

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 25, 2023

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Tuesday, July 25, 2023. Commission President Tom Costigan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President Tom Costigan, Commissioner Susan Delean-Botkin, Commissioner Katrina Greer, Public Works Supervisor Matt Ozman, Chief Eric Kellner, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis and Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Approximately 55 people were in attendance and another 15 virtually.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Greer motioned to approve the minutes of July 25, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Greer motioned to approve the disbursements for the month of June 2023, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

OATH OF OFFICE

President Costigan issued the Oath of Office to new Oxford Police Officer Brandon Bobbick. Chief Kellner welcomed Officer Bobbick and provide some background on his qualifications and steps moving forward.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Supervisor Matt Ozman provide his report. PW responded to two after hours alarms at the wastewater treatment plant, one for non-Potable water system failure and one Pump Station control panel failure, both turned out to be bad fuses that were replaced and spares have been ordered. These failures happen more often with extreme heat. All large equipment has been serviced, this includes backhoes, excavator, skid steer, portable pump, air compressors and water jet. PW responded to one sewer back up this past weekend, line was jetted and cleaned and back to normal. Manufacturers Parkson and Revere have been working on the wastewater treatment plant computer system. This includes routine computer application updates that need to be done periodically to keep the HMI screens and system working properly. PW has pulled the sand filter lift pumps for inspection to find considerable wear in each, one lift has been repaired, and the other is still in operation as of now awaiting needed parts to do a complete rebuild. After some research we found it's cheaper to buy individual parts and rebuild the units than it is to buy a complete unit. Parts are about \$700.00 compared to \$2800.00 for a complete unit.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Kellner provided the report of calls, attached here, and a progress report for the department. Pfc Bobbick is working on completing his 80 mandated Field Training. PD continues to monitor traffic complaints on Tilghman St and Morris at Pier St. Postings, including 9 pm Lock Up notices, continue on Facebook. PD is still accepting applications for the Citizen Police Academy. The NIBRS certification process has been completed and NIBRS data can now be submitted through the RMS system. Parking Tickets and Traffic Warning templates have been updated to reflect the new laws and new books have been ordered. PD is now able to access the County Mobile CAD system. Several policies have been updated due changing laws. All officers are taking Police One Academy online training, which allows officer to remain available in town. Chief attended the Law Enforcement Steering Committee meeting at the 911 Center.

FIRE COMPANY

Tim Kearns gave an update from the Fire Company, stating there have been a few calls, and has been slower than normal. Several new members have entered Fire Fighter 1 and some current members have entered Fire Fighter 2 during the fall classes. The boat is in its final preparation stages with a sea trial scheduled for August 15th. The Auxiliary's Childrens Carnival was well attended and a success. Breakfast continues on the second Sunday of the month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Costigan opened the continued discussion on the Crosswalk consideration on Morris Street at Town Park, stating the commissioners were grappling with an intelligent cost effective way to deal with the situation. SHA representatives were in town Monday to meet with the Commissioners and staff. They heard concerns from both officials and citizens and offered solutions, including removal of the white line along the road edge in front of town park and installation of a white stripe crosswalk following the town's installation of ADA ramps on town property. The temporary cones will remain until the crosswalk is in place and use of a crossing guard during extremely busy events will be considered. Commissioner Greer felt good about the meeting and the solutions presented for this area, still allowing for a more comprehensive review of pedestrian plans throughout town. Commissioner Botkin-Delean inquired as to the repair of the sidewalk in front of the Methodist Church, as she felt it was a safety hazard and an urgent need. Commissioner Greer expressed that she felt this should be the responsibility of the property owner. Following an extensive discussion, Botkin-Delean requested a closed session following the meeting for legal advice.

Lewis notified the Commissioners that the Tier Map as attached to introducing Resolution 2307 was still under review at the Maryland Department of Planning. She said that although they were working on reconciling some differences related to some old annexations on their mapping, they seemingly have not taken issue with the Tier Map itself as proposed. It is hopeful the town will receive their comments by the next meeting. Lewis noted that the Planning Commission will be moving forward with their update to the Oxford Comprehensive Plan based on their suggested map and that once the Commissioners have approved the Resolution and Sewer Tier Map, it would be forwarded to Talbot County, who is currently working on their Report to the 2002 Talbot County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan, after which they will move into the Comprehensive update to the same plan.

