

**COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**January 11, 2024**

Due to extreme weather conditions, the regularly scheduled January 9, 2024 Commissioners Meeting was postponed, and held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Thursday, January 11, 2024.

**PRESENT**

Attending the meeting were Commission President Tom Costigan, Commissioner Susan Delean-Botkin, Commissioner Katrina Greer, Lt. Chris Phillips, and Town Manager Cheryl Lewis. Attorney Lyndsey Ryan and Public Works Supervisor Matt Ozman were not available. Approximately 40 people were in attendance and approximately 35 virtually. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

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

**PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

Supervisor Matt Ozman's report was provided by Town Manager Lewis, noting staff has been busy due to the recent tidal flooding resulting from extreme weather conditions. Two potential water leaks were investigated recently, with only one turning out to be an active leak due to a bad rubber washer inside the pit. Christmas lights around town have been taken down. They responded to one residential sewer back up. It was necessary to pull ENR pump number two at the wastewater plant due to a motor overload alarm. With the heavy rains and tidal flooding incidents, these pumps have been working at capacity since before the Christmas holiday. A spare has been placed temporarily and will be replaced once repairs have been made. Public Works employees have attended water and wastewater training classes over the past month and will continue for the next few months to acquire continuing education credits needed for licensing. Public Works spent time last week and over this past weekend preparing for the storm that hit on Tuesday night, with preparations taking place right up to when the storm hit Tuesday night with high winds, heavy rains, and an extreme tide. There were three employees on duty throughout the duration of the storm and they were assisted by the Oxford Police department in shutting down streets as they became flooded. Public Works will be out the rest of this week and next week picking up storm debris/brush. Regular bulk trash day will also be picked up Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**POLICE REPORT**

Lt. Phillips presented the police statistics for the prior period, attached here. Phillips stated the department assisted Public Works, with additional staffing, throughout the storm. He noted that although most drivers were responsible, there were some curiosity visitors, and recommended during these events it is best for people to stay and safe. The holidays were event free.

**FIRE COMPANY**

The department was holding their annual elections this evening. Lt. Phillips did note that the fire company was very helpful during the flooding and had staged fire equipment near the office in order to have staff and equipment on both sides of the Causeway once the flooding started.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

President Costigan requested comments from the Commissioners regarding the recent request for a Tilghman Street Traffic Study submitted by Will Cawley. Commissioner Greer inquired of Cawley if the contract had been changed to reflect a peak time for the study, and if there would be an additional street

added to the study. With respect to Bonfield, Commissioner Delean-Botkin noted that although there has been more traffic currently due to two construction projects, the recently installed stop signs have slowed the trucks down considerably and she did not believe a study was needed. Commissioner Greer motioned to approve contracting Traffic Concepts to do a traffic study on Tilghman Street to consider traffic patterns and lowering of the speed limit at a cost of \$3100, Commissioner Costigan requested that the contract be addressed to the town and seconded the motion to approve, all were in favor, and the motion approved.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

None presented.

#### **LETTERS AND REQUEST**

None presented.

#### **ATTORNEY**

#### **TOWN MANAGER**

Manager Lewis noted that Maria Brophy has taken a position in the private sector, and the town currently has a posting for the Planning and Zoning Coordinators position, which had been prepared and posted per the recently developed Employee Hiring Procedures. Lewis also state that Chief Eric Kellner has requested to step down from the Chief's position for personal and professional reasons, but would be remaining with the department as an officer. Officer Phillips will be filling the role as the Interim Chief. In the near future, the town will be posting a request for applications for the position of Chief per the Employee Hiring Procedures. Lewis wished Maria well in her new employment and thanked Chris for stepping up to the new responsibilities.

