the third party had no intention of renewing the lease. In order to continue the operations of the Post Office with no interruptions, the Town, who already owns the ground, entered into discussions with the USPS. The Commissioners elected to lease the existing Post Office Facility directly to the United States Postal Service.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Supervisor Matt Ozman presented his report. Public works investigated one service line water leak. They hydro excavated the ground around the meter and service line and found no leaks, so far further investigation is needed to determine the source of the water. Two public works employees attended WWSO annual short course for wastewater training and sat for the MDE certification test for wastewater 5A. This month is safety training month for Public Works. They will be training on OSHA mandated training such as heavy equipment, fall protection, confine space, and lock out tag out procedures. This training is to be done yearly, and is a mandatory requirement by OSHA for all government municipalities. Public works is currently working on painting of wastewater lift stations around town. In the past two weeks there was one after hours call in for the wastewater treatment facility, due to a program error on SCADA. Brush has been cut back along bachelors point road to allow motorists to see better around curves for oncoming traffic and pedestrians. Coming up, the bridges in the soccer field will be painted towards the end of June, after which they will be closed for at least 12 hours to allow them to dry. Public Works will be jetting out sewer lines and storm water lines around town in the next few weeks and will have one lane traffic in areas in certain areas. Commissioner Costigan noted appreciation for the Pedestrian Area signs Ozman recently had made for the town park/commercial storefront area.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Kellner provided the report of calls, attached here, and a progress report for the department. Review of policies and procedures has been completed. The Chief stated that of the 30 applications received, 6 applicants met the minimum requirements, 5 applicants requested to be interviewed, with 1 dropping out the day of interviews. 2 of the candidates are currently going through the background investigation process. The Speed Sign Trailer was deployed on the Strand. The data from the speed sign while installed on the Strand, registered 966 vehicles from May 15 to May 21, with 12 speed violations. The highest speed was 37 mph. Oxford PD stopped 1 vehicle during radar enforcement and a second complaint was address in person by Lt Phillips. Facebook post,

citizen-business interactions, and Coffee with a Cop continue. Kellner mentioned the lock up at 9 pm campaign to remind citizens to lock vehicles, etc., to prevent crime. Lt Phillips gave a brief overview of the new Citizen's Police Academy program the department has been working on, which will be a multi week class for 15 applicants that will provide residents with a glimpse into policing, including trips to outside agencies and use of simulation equipment, offering citizens a better understanding of how policing works.

FIRE COMPANY

Tim Kearns gave an update from the Fire Company, 1 water rescue, 2 marine fires, 1 serious motor vehicle accident, 2 structure fires, and 6 medical calls. There were 150 attendees at the last breakfast. The annual rummage sale drop off is this Friday and the sale will be on Saturday June 17, 2023.

OATH OF OFFICE

Commissioner Wells motioned to place David Ober on the Ethics Commission, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. President Jaramillo issued the Oath of Office.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Costigan stated in an effort to improve communications and with recent citizen concerns over the timing required before meeting minutes can be posted, research into solutions for live broadcasting of meetings has been underway. Manager Lewis stated, that after several failed attempts to find someone to work with the town on a solution, she had been in contact with a company called "Town Hall Streams" that provides both equipment for streaming and the platform for live stream meetings, along with the ability to store for later viewing. This vendor would work in coordination with our current IT provider to have their equipment installed. This company provides service to many communities including the City of Cambridge and currently holds the State of Maryland's master contract for Live Streaming. The streaming camera and microphone equipment would be \$2000, with streaming cost of \$150 monthly. After the initial investment, the company would be responsible for upgrades to the equipment and other than returning the equipment, the service can be canceled at any time. The town's IT provider is scheduled to review and provided a wiring estimate, but based on prior estimates, the cost is being estimated at under \$3000, bringing the upfront cost to \$5000 and the annual streaming subscription to \$1800. Lewis stated she was requesting consideration of funding of this acquisition and installation, noting at this time it would come out of Building Capital which currently is a line item of \$10,000. There were citizen comments regarding other streaming products used by the county and the use of free services like YouTube. It was suggested that citizens view the Town Hall Streams meetings for other communities. The discussion was deferred to the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Parks and Recreation Chair, Karen Livingston, presented recommendations for name of the old ballfield, which has been going by the name of Central Park during its transformation. She stated that she had posted rules on line regarding submittal of suggestions. The committee only received one name submitted by two different people, along with a second suggestion which was dropped off at the town office. The submittal with two votes was for "Dug Out Park" and the second submittal was "Volunteer Memorial Park." No immediate action was taken.

