

BOARD MEETING:
2ND AND 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
(410) 226-5122



101 Market Street
P.O. Box 339
Oxford, Maryland 21654

Commissioners of Oxford

The next COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD regular meeting will be held in person at
101 Market Street on September 24, 2024 at 6 pm

All are welcome to join the meeting in person or view the meeting virtually at the following link:
https://townhallstreams.com/towns/oxford_md

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD ~ September 24, 2024 AGENDA

REGULAR TOWN MEETING – 6 pm
Pledge of Allegiance

CLOSED SESSION

The Oxford Commissioners will vote to go into Closed Session following this open session on this 24th day of September 2024 under the Open Meetings Act, General Provision Article Sub-Section 3-305(b) (1) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSIONER

Commissioners Comments/Announcements

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Minutes with letters – August 13, 2024

OATH OF OFFICE

Board of Zoning Appeals – Stephen Selden

RESOLUTION FOR CONSIDERATION

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD TO AMEND THE RULES FOR CONDUCT AT COMMISSION MEETINGS

RESOLUTION NO. 2415 - A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD ADOPTING THE REVISED 2024 TOWN OF OXFORD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCE

ORDINANCE NO. 2414 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND THE FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF “SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT” REMOVING THE DATE OF “JULY 1, 2013” AND SUBSTITUTING “THE PREVIOUS FIVE (5) YEARS” AND TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF “AGREEMENT TO SUBMIT AN ELEVATION CERTIFICATE” TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT FOR A FLOOD ELEVATION CERTIFICATE UPON PLACEMENT OF THE LOWEST FLOOR AND SUBSTITUTING THE REQUIREMENT FOR WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OF LOWEST FLOOR HEIGHT FROM A LICENSED ENGINEER OR SURVEYOR.

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Commissioners of Oxford

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Increase to the Accommodations Tax – 4% to 6%
- Orange fence at the Strand
- Baker Tilly – Town Manager search update
- Amendments to Meeting Policy

NEW BUSINESS

- Procedure of how letters are to be submitted for Public Comment
- Submit an accessibility Grant to the Christopher Reeves Foundation
- Approval to hire consultant for Building and Floodplain permits

LETTERS RECEIVED

- Donna Patchett – Meeting Procedures
- Emilie Knud-Hansen – Meeting Rule Proposal
- Karen Wayland – Proposed Rules for Public Comment
- Barbara Paca – Oxford Revised Meeting Policy
- David Poe – Meeting Procedures
- Dorothy Fenwick – Purpose of Meeting

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS Public comments are encouraged and can also be emailed to oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net by noon on the Friday before every meeting

FUTURE MEETINGS

October 8, 2024 – Commissioners Meeting

October 22, 2024 – Commissioners Meeting

ADJOURNMENT OF OPEN SESSION

Vote to go into closed session

ADJOURNMENT OF CLOSED SESSION

The Commissioners of Oxford are governed by the Oxford Charter and are guided by Robert's Rules of Order. The Charter provides that all meetings of the Commissioners shall be open to the public, and the rules of the Commissioners shall provide that residents of the Town shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting in regard to any municipal question. Public Comment is included on all Commissioner regular meeting agendas and affords the public the opportunity to have a voice, and the Commissioners an opportunity to listen. Public Comment is not a Debate. It is not a question-and-answer session or discussion. If, after a public comment, a Commissioner wishes to clarify a matter, they may do so. With that in mind, the Commissioners thank the public for their interest, welcomes the public to speak, and requests that anyone who would like to speak please state your name and address for the record.

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2024

The Commissioners Meeting was held in the Oxford Commissioners meeting room on Tuesday, August 13, 2024. Meeting was called to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT

Attending the meeting were Commissioner Norm Bell, Pres., Commissioner Tom Costigan, Commissioner Greer, Town Planner Marilyn Williams, Clerk/Treasurer Vickie Sharp, and Attorney Lyndsey Ryan. Approximately 41 people were in attendance along with individuals attending virtually.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Commissioner Bell stated there was a Fire Marshal inspection last week, that capacity for the meeting room is 63 seats. The capacity seating is now posted on the wall. There were no violations. There have been several closed session meetings working on the process to select a search firm for the Town Manager position. Hopefully we will be ready next week for a special meeting to vote and announce the search firm.

