

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 26, 2023

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commission President Tom Costigan, Commissioner Susan Delean-Botkin, Commissioner Katrina Greer, Police Chief Eric Kellner, Public Works WW Supervisor Matt Ozman, Town Manager Cheryl Lewis, and Attorney Lyndsey Ryan, with Planner Maria Brophy attending virtually. Approximately 55 people were in attendance and approximately 50 virtually.

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to approve the minutes of September 12, 2023 as distributed, Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

REPORT OF DISBURSEMENTS

Commissioner Greer motioned to file the report of disbursements for the month of August 2023 for audit, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Supervisor Matt Ozman provided his report. Public works finished marking all water meters in town for winter. They have a small list they will need to go back and uncover. They are also working on plotting them with GPS coordinates for GIS mapping. Public works has fixed some signage around town to include stop signs, no parking signs, and dead-end signs, and will continue to replace through-out the next few weeks. Wastewater plant is in the transition from summer operations to wintertime operations. The NON-Potable water system was fixed this past week. Public works had two employees in town for the storm, and assisted the Police and SHA with traffic and set up barricades around flooded streets. A big thank you to the Oxford Police for helping Public Works in the setup of all control devices along with high water signs. Another big thank you to MSP, and SHA for the assistance on Sunday with traffic control on Oxford Road during the highest tide we saw during the storm. Public works spent all day Monday cleaning up storm debris around town.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Kellner provided the report of calls for the prior period, attached here. Kellner reported the speed trailer was set up at Bonfield Ave over the last two weeks with a total of 1430 vehicles, 8 vehicles were recorded traveling between 26-30 mph, with a high speed of 29 mph. The second Citizen's academy was held the previous night with guest speaker States Attorney Joe Coale; the next session is on October 9, 2023. Kellner is attending administrative training this week. Kellner provided comments regarding recent flooding, thanking SHA and MSP for assistance provided, and extending kudos and a thank you to Matt Ozman and PW staff for everything they did. Kellner attended Task Force Advisory Board meeting. OPD has partnered with Mid Shore Mediation, as have other departments, to comply with State requirements for a mediation policy. Kellner stated a survey has been added to the OPD Facebook page allowing citizens to anonymously comment on performance to inform the department. Commission President Costigan asked that a thank you be passed on to Officer Bobbick a thank you for his help during the storm and the clean up afterwards.

FIRE COMPANY

Tim Kearns gave an update from the Fire Company: the members received training on the recently delivered power lift stretcher. The auxiliary Craft Show will be on Saturday and the next Pancake Breakfast is on October 8, 2023. The new boat is still in the testing phase.

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

It was noted that representatives from Easton Velocity had attended the previous meeting providing officials and citizens with information regarding their internet service and the proposed franchise agreement the Commissioners were considering. Attorney Ryan provided a brief overview of the agreement, including the fact that it is a non-exclusive franchise agreement with a 15-year term, and 5-year renewals. As drafted the franchise fee to the town is set at 2%, with the ability to be increased upon notice to the vendor. She noted other standard requirements found within similar agreements and that a provision was added that states all facilities installed as part of the initial installation would be placed underground, unless it was not feasible, in which case EV would come to the town with the reasoning for approval. Following discussion, it was determined the fee would be set at 2% and Commissioner Greer motioned to approve signing of the Easton Velocity Franchise Agreement, Commissioner Delean-Botkin seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

President Costigan stated moving on to the Financial Investment Policy, as requested Lewis will provide information regarding...

Commissioner Greer stated that she had provided a drafted resolution provided for the Commissioners consideration, with the idea that a committee would advise the Commissioners so that they may instruct the Town Administrator on the best options for investments and to have professionals that would guide those determinations as is done for charities. Commission Delean-Botkin felt this idea needed to be discussed as she was not aware of any other municipality that has advisors on financial matters. Commissioner Greer stated that they had commissions that were set up to advise on pensions, finance and many other things. Greer stated that the Towns of Frederick and Rockville had advisory commissions and she could come up with a list of hundreds. Delean-Botkin questioned this as she was not aware of any local public entities. Greer stated that it was necessary because the clerk-treasurer/manager was performing a lot of functions, and one of them may not be knowing how to ladder treasuries. A committee would make recommendations to the Commissioners and they would then direct the manager to look into the options. It would be an advisory committee to help the Commissioners guide the investments, as we have had some problems with our investments which have been discussed previously. Discussion ensued as to whether the Investment Policy or Advisory Commission Resolution should be discussed, along with agenda procedures. President Costigan stated that he would like time to reflect on Greer's proposal and also to provide the Town Attorney time to review it as well and it could be revisited at the next meeting.