LETTERS AND REQUEST

In reference to the ballfield, Lewis provided a letter from Cassie Greenhawk, a now adult who had grown up playing on the field, which was summarized at the meeting and will be attached to these minutes. Her suggestion was to develop a memorial of some form allowing the residents to display their memories. It was acknowledged that the new design will allow for ample opportunity to place memories on signage, inside the dug outs, and on other outbuildings. Her thoughts were well received and her help will be solicited in the creation of a memorial.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis stated that Karen Livingston would also like the Commissioners to consider the appointment of Cecelia Corder and Jan Nelson to the Parks and Recreation committee. Commissioner Costigan motion to approve appointment of the two members, Commissioner Wells seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Lewis provided an update on the Oxford 2100 Visioning Project for which a Concept Plan, along with other designs of a future Oxford, were presented this past Saturday at the Oxford Community Center. The presentation was well attended and interesting discussions were had. The next step in the process is to develop a timeline for the necessary infrastructure improvements over the next 80 years to create a long-term Capital Improvement Plan. Lewis noted that there were also questions posed during the presentation regarding current and near future efforts and she felt it might be good to have a "Town Talk" at the OCC to bring residents up to date on current work, as it had been a while since the last talk. The Commissioners provided their comments on the sobering images of 2100, appreciating the need to go through this exercise to better prepare Oxford for the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Juneteenth – June 19, 2023 – the Office will be closed. The Election for a Commissioner will be on June 20, 2023 from 8 am to 8 pm. The Informational Meeting to Discuss the Charter Amendment – July 14, 2023 at 6 pm at the OCC. The Charter Amendment Referendum Election will be on July 18, 2023 from 8 am to 8 pm. The next Commissioners meeting will be on June 27, 2023.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Costigan commended Dorothy Williams and the Oxford Garden Club, and especially Bill Dial, for the beautiful and solemn Memorial Day ceremony. Costigan also gave his own update on the Poplar Hill development, providing dates of the next relevant meetings and providing email addresses for the County Council for concerned residents to submit their thoughts.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Art Murr thanked the Chief for his report on the Strand. He also commented on the 2100 presentation and hoped that we would look at the next 10 years also. Frederikos Franke suggested eliminating some of the parking in front of Town Park, at least for the 4th of July. Chief will look into it while planning for the holiday. Lewis stated she had forgot to mention that she has spoken with the State regarding implementing a crosswalk and also widening the parking in front of Town Park to create a safer area. Emily Knud Hanson inquired as to how many people voted on the naming of the park, which in fact was only 3, one of which was hers. Hanson also noted that the 2100 Vision was exceptional and was appreciative of the student involvement. Jan Greenhawk stated the third vote was hers and Lewis confirmed that they did have her recommendation of Volunteer Memorial Park. Commissioner Wells suggested that maybe the appropriate name is "Dug Out Memorial Park". There was some discussion regarding the sea level predictions used for Vision 2100, online locations that are available for the public to look at the effects of rising sea levels like Climate.gov. There was discussion regarding the streaming service proposed and whether the town would own the rights to the videos from the service if the contract is canceled. Susan Delean-Botkin expressed concerns with the use of Grativus, which is the service the School Board uses, as they generally require several staff at meetings to manage the audio/video components, and still don't have the greatest results. There was continued discussion regarding the parking in front of Town Park, possible streaming solutions, and sea level rise preparations. Barbara Paca stated based on the concerns with communications and the discussions regarding Oxford 2100 this evening, she would like to request to have access to all the grants that have been written thus far and have a catalog of every line item of every budget for every grant ever written, as she thinks it would be helpful to her neighbors to have access to this information for environmental justice, to know how these grants are being written and exactly how these funds are being spent to better understand this town on a broader platform, and it would be important to see who is the principal investigator and how that person is being compensated and what is in each line item, so that we can better understand what has happened in the last 5 to 10 years. The Chief was questioned as to why the traffic reader sign was located on Banks and Market, and he explained that it was placed there after citizen request due to the volume of people who travel the wrong way down Market Street.

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 7:11 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: 5/22/23 – 6/11/23

REPORTS	RP	YTD	ARRESTS	RP	YTD
Theft	2	5	Drug Arrests	0	0
Animal Complaint	0	1	DUI Arrests	0	0
Harassment	0	2	Criminal Arrests	0	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	1	2	Total Arrests	0	2
Suspicious Conditions	1	2			
Found/Lost Property	2	10			
Other	2	3			
Total Reports	8	28			
CALLS FOR SERVICE	RP	YTD	COMMUNITY POLICING	RP	YTD
Alarm	1	12	Property Checks	84	490
Animal Complaints	2	14	Special Events	4	10
Check Welfare	1	2	Foot Patrol	8	41
Suspicious Condition	1	5	Bike Patrol	6	14
911 – Hang-up	0	1			
Trespassing	0	1	ASSISTS	RP	YTD
Liquor Law Violation	0	1	Other PD	1	5
Noise Complaint	0	1	Fire/EMS	6	12
Parking Violation	8	13	Other Agency	0	0
Suspicious Person	0	2			
Suspicious Vehicle	0	4	ENFORCEMENT	RP	YTD
Verbal Dispute	0	2	Parking Citations	5	6
Found Property	2	9	Traffic Stops	24	64
Motor Vehicle Collision	2	5	Traffic Citations	0	1
Traffic Complaint	2	3	Traffic Warnings	24	52
Harassment	0	2	PC Searches	0	0
Rogue and Vagabond	0	4	Criminal Citations	0	0
Misc. Calls	14	17	Civil Citations	0	0
Total Calls	33	98			
TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD	TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD
Speeding	22	52	Cell Phone Violation	0	2
Stop Sign	0	2	Other Violation	1	4
Driving w/o License	0	2	Equipment Violation	1	3

The Oxford baseball field is undergoing conversion into a multi-purpose, multi-use park, but it used to be so much more.

