

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2023

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Tuesday, September 12, 2023. Commission President Tom Costigan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a moment of silence in remembrance of September 11, 2001.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President Tom Costigan, Commissioner Susan Delean-Botkin, Commissioner Katrina Greer, Police Chief Eric Kellner, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, and Attorney Lyndsey Ryan, with Planner Maria Brophy attending virtually. Approximately 55 people were in attendance and another 65 virtually.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

A Workshop was held prior to the meeting for Commissioner discussion regarding the recently passed Charter Amendment for the filling of vacancies.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to approve the minutes of August 22, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Supervisor Matt Ozman's report was provided by Manager Lewis. Public works has finished painting bridges around the causeway park walking track, with each getting a second coat at the beginning of this month. Public works has started marking water meters around town with blue paint. The fixed perimeter fencing at the dog park has been fixed and gaps corrected under gates, along with minor holes being filled. (Reminder please do not allow dogs to dig under fencing and or around any part of the dog park). Public works has installed a grate over top of a storm water drainage pipe on the corner of Tilghman and Stewart Streets. Purple lights have been installed around town starting at the pincushion to town park and townhall. Public works has been extremely active in hurricane preparedness the past few weeks, making sure all equipment is serviced and ready to go in case of a significant weather event. This includes the mobile pump, chainsaws, backhoes, Humvee, and mini equipment. All town Generators for the pump stations and the shop will be topped off with fuel this week as a precaution with increasing storm activity in the ocean.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Kellner provided the report of calls for the prior period, attached here. Kellner reported that the speed trailer had been set up at E Pier Street to address speed complaints. Between 8/28 and 9/10 there were 1078 vehicles recorded with 24 traveling between 26-30 MPH and 2 traveling between 31-35 MPH. The first Citizen Police Academy class was held on September 11, 2023, with 10 participants, with the next session on September 25, 2023, when States Attorney Joe Coale will be speaking. The public is invited to attend this session. Coffee with a Cop was held on August 24, 2023 and the next event will be in October. All officers completed Taser certification training on September 7, 2023, provided by the Cambridge PD. All officers completed Emotional Intelligence Training as recommended by the Police Accountability Board and have completed Trial Board training. Kellner provided a brief explanation of the functions of the Police Accountability Board and Trial Board. PFC Bobbick will attend CPR/First Aid training on September 14, 2023. Kellner attended the Talbot Goes Purple Event on August 31, 2023, reminded citizens there was a prescription drop box available in the town hall lobby, thanked Public Works for placing the lights and banners around town, and thanked the Scottish Highland Creamery for supporting Talbot Goes Purple by creating a "Purple Ice Cream" and donating a portion of proceeds.

FIRE COMPANY

Tim Kearns gave an update from the Fire Company: breakfast was well attended, the new fire boat is undergoing sea trials currently, and the company has just received power stretchers which will save the backs of the volunteer first responders. FF1 and EMT classes begin this week and as always please contact the fire company if you are interested in volunteering.

PUBLIC HEARING

Attorney Ryan provide a brief overview of Resolution 2309 increasing the number of Election Supervisors from three to six, following an increase in the polling hours in 2022. The Public Hearing was opened for comments. A resident inquired as to how one applies to be a judge. Hearing no further comments regarding the resolution, the hearing was closed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

With no further discussion, Commissioner Greer motioned to approve Resolution 2309 a Charter Amendment changing the number of Election Judges from three to six judges, Commission Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

It was noted that the Commissioners are reviewing the Easton Velocity Franchise Agreement, following the presentation provided by Easton Velocity at the August 22, 2023 meeting. Commission President Costigan stated that the Commissioner's would be discussing the agreement at the September 26, 2023 meeting. Manager Lewis added, for the future discussion, the current broadband vendor franchise fee is 2%, and Attorney Lyndsey explained that legally the fee would need to be the same for any franchise agreement, although it can be changed for the existing agreement if that is the desire of the Commissioners.