Lewis was provided the ability to move on with her discussion. She stated with regards to a Financial Investment Policy, at the last meeting having a policy was discussed, along with the concept of a resolution for an advisory committee, so she had started to research polices and at about the same time she had discovered something 'in the archives', she had received an email from Lyndsey asking for something. She stated that the town did have an investment policy created in the 90's following a state mandate to create and file a policy. Unbeknownst to her, the town did have one and she noted that the Commissioners that hired her nor the person she replaced seemed to be aware, because even the policies that would have applied her as the incoming clerk where not followed. She had also seen no evidence of other parts of the policy, including any recorded information related to former Commissioner's investments in local banks. She stated that she took the town's archived policy, which was distributed to Commissioners, the state's model template, and Talbot County's recently updated policy, and prepared an updated policy for the town, along with an adopting resolution, which she was providing to the Commissioners at this meeting for their consideration at a future meeting. She noted that aside from the normal language found in most policies, she highlighted a couple of sections that were unique to Oxford, in the event they wanted to rethink those specific sections during discussion. She noted that the updated policy as presented

included a disclosure requirement for the officials and manager regarding local investments; a requirement that no more than 50% of funds could be in any one institution, acknowledging that she was not aware of this and that this was not the most recent practice, also noting that the town might want to identify federal treasury bills as an exceptions for example, and the requirement that no funds would be invested for more than one year, which again she was pointing out as some policies had exceptions for things like treasury bills. She stated that after the recent moving of funds, the town was diversified in line with the policy, but that the town was still holding a CD that matured at 24 months. Otherwise, she stated the drafted policy was updated to include current accounting standards and written in language that the average person reading it would understand what investments were acceptable. Lewis also felt it was important to have an updated policy in place for any citizen committee that might be created in order for clarity on permissible investments.

Commissioner Greer stated that the current policy has been in effect for 12 years, and she is embarrassed the Commissioners and the Town Manager did not know about it, and it was serious to not be in compliance with the town's own laws, and she apologized and said all would apologize. She stated for this reason it was necessary to have a financial advisory committee, as our money has not been invested to make the most return. Delean-Botkin stated that the first item on the current policy is safety and noted that during the last many years other entities have struggled and even gone bankrupt, and Oxford has not had any problems and has remained solvent, and should move forward cautiously and positively, and she felt that a paid advisor would better serve the town with a level of fiduciary responsibilities. Discussion continued on the investment policy and proposed committee and deferred further conversation until the next meeting.

LETTERS AND REQUEST One letter received and noted in Public Comment below.

ATTORNEY

Attorney Ryan provided three Resolutions addressing the Charter Amendments following the prior meetings discussion of recommended changes so that certain provisions will apply to all meetings, not just special or vacancy meetings, noting that Charter Amendment Resolutions can only address one topic. She read each title and provided an explanation of purpose for each.

RESOLUTION NO. 2310 - A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD FOR THE PURPOSES OF AMENDING THE OXFORD TOWN CHARTER TO CLEARLY ESTABLISH THE DEADLINE FOR FILING A CERTIFICATE OF NOMINATION AND FOR PROVIDING NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2311 - A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD FOR THE PURPOSES OF AMENDING THE OXFORD TOWN CHARTER TO REMOVE REFERENCES TO A GENERAL ELECTION TO ESTABLISH THAT CERTAIN PROVISIONS ARE APPLICABLE TO ALL TOWN ELECTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2312 - A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD FOR THE PURPOSES OF AMENDING THE OXFORD TOWN CHARTER TO CLARIFY PROVISIONS RELATED TO FILLING A COMMISSION VACANCY BY SPECIAL ELECTION

Commissioner Greer motioned to introduce Resolution 2310 as read, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A public hearing was scheduled for October 24, 2023 at 6 pm.

Commissioner Costigan motioned to introduced Resolution 2311 as read, Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to introduce, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A public hearing was scheduled for October 24, 2023 at 6 pm.

Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to introduce Resolution 2312 as read, Commissioner Costigan seconded the motioned, all were in favor, and the motion carried. A public hearing was scheduled for October 24, 2023 at 6 pm.

Attorney Ryan noted that the Breezeline Franchise will becoming up for renewal, and she provided two processes for the renewal, either a formal process including a review of the services, issues, etc., and make recommendations of improvements for their response, or an informal process, where you forgo the review, they submit an amended franchise agreement and you hold a public hearing. Lewis stated it may be the right time to

notify Breezeline that citizens do have issues with the service and a public hearing where citizens can speak to Breezeline representatives may be the appropriate.

Ryan stated that under the Federal Housing Act the town was required to affirmatively further fair housing, meaning to take meaningful action to overcome segregation and foster inclusive communities and promote fair housing while eliminating disparities. Additionally, as we going through the Comprehensive Plan update, we need to include a housing element which addresses how we as a town can affirmatively further fair housing, which presents the potential for a review committee if you have citizens who are interested in furthering fair housing. A committee that could recommend goals and objectives would assist in meeting the requirements. Info will be provided to the Planning Commission for their workshop the next morning.

TOWN MANAGER

Lewis updated the Commissioners on the Strand Beach project which is scheduled to start construction around October 15, 2023. She said it was the same plan that was approved in 2021 by then Commissioners. The shoreline work will be constructed first and should be completed before the holidays. The above ground efforts, street, parking lot, and parcel elevations will likely take place in the first of 2024, with the plan to have everything completed before the next beach season. She provided a brief explanation of each component of the improvements. The plans are located online and questions can be directed to the office.

Lewis provided a bank investment comparison spreadsheet as requested at the prior meeting, identifying several products available at local banks, along with current Treasury Bill and MLGIP rates for comparison. She noted that 2 million of the town funds were currently in MLGIP currently at 5.41%, the bulk of the town's immediate cashflow was in a money market making currently at 4.22%, and there were funds in CD's making from 4 to 5%. Lewis gave an overlook of the minor savings accounts and the basics for how the different functions of the government are accounted for in the bookkeeping. Greer would like to know what the penalty is for having funds with a maturity date exceeding the current investment policy. Lewis noted that the MLGIP is currently structured to pay the interest back to the money market account currently, as interest is generally treated as income in the operating budget.

Lewis stated that she would be requesting credit cards from Shore United as they now have an in-house product, and then she will cancel the credit cards with the third-party entity. She explained that third-party cards present multiple issues, that would be eliminated with a local bank where a real person could be contacted for assistance. The limits would be the same as current, with one card each for PW, OPD and Administration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Oxford Library Book Sale – September 30, 2023 – 9 am to noon, Oxford Auxiliary Autumn Craft Show and Sale – September 30, 2023 - 9 am to 4 pm, Emergency Preparedness Program at the OCC on November 8, 2023 – 5 pm.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Delean-Botkin noted that there was a good turnout at the Tench Tilghman wreath laying; Shore Rivers Cycling for the Shore was well attended, including some participants from Oxford, Frederick Douglas day held on Saturday at the Easton Library was very informative, the Holy Trinity for volunteers and those that work for the town was lovely.

Commissioner Greer stated she was very pleased that we were examining our banking, should would come with some of the appropriate research and would reaching out to professionals in the community.

President Costigan said a few words following the passing of Oxford resident Fiona Foster, with celebration of her life on October 14 at 11 am at the OCC, and former Oxford resident Larry Denton, stating that both will be missed be the entire community which is richer for their contribution.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A letter was received from Toby Frey with regards to agendas, minutes, and email addresses, attached here. Deborah Pulzone inquired as to whether this proposed committee would be doing any auditing and was told no