Lewis noted that the town had received the proposed grant agreement with MDOT for the recently acquired Lamphier Bikeways Grant of \$23,962 to design a trail, as presented by Cameron Mactavish at a prior meeting, that would hopefully someday reach Easton along the old railroad trail. This leg would be solely on town property from the Causeway Parking Lot outside of Pope's, through the Causeway Park, and onto Dugout Memorial Park, eventually joining a future trail through the County's Conservation Park. She noted that the award had been announced in a prior meeting, the contract did require an in-kind match, which Talbot Thrives would be responsible for, and that she had provided the agreement to the Commissioners prior to the meeting. Once there is clarification on the contracting process, the town would move forward with acquisition of a design contractor.

Lewis requested a Closed Session for Personnel Matters following the meeting.

Lewis provided information with regards to the recent flood event and the next anticipate event this weekend. She stated that during this significant event, Public Works and Police Dept staff did an excellent job before, during, and after the event, as did the citizens in taking the warning seriously and preparing. The town was also supported by Talbot County Emergency and Maryland State Highway in preparation and during the event. It appears this was likely the second highest flooding event in recorded town history, with Isabel remaining the worst. The levels were higher than this past December's flood event, and within an inch or two of the 2021 Halloween flood, noting that is two significant flood events in two years, and with Isabel, three in twenty years, with the relevance being this far exceeds the normal and the public needs to understand the current weather pattern is higher than normal tidal flooding more often. Now is the time to prepare for future flooding, individually residents should use this experience to access what they can do to prepare for future events. It was noted in the future, due to sightseers traveling through flooded streets, as individual streets begin to flood, they will be coned off to avoid unnecessary damage from wakes to the homes and vehicles along the streets. The function of the town's tide gates, what happens when the tide completely overtops the structures, and the difficulty in draining flooded

areas when the tide remains high was explained. As mentioned in previous meetings, incorporating infrastructure, to include pumping systems, is currently being studying. Possible future solutions were discussed. The town is anticipating GMB Engineering to attend a March meeting to discuss their recommendations.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Martin Luther King Day – January 15, 2024, next Commissioner’s Meetings - January 23, 2024, Town Auditors will attend with Presentation of FY 2023 Financial Report, Town Talk on the functions of Living Shorelines and the Strand Shoreline Project: February 7, 2024 - 5:30 pm with MD DNR Chesapeake and Coastal Services and National Wildlife Federation.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Greer stated, as we are realigning jobs, it would be a good time to address the auditors concern about the lack of internal controls, and suggested the Commissioners consider hiring someone with a strong financial background to assist the admin and the manager, which would help to alleviate the audit concern. Commissioner Delean-Botkin reminded residents the dock trees are scheduled to come down on Saturday, pending weather conditions, and that the clearing of invasive species the Conservation Park was also rescheduled for Saturday, again conditions pending.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Art Murr asked questions regarding the Tilghman traffic study and request the information be brought back for to the public for discussion once received. Jane McCarthy asked that stop bars be added to the Stop signs on Tilghman. Dave Carroll expressed his concerns with the location of the new stop sign on Tilghman, which is centered directly in front of his home, impacting the esthetics of his home, with cars stopping for the stop sign stop directly in front of his driveway, and lastly, he is concerned with the late, overnight, early morning stopping and starting of diesel trucks to and from the landing. Emily Knud-Hanson said she is fine with the stop signs installed around her home on Bonfield, as there is a noticeable slowing of traffic. Dave Ober asked for the proposal for the suggested new position be posted online so the public can participate in the discussion. There was some discussion of the material weakness identified in the audit, and also explanation of the current distribution of efforts and oversight of the Commission President with dual signatures. Answering to the concerns of the lack of segregation of duty, Lewis stated that the solution is and has always been more staff, in order to address the town’s concern there needs to be three actual employees working with the finances, in addition to the employee managing the permitting and planning needs of the town. In response to Dan Kordell’s question on the status of the Cannabis legislation, Lewis stated the Planning Commission has approved and forwarded to the Commissioners draft legislation that will be on the next Commission meeting agenda, it will start as a discussion item under New Business, will be posted for the public following that meeting, with the required public hearing likely to be held at the last meeting in February. It was noted that State Highway has removed the white line along the town park, which had caused some confusion for parking, the crosswalk has been partially installed, and should be completed in the near future, after which pedestrian signs will be installed. Bob Hyberg inquired as to whether there had been any applicants for the Investment Task Force, with the answer being none at this time.