Commissioner Greer motioned to amend the agenda, as part of a new process, we're going to move to a consent agenda. Department reports will be reported at the first meeting of every month. This process will allow more legislative time. Currently in public works report there is an item that needs to be moved to new business, and that is the removal of trees and the replacement of trees. Commissioner Greer motioned to move the Bartlett tree proposal to new business. Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Bell announced that Lisa Willoughby will be retiring on October 31, 2024. She is the longest employee for the Town of Oxford starting with the Town on May 1, 1987. If you see her, please wish her well.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Greer motioned to approve the meeting minutes for July 9, 2024, and the revised meeting minutes for July 23, 2024. Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

PRESENTATION

Renee Sheey, Government Affairs with Delmarva Power for the Bay Region and Jeff Middleton, Senior Program Manager for Vegetation Management with Delmarva Power gave a presentation and discussion with the public regarding the trimming of the trees around town. The town had asked us to come together and discuss some of the tree trimming, some of the scheduled pruning that we do for reliability in the region. We do it every four years. And when a lot of that activity was going on, there are some questions, some concerns, some education and information that people had asked for. Maintenance of vegetation along power line and utility corridors is very important to ensure that folks receive the electrical service that they pay for and deserve. Conversation between Delmarva Power and residences of Oxford was long, watch the Town meeting recording for August 13, 2024 for full discussion and questions.

TOWN PLANNER REPORT

Dugout/Central Park grant was awarded in 2019 with a game plan put together for different improvements to go into the park. In June of 2024 there was a meeting held at the Park and the residences were asked to come and get involved to help determine the layout. At this time there was a lot of interest in actually reviving the baseball field. After the meeting I went back to the residences, about 40 responded, to ask what everyone thought of the items in the grant. Most of the responds were a picnic area, so in the future if the ball field was brought back there were places to sit and watch. The bocce was popular as well. We can only put in the field with this grant the things that were approved by the Maryland Board of Public Works, specifically the bocce courts, chess, table tennis, corn hole, archery, grilling stations, picnic pavilion, landscaping and the a few of the little items that were shown on the site plan such as solar lights, benches, trash and recycle cans. This makes us limited to how we can use the funds. It has been confirmed that we don't have to purchase all the approved items. We can purchase as little of the items and arrange them anyway. We are now down to a deadline so I have asked for an extension. Tonight, we need to decide do we want to use the grant by purchasing only the top picks (picnic tables, barbecue grills and bocce court) and leave the baseball field for future development. No funds have been expended on this project to date and no funds have been received from the State. A decision needs to be made to either return the grant, or to go forward by installing improvements. Jane asked where did the soil come from and will the soil be tested? Town Attorney stated that she was currently going through other grant projects to determine where the soil/fill came from. In 2018 the fill came from the Causeway Project and stormwater ditches. Commissioner Bell stated, the answer is, Jane, it's not included in the grant. Jane asked would there be another grant to take the fill out? Commissioner Bell, we need to finalize the history of where the fill came from then we can finalize testing of the fill if needed. Several residences stated that soil testing is an easy process. Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve everything that is mentioned on the grant for Dugout Memorial Park. Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

CLERK/TREASURER REPORT

Financial reports for FY June 30, 2024 and FY July 31, 2025 were presented. Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve and send to audit. Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Packets containing resumes for applicants that have applied for the Board of Zoning Appeals were handed out and instructed Commissioners to review and make their selection at the next closed session. There are 3 spaces to fill.

Request for a street closure from Pam Harrison, between Morris Street and Pork Alley for the annual Library book sale on September 28th from 7:00 am to 1:30 pm. Police will monitor the street closure. Commissioner Costigan motioned to approve the street closure between Morris Street and Port Alley for the annual Library book sale. Commissioner Greer seconded, all were in favor and motion carried.