Discussion regarding Banking and Investing was opened. Commissioner Delean-Botkin stated that the Commissioners had been presented with information from BayVanguard and an informative discussion had taken place. Manager Lewis stated that prior to the previous meeting she had requested BayVanguard evaluate the town's money market rate where the town's funds are currently sitting, and that BayVanguard had increased the money market rate to 4% at that time, meaning the town funds have been accruing 4% interest since that time, which is compounded daily. The 4-month CDs have been rolled over into the money market also and are making 4% interest now. Additionally, a sweep account has been set up for the disbursement account, maintaining the funds in the money market until needed to gain the higher rate. With respect to a letter submitted by resident Lelde Schmitz, Commissioner Greer stated she had recommended several processes she felt should be considered, letter attached here. Commissioner Greer requested that Lewis inquire with other institutions for competitive rates and provide alternatives, before an assessment can be made as to where funds should be invested. Additionally, there should be a separated decision with the public regarding the local bank, the ATM and what are the alternatives. Lastly, Greer stated because MLGIP (Maryland Local Government Investment Pool) is an instrument that is completely liquid and has an interest rate of nearly 5.4%, the town should consider moving \$2,000,000 at this time, while discussions regarding the local bank and other investment opportunities continued. Lewis noted that although the town would be gaining between 1 and 1.5% interest, moving the funds could potentially threaten the loss of the local branch, which is a relevant concern for the town. There was in depth discussions regarding the town's existing funds, how these funds are currently used, how government monies are federally protected outside of FDIC, and also the potential impacts to the viability of the town's bank branch should significant funds be removed from BayVanguard. Lewis pointed out that the Commissioners and the citizens need to understand that there are many components to have a vibrant community, which included having a bank, a post office, a market, a community center, churches, etc., and that she felt this discussions needed to clear understand the responsibilities of the government did not solely center around the best possible investment of monies, with the understanding that discussion with the town's bank have always included the need to keep a branch in town. Lewis noted that she had provided the current BayVanguard CD rates to the Commissioners, which

included short-term CDs at 4.8%. Following continued discussion and citizen input, both pro and con, Commissioner Greer motioned to move \$2,000,000 to MLGIP for two weeks, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion. Greer and Costigan voted in favor of the motion, Commission Delean-Botkin voted against the motion, and the motion carried. Lewis will research and follow up with recommendations for an investment procedures policy.

LETTERS AND REQUEST None Presented

ATTORNEY

Attorney Ryan provided a quick recap of the workshop, noting that the general consensus was to make amendments to the Charter which include the use of calendar days instead of specific dates, remove references to the word appointed and replace with elected, deleted the language of C5-15 referencing different sections in C5, amend the process for notices to accommodate the new language, including whether newspaper advertising is even a requirement, utilizing only the town website and town board for posting, and establishing that the person elected to fill a vacancy will fill the term of the vacancy, and lastly keeping a vacancy election separate from a general election. Commissioners requested Ryan draft legislation based on the workshop and the noted recommended changes for the next meeting.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis updated the Commissioners, providing an additional estimate to go with the two prior estimates for the proposed ADA compliant ramps at Town Park. She requested approval for the middle estimate with a cost of \$9775, stating the contractor provided the appropriate response to the request clearly identifying the work to be performed. Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to proceed with the Shore Real Estate Investment proposal for \$9775, Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

In the interest of time, an update on the Strand Beach project was put off until the next meeting.

Lewis provided Hurricane preparedness information for the citizens as a reminder of the season and the need for residents to be prepared. It was noted that an Emergency Preparedness Program was to be held at the OCC on November 8, 2023 at 5 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OCC Road Rally on September 16, 2023 at 8 am. Wreath laying ceremony/Tench Tilghman September 16, 2023 at 1:30 pm. Office will be closed on September 15, 2023 for training.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Delean-Botkin noted that the key speaker for the Emergency Preparedness Program would be Geneva Schaffle of Talbot County Emergency Services. Commissioner Greer thank those in attendance for a good meeting. President Costigan congratulated the Oxford Business Association on a very successful Oxford Picket Fence Auction, raising over \$10,000 for local charities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None further comments presented.

With no further business, Commissioner Greer motioned to adjourn the regular meeting, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager

Commissioner Meetings are now live streaming and are archived on townhallstreams.com.



*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: 8/21/23 – 9/9/23

REPORTS	RP	YTD	ARRESTS	RP	YTD
Theft	1	7	Drug Arrests	0	0
Animal Complaint	0	3	DUI Arrests	0	0
Harassment	0	3	On-View Arrests	0	0
Fraud / ID Theft	1	3	Warrant Arrests	0	1
Assault	0	1	Criminal Summons	0	1
Domestic	0	2	Juvenile Referrals	0	1
Accident Report	0	4	Other Arrests	0	0
Suspicious Conditions	0	6	Total Arrests	0	3
Found/Lost Property	1	18			
Other	1	5			
Total Reports	4	52			
CALLS FOR SERVICE	RP	YTD	COMMUNITY POLICING	RP	YTD
Alarm	0	15	Property Checks	164	1036
Animal Complaints	2	26	Special Events	3	18
Check Welfare	1	4	Foot Patrol	9	66
Suspicious Condition	0	12	Bike Patrol	4	29
911 – Hang-up	1	2			
Trespassing	0	7	ASSISTS	RP	YTD
Liquor Law Violation	0	1	Other PD	1	7
Noise Complaint	0	1	Fire/EMS	6	27
Parking Violation	4	15	Other Agency	0	0
Suspicious Person	0	7			
Suspicious Vehicle	0	6	ENFORCEMENT	RP	YTD
Verbal Dispute	0	3	Parking Citations	1	27
Found Property	4	21	Traffic Stops	20	141
Motor Vehicle Collision	0	7	Traffic Citations	0	3
Traffic Complaint	0	13	Traffic / Parking Warnings	21	146
Harassment	0	3	PC Searches	0	0
Rogue and Vagabond	0	4	Criminal Citations	0	0
Misc. Calls	4	46	Civil Citations	0	0
Total Calls	16	213			
TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD	TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD
Speeding	17	107	Cell Phone Violation	0	4
Stop Sign	1	17	Other Violation	2	12
Driving w/o License	0	2	Equipment Violation	1	5