NEW BUSINESS

None Presented

LETTERS AND REQUEST

None Presented

ATTORNEY

Ryan provided an update stating the Charter Amendment passed on July 18, 2023 would become effective on August 17, 2023. She recommended after August 17th the Commissioners begin considering what the process would be for a special election in the event of a vacancy, including hybrid or non-hybrid, time frame from vacancy to the next election, consideration of write in candidates, etc., and once the process had been determined a Resolution for a Charter Amendment would be drafted. The Resolution on the proposed new language would require a public hearing prior to adoption. Commissioner Greer requested a public workshop for the development of the language. Lewis suggested placing in front of or in place of a future regular Commissioner meeting with limited other business to allow sufficient time for discussion and public input.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis stated the wiring for the future Live Streaming equipment for town meetings had been completed and the town is waiting on the audio and video equipment to arrive, after which it would be installed in hopes of having the new system in place by the second meeting in August.

Easton Velocity, subsidiary of Easton Utilities, is currently running fiber throughout the county providing internet to the unserved areas of the county. Once this effort is complete, they intend to offer services to residents within the municipalities. Residents currently have access to broadband services, but would benefit from the higher speed internet product and potentially cable television at some point. Easton Velocity has contacted the town to discuss a franchise agreement for this future service and she anticipates bringing a draft to an upcoming Commissioner meeting. She noted that the agreement would require no financial contribution from the town or the residents.

Lewis noted that the Congressional request for federal funding for Oxford's Building Capacity for Sea Level Rise Adaption on the Eastern Shore has overcome another hurdle and has been included in the Senate's appropriations

budget. The next step will be inclusion in the budget from the House side and the town remains hopeful. This funding would provide for two full-time Environmental Scientist and two community liaisons working through the Oxford Lab, and would include a new tide gauge at the Lab providing the town with real-time tide data for predicting flooding. The project will assist the town in building capacity to plan for and mitigate the impacts of coastal flooding. The community liaison will provide local outreach and also bring these findings to other Eastern Shore communities.

As follow up to a prior meeting, Lewis covered a summary of the proposed projects found within Phase 1 of the Water System Improvement project, for which engineering has started, noting that the current total for the project is approximately \$4.7 million dollars, and the town has already been awarded \$2.1 million in grant funds and \$2.6 million in loan funds from USDA Rural Development. She explained that when utilizing USDA funding, the loan is exhausted first and then the grant monies, and for this reason it is important to follow through with a full effort to be able to take advantage of the full grant funding. There was extensive discussion regarding the components of the Phase 1 improvements and the purpose for identifying these components for upgrade. It was also explained that although the Preliminary Engineering Report identifies a Phase 2, it would be a future effort and funding for such an effort, should the town choose to proceed, would involve additional public notice. The Phase 1 Summary will be attached to these minutes and posted online.

Lewis requested a close session to discuss Personnel Matters and for Legal Advice on active legal cases.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 10, 2023 5:30 pm at the OCC – Town Talk on Current Resilience Efforts and Grant Projects

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Delean-Botkin was appreciative of the detailed summary provided by Lewis with regards to the Water System Improvements, much condensed from the 78 page report.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Costigan read a letter from Dan Kordell supporting safety improvements in the commercial area, and requesting the intended crosswalk by zebra white stripping as opposed to the historic brick overlay, as he felt that visitors did not identify the latter as a crosswalk.

Residents posed several questions regarding the future fiber service from Easton Velocity, including potential cost, speeds, resident responsibilities, for which general answers were provided, with the understanding that the town does not have all of the information at this time. A question was received regarding timely posting of commissioner meeting minutes. There was a concern regarding access to the MEWS building, which will be shared with the business owner. It was also noted that the building could be accessed from the back utilizing the ADA conforming ramp that leads to the back entrance to the business. A question was asked regarding the lead violation noted on the 2023 Water Report and why the residents were not notified that there was a lead violation. Lewis explained that the lead violation found on the report was a 'reporting violation' regarding timeliness of the report to the state, not an issue with the quality of the actual drinking water. A resident expressed concerns with the Pier Street and South Morris Street intersection and people running the stop sign. Chief Kellner will attend to the request.