by Katrina Greer. Pulzone stated that any auditing should be done by a professional auditor. With regard to the resolution, would it become public before the Commissioners would vote on it, Greer said she would email it to her. Conversation centered around procedures for Commissioner communications. Deborah Krolicki pointed out an error on the contacts page of the website. Citizen expressed appreciation to Ozman and Kellner for the great job they were doing. Bob Hyberg commented with regards to the proposed finance commission, were their liabilities with using volunteers, and would there be consideration of using hired professionals. A citizen cautioned on the creation of a committee, there should be a narrow scope of work, and identified procedure and staffing. Status of the lease on the town bank was requested, Lewis stated with the renewal date of December 2023, negotiations are anticipated. Dan Kordell inquired as to whether the shoreline project would impact the bacteria in the water, which was followed by discussion regarding current testing and possible reasons when there is a bad reading, and the fact that the introduction of living shorelines would only have a positive impact to the water quality due to natural filtration. Phil Dietz asked about having meeting minutes posted prior to approval, with the response that the live meetings are available the next day, but official minutes are not posted until voted on by the Commissioners. Jane McCarthy stated that there should be some oversight of the management of the finances. Susan Kordell stated it was reasonable to stand up a finance committee and it was time to talk about it. George Morris stated with a policy that identified 50% in any one institution and 12-month maturity in place, and limitations on where funds can be invested, there is not room to be extremely creative, as funds mature, they should be rolled into the next best available fund. David Ober stated the only way to receive unbiased advice regarding financial investments, would be to hire an independent professional advisor, it could be a one-time engagement to review our guidelines and make a professional recommendation on what could be changed to make a real difference, adding that the town hires professionals for a reason, you would not ask a legal committee for legal advice.

With no further business, Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to adjourn the regular meeting, Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:53 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: 9/10/23 – 9/25/23

| REPORTS | RP | YTD | ARRESTS | RP | YTD |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|----------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Theft | 0 | 7 | Drug Arrests | 0 | 0 |
| Animal Complaint | 0 | 3 | DUI Arrests | 0 | 0 |
| Harassment | 0 | 3 | On-View Arrests | 0 | 0 |
| Fraud / ID Theft | 0 | 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 | 3 | 21 | | | |
| Other | 1 | 6 | | | |
| Total Reports | 4 | 56 | | | |
| CALLS FOR SERVICE | RP | YTD | COMMUNITY POLICING | RP | YTD |
| Alarm | 2 | 17 | Property Checks | 125 | 1161 |
| Animal Complaints | 1 | 27 | Special Events | 3 | 21 |
| Check Welfare | 0 | 4 | Foot Patrol | 10 | 76 |
| Suspicious Condition | 0 | 12 | Bike Patrol | 1 | 30 |
| 911 – Hang-up | 0 | 2 | | | |
| Trespassing | 0 | 7 | ASSISTS | RP | YTD |
| Liquor Law Violation | 0 | 1 | Other PD | 0 | 7 |
| Noise Complaint | 0 | 1 | Fire/EMS | 2 | 29 |
| Parking Violation | 4 | 19 | Other Agency | 0 | 0 |
| Suspicious Person | 1 | 8 | | | |
| Suspicious Vehicle | 1 | 7 | ENFORCEMENT | RP | YTD |
| Verbal Dispute | 0 | 3 | Parking Citations | 3 | 30 |
| Found Property | 3 | 24 | Traffic Stops | 12 | 153 |
| Motor Vehicle Collision | 1 | 8 | Traffic Citations | 0 | 3 |
| Traffic Complaint | 1 | 14 | Traffic / Parking Warnings | 14 | 160 |
| Harassment | 0 | 3 | PC Searches | 0 | 0 |
| Rogue and Vagabond | 0 | 4 | Criminal Citations | 0 | 0 |
| Misc. Calls | 0 | 46 | Civil Citations | 0 | 0 |
| Total Calls | 14 | 227 | | | |
| TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS | RP | YTD | TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS | RP | YTD |
| Speeding | 6 | 113 | Cell Phone Violation | 1 | 5 |
| Stop Sign | 4 | 21 | Other Violation | 2 | 14 |
| Driving w/o License | 0 | 2 | Equipment Violation | 0 | 5 |

Commissioners of Oxford
103 Market St
Oxford, MD 21654

REF: TOWN COMMUNICATIONS

23 SEP 2023

I am requesting that the Oxford Town Office update its communication with the citizens of Oxford.

In this age of the computer, I suggest that the town in its next quarterly letter and subsequent notices request that the citizens of Oxford submit their email address to the town so the town can disseminate more information to its citizens and do it in a cost effective and timely manner.

Further, I would suggest that it becomes policy that the town of Oxford disseminates the proposed town meeting agenda by Friday before the meeting and the minutes of the meeting within 7 business days after the meeting.

I would like this topic presented at Tues nights meeting please.....

Any questions, [REDACTED]

Sincerely,



Sewell "Toby". Frey