I grew up in Oxford. I was one of the 67 kids between the ages of 5 and 14 identified in the 2000 U.S. Census. While not all of these 67 kids lived “in town” and despite being a small fraction of the Oxford population at that time (771), we were everywhere – riding bikes around town, buying candy at the market, hanging out at the park, and playing games of tag and hide and seek. Those of us not on the Little League team spent time playing at the baseball field during home games, hoping to get our hands on candy and hotdogs from the concession stand.

While the town itself is special to me, I owe so much of who I am to that baseball field.

In 1994, I met my lifelong best friend at that field. We were 3. Her brother was playing Little League for my dad, Jimmy Greenhawk, and we would play together during games and practices. She was the maid of honor at my wedding, as was I at hers. We both referenced our time spent playing at that field in our toasts.

From 1995 to 1997, I played Oxford tee-ball. I remember wearing my brother’s cleats with paper towels shoved into the ends to fill the gaps because my parents weren’t about to buy me my own if this was just a one or two season thing. I don’t blame them. All I really did was pick weeds in the outfield and peer out at the field through the webbing of my glove – neither of which is conducive to fielding a ball. I liked it enough, especially when I was placed last in the lineup – a coveted spot for a tee-baller because that meant when you hit the ball during your at-bat it was an automatic, bases-clearing, homerun.

During this time, I was always going to Little League practices with my dad – watching the “big kids” play, and occasionally getting to join them. I was young, but my dad would let me hop in the line to try my hand at catching one of his infamous pop-ups he would launch into the air for each kid at the end of practice. Soon enough, I could catch them. I was hooked.

Oxford did not have a girls’ softball team, so as I got older and moved through the rankings of farm league (coach-pitch) and Little League softball, I played for Homerun Baker out of Trappe. I eventually started playing travel ball, first locally on the Eastern Shore for 10u and 12u, then playing for teams on the Western Shore as I moved up to 14u and 16u, finally playing for a team based out of Virginia for 18u. We traveled all over the East Coast and beyond, attending high caliber, showcase tournaments in front of college coaches with the hopes of being signed to continue playing at the next level.

At the same time, I played softball for Easton High School. I was a 4-year member of the varsity team, and member of the 2008 2A state champion team. Two of those years were spent playing under the careful and steady guidance of Coach Durrie Hayes, another former Oxford Little League coach, who I quickly found out also employed the “line-up to catch a fly ball at the end of practice” tactic, though at our skill level we had to catch them behind our backs. This simple drill was a comfortable callback to being that young girl hanging out with the Oxford Little Leaguers that grounded me at the end of each practice. I wish I had thanked him for that.

Despite all the travel and playing for teams with different towns emblazoned across my chest, the Oxford baseball field was still my home. The Little League program had died out over time, but that field was still where I practiced one-on-one with my dad, spending hours on pitching lessons, soft toss, hitting off the pitching machine, and running down fly balls that he would try to hit just out of my reach to improve my

range. We filmed my recruiting video on that field – a video with a truly painful opening of a shy kid introducing herself as a hopeful college athlete, followed by 7+ minutes of grainy, outdated video that captures my hitting, fielding, and pitching skills, all on the Oxford baseball field. It was a video that, despite its production quality, landed me at Bucknell University where I was fortunate enough to live out my dreams of competing as a Division 1 college softball player, all while obtaining a quality education and developing the interpersonal and professional skills that serve me every day in my career.

I understand why the field is being converted into a park. As a professional in the environmental science and environmental planning field, I understand the issues with frequent inundation and the need to repurpose a parcel of land to fit new needs. But this type of work can be completed while maintaining the spirit of what that park was to so many people who came before. It would be a disservice to dismiss its history and meaning.

I urge you to formally gather photos, information, and personal accounts of those who benefited from and enjoyed their time spent on and around that field. Beyond giving the residents a chance to weigh in on what the park is officially named, I hope you will consider using all that you obtain to work with those who were part of this history to create some sort of physical recordation in the form of a kiosk or interpretive sign (like you might find at a county or state park, see photos below) to represent the past use of the field, which extends much further than the personal account I have provided within.



Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Cassie Williams (formerly Greenhawk)