With no further business, Commissioner Delean-Botkin motioned to adjourn into a Closed Session for Personnel Matters, Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned to go into a closed session at 7:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager

*Commissioner Meetings are now live streaming and are archived on [townhallstreams.com](http://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: 12/11/23 to 12/31/23**

<b>REPORTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>ARRESTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Accident Report	0	5	Drug Arrests	0	0
Animal Complaint	0	3	DUI Arrests	0	0
Assault	0	1	On-View Arrests	0	0
Domestic	0	2	Warrant Arrests	0	1
Found/Lost Property	0	27	Criminal Summons	0	1
Fraud / ID Theft	0	5	Juvenile Referrals	0	1
Harassment	0	3	Other Arrests	0	0
Misc. / Other	0	12	<b>Total Arrests</b>	0	<b>3</b>
Suspicious Conditions	2	11			
Theft	0	7			
<b>Total Reports</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>76</b>			
<b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>COMMUNITY POLICING</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Alarm	0	22	Property Checks	118	1697
Animal Complaint	3	33	Special Events	2	35
Assist Other Agency	1	48	Foot Patrol	10	129
Check Welfare	0	10	Bike Patrol	0	32
Found/Lost Property	0	27			
Harassment	0	3	<b>ASSISTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Misc. / Other	3	62	Other PD	1	10
Motor Vehicle Collision	0	10	Fire/EMS	0	39
Noise Complaint	0	1	Other Agency	0	0
Parking Complaint	1	22			
Rogue and Vagabond	0	4	<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Suspicious Conditions	2	18	Parking Citations	0	31
Suspicious Person	1	9	Traffic Stops	11	238
Suspicious Vehicle	0	8	Traffic Citations	0	5
Traffic Complaint	0	14	Traffic / Parking Warnings	11	248
Trespassing	1	9	PC Searches	0	0
Verbal Dispute	0	3	Criminal Citations	0	0
911 Hang Up	0	2	Civil Citations	0	0
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>329</b>			
<b>TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Speeding	4	161	Cell Phone Violation	0	6
Stop Sign	7	54	Other Violation	0	18
Driving w/o License	0	3	Equipment Violation	0	8



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***Talbot County Sheriff’s Office Response Statistics***

<b>REPORTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>ARRESTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
DWI	0	2	Drug Arrests	0	0
Child Custody	0	2	DUI Arrests	0	2
Domestic	0	1	On-View Arrests	0	1
MDOP	0	1	Warrant Arrests	0	0
Misc.	0	1	Criminal Summons	0	0
			Juvenile Referrals	0	0
			Other Arrests	0	0
			<b>Total Arrests</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Reports</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>			
<b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>COMMUNITY POLICING</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Alarm	0	2	Property Checks/Patrols	22	252
Animal Complaints	0	8	Special Events	0	3
Check Welfare	2	6	Foot Patrol	0	0
Suspicious Condition	0	5	Bike Patrol	0	0
911 – Hang-up	0	0			
Trespassing	0	3	<b>ASSISTS</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Liquor Law Violation	0	0	Assist Oxford PD	0	5
Noise Complaint	0	2	Fire/EMS	0	1
Parking Violation	0	1	Other Agency	0	0
Suspicious Person	0	5			
Suspicious Vehicle	0	1	<b>ENFORCEMENT</b>	<b>RP</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Verbal Dispute	0	0	Traffic Stops	4	11
Found Property	0	0			
Motor Vehicle Collision	0	0			
Traffic Complaint	1	1			
Harassment	0	1			
Rogue and Vagabond	0	0			
Theft	0	1			
Misc. Calls	0	9			
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>			