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Reporting Period: 8/25/23 – 9/9/23

Talbot County Sheriff’s Office Response Statistics

REPORTS	RP	YTD	ARRESTS	RP	YTD
DWI	0	1	Drug Arrests	0	0
Child Custody	0	1	DUI Arrests	0	1
Domestic	0	1	On-View Arrests	0	1
MDOP	1	1	Warrant Arrests	0	0
Misc.	0	1	Criminal Summons	0	0
			Juvenile Referrals	0	0
			Other Arrests	0	0
			Total Arrests	0	2
Total Reports	1	5			
CALLS FOR SERVICE	RP	YTD	COMMUNITY POLICING	RP	YTD
Alarm	0	2	Property Checks/Patrols	7	198
Animal Complaints	0	5	Special Events	0	0
Check Welfare	0	4	Foot Patrol	0	0
Suspicious Condition	0	4	Bike Patrol	0	0
911 – Hang-up	0	0			
Trespassing	0	2	ASSISTS	RP	YTD
Liquor Law Violation	0	0	Assist Oxford PD	0	4
Noise Complaint	0	1	Fire/EMS	0	0
Parking Violation	0	1	Other Agency	0	0
Suspicious Person	0	4			
Suspicious Vehicle	0	1	ENFORCEMENT	RP	YTD
Verbal Dispute	0	0	Parking Citations	0	0
Found Property	0	0	Traffic Stops	0	5
Motor Vehicle Collision	0	0	Traffic Citations		
Traffic Complaint	0	0	Traffic / Parking Warnings		
Harassment	0	1	PC Searches		
Rogue and Vagabond	0	0	Criminal Citations		
Misc. Calls	1	6	Civil Citations		
Total Calls	1	31			
TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD	TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS	RP	YTD
Speeding			Cell Phone Violation		
Stop Sign			Other Violation		
Driving w/o License			Equipment Violation		

From: [Lelde Schmitz](#)
To: [Cheryl Lewis](#)
Subject: Commissioners " Meeting of August 22, 2023: Topic -- Financial Management by the Town of Oxford and Relevance of Local Bank Services
Date: Monday, September 11, 2023 5:47:38 PM

Hi Cheryl, may I ask you to please circulate this email to the Town Commissioners. It could be added (Commissioners' decision) to Commission Meeting Minutes. If the text below were read in a public meeting, I think it would suffice to quote only my proposal below on internal procedures for investment decisions to be taken by the Commissioners.

Dear Commissioners,

Upon listening to the recorded meeting of August 22, I found the public exchange of views (in writing or orally) on the relevance of having local bank services and on efficient interim-investing of Town funds earmarked for still pending capital projects useful. Both sides, citizens and Town officials, made valuable points. I took away that there is consensus that the Town should continue using the Oxford branch of the Bay Vanguard Bank for its current transactions, and that the only open question is how to best invest transitory capital funds that will start to be used in tranches when the pertinent project(s) begin to be executed. Obviously, this is a financial engineering decision that falls into the domain of the Town management and oversight. As was noted, the preparation of such decisions does not belong in the public domain. Still, to avoid any unfavorable impression about the quality of decision making in the general public, shouldn't the Commissioners agree on setting internal procedures for this process?

Investment decision procedures:

- The town manager (or financial officer) makes a timeline for withdrawal of earmarked funds for a specific capital project. This timeline will guide the maturity structure of the possible instruments.
- The town manager presents, to the Commissioners, 3-4 alternative investment options that all meet security considerations, and involve various banks (incl. local) and/ or investment funds (incl. MLGIP).
- On this basis, Commissioners take a decision on where to place the funds.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind regards,
Dr. Lelde Schmitz