With no further comments, Commissioner Greer motioned to adjourn the regular meeting and go into closed session for Personnel Matters and Legal Advice, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Following the closed session, President Costigan motioned to nominate Jim Wilcox to a seat on the Historic District Commission, Margaret Morris as an alternate on the Historic District Commission, and Justin Werner to a seat on the Historic District that will become available in October, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

With no further business, Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to close the regular meeting, Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion closed at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager



*Oxford Police Department
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P.O. Box 339
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“Maryland’s First Port”*

Eric M. Kellner, Chief of Police

Reporting Period: 7/10/23 – 7/23/23

REPORTS	RP	YTD	ARRESTS	RP	YTD
Theft	0	5	Drug Arrests	0	0
Animal Complaint	0	2	DUI Arrests	0	0
Harassment	0	3	On-View Arrests	0	0
Fraud / ID Theft	0	1	Warrant Arrests	0	1
Assault	0	1	Criminal Summons	0	1
Domestic	1	2	Juvenile Referrals	0	1
Accident Report	0	2	Other Arrests	0	0
Suspicious Conditions	0	4	Total Arrests	0	3
Found/Lost Property	4	17			
Other	0	4			
Total Reports	5	41			
CALLS FOR SERVICE	RP	YTD	COMMUNITY POLICING	RP	YTD
Alarm	2	15	Property Checks	64	659
Animal Complaints	2	20	Special Events	0	13
Check Welfare	0	2	Foot Patrol	1	49
Suspicious Condition	1	8	Bike Patrol	3	20
911 – Hang-up	0	1			
Trespassing	1	4	ASSISTS	RP	YTD
Liquor Law Violation	0	1	Other PD	0	5
Noise Complaint	0	1	Fire/EMS	1	17
Parking Violation	2	2	Other Agency	0	0
Suspicious Person	0	5			
Suspicious Vehicle	0	5	ENFORCEMENT	RP	YTD
Verbal Dispute	1	3	Parking Citations	6	18
Found Property	5	17	Traffic Stops	16	102
Motor Vehicle Collision	0	5	Traffic Citations	2	3
Traffic Complaint	1	9	Traffic Warnings	14	101
Harassment	0	3	PC Searches	0	0
Rogue and Vagabond	0	4	Criminal Citations	0	0
Misc. Calls	4	30	Civil Citations	0	0
Total Calls	21	155			
TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD	TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD
Speeding	10	75	Cell Phone Violation	2	4
Stop Sign	4	13	Other Violation	1	8
Driving w/o License	0	2	Equipment Violation	0	4

TOWN OF OXFORD
CENTRAL WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM EVALUATION
PHASE 1
ESTIMATE CONSTRUCTION COSTS BY ITEM

ALTERNATIVE	ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS
Supply Wells <i>Alternative 3: Explore New Well Supply</i>	\$ 65,000
Water Meters and Billing <i>Alternative 3: Install New Tower-mounted Software and Equipment</i>	\$ 413,000
Water Treatment System <i>Alternative 3: Rehabilitate Ex. System and Install Fluoride Treatment or Connect New Well Supply</i>	\$ 2,034,000
Water Storage Tanks <i>Alternative 3: Renovate Tanks and Begin Maintenance Contract</i>	\$ 272,000
SCADA System <i>Alternative 3: Renovate Existing System and Connect to Oxford WWTP SCADA</i>	\$ 58,000
Water Distribution System <i>Distribution System Renovation</i> <i>Alternative 4: Install New Water Distribution Piping</i>	\$ 232,000
<i>Recently Replaced Piping</i> <i>Alternative 1: Do Nothing</i>	\$ -
Recommended Alternatives Costs	
<i>Sub-total Construction Cost</i>	\$ 3,074,000
<i>Construction Contingency (10%)</i>	\$ 308,000
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$ 3,382,000
<i>Planning (PER & ER Costs)</i>	\$ 40,000
<i>Admin & Legal (4% Construction Costs)</i>	\$ 135,000
<i>Engineering (10% Construction Cost)</i>	\$ 338,000
<i>Project Inspection Fees (18-months @ \$85 per hour)</i>	\$ 354,000
<i>Project Contingency (10%)</i>	\$ 425,000
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 4,674,000