Submitted spreadsheet of the renovations that have been completed at the 201 West Pier Street condominium, this is where Chief Phillips and his family have moved into. Previously granted funds of \$20,000 to spend on the renovations. To date the Town has spent \$21,687.32 to up grade the condominium. Chief Phillips has turned in invoices for smaller purchases that total \$1,049.46 that he would like to be reimbursed. Requesting permission to reimburse the amount of \$1,049.46 to Chief Phillips. Commissioner Greer motioned to reimburse Chief Phillips for the repairs. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor, and motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS

Seeking Commissioner approval for tree removal and purchase of new trees to mitigate the ones being removed. The reasons to be removed that they are dying, Mark Eppard with Bartlett Tree has been out to inspect them and has recommended due to safety concerns that they be taken down. Please see attached quote. This will require nine new trees to replace the three removed. The locations are the oak tree by the water at Town Park, the beech tree by the church at Town Park, and the oak tree by the basketball court. Total is \$6,981. That dollar amount is for removal only. Commissioner Greer motioned to have Bartlett Tree experts remove the three trees in question and for us to explore options for new trees. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor, and motion carried.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police reports was presented for approval. Commissioner Greer stated that as part of the future process we will be completing a Consent Agenda at the beginning where all reports will be approved. Commissioner Greer motioned to approve the police reports as presented. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor and motion carried.

TOWN ATTORNEY AND OVF COMPANY REPORT

There were no reports

OATH OF OFFICE

3 new Planning Commission member were sworn in. Raymond "Skip" Case, Ken Jacoby and Russ Gray took oath of office for the Planning Commission.

RESOLUTION FOR CONSIDERATION - INTRODUCED

RESOLUTION 2414 - A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD ADOPTING AN ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDE FOR THE EMPLOYEES AND COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD AND CLARIFYING THE AUTHORITY TO SET AN AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE OXFORD COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Greer motioned to adopt Resolution 2414 as presented. Commissioner Costigan seconded the motion, all were in favor, and motion carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Review of the Stormwater and Management plan review fee, Commissioner Greer has requested to seek additional bids and bring back the review and findings back to the Commissioners for further review before approval. Commissioner Greer motioned to direct the Town Planner to get more cost proposals for Stormwater Management plan review fee. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor, and motion carried.

Approval for a grant, the State has stated that they will give a grant to repair the Tilghman Street bulkhead in the amount of \$250,000. Commissioner Greer asked that as long as you're digging up the parking lot, would request that they also include having a larger outfall pipe and tide gate down there. It's a one-time opportunity. 12 inches is pretty small. Commissioner Greer motioned to approve the grant application with looking into including the outfall pipe. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor, and motion carried.

Commissioner Bell stated we need permission for an RFP for a structural engineer for the FEMA house elevation. This is to find a structural engineer to go through the houses that are part of the FEMA project and start that work, which is the preliminary work to raise the houses. This would be one engineer for all 14 elevations. Commissioner Greer motioned to approve an RFP for the structural engineer for the FEMA house elevation grant. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor, and motion carried.

Commissioner Greer talked about the Maryland Municipal Technical Assistance Program. They provide assistance to municipalities to look for grants, federal grants mostly, for stormwater remediation, and they will help you do it. They will map the funding. The motion is to approve filling out the form for the Maryland Municipal Technical Assistance Program to map funds for stormwater projects. We could at another meeting decide what section of town we're gonna do, or we can decide it tonight. Would definitely use the 2016 stormwater report as our guide. The suggestion had been from the former Town Manager that we attack Bank Street with this particular technical assistance program. Both Marilyn and I attended the webinar on this new program. It would be something that would complement the Design and Build GMB project with the POPs. Commissioner Greer motioned that we direct our Town Planner to apply for the Maryland Technical Assistance Programs to map funds using the 2016 report for the Design and Build, to complement the Design and Build project by GMB. Commissioner Costigan seconded, all were in favor, and motion carried.

LETTER RECEIVED FOR THE COMMISSIONERS

These letters will be attached to the minutes of this meeting.

Against Banning Plastic Bags

Richard Leggett
Susan Campbell
Anthony Passarella
Liz Hasbrouck
Oxford Market – Chris McKelvy
Graham Norbury
Joan Nubie-Miscall

Dick Deerin – In favor of Plastic Bag restrictions

Bob Hyberg – Concern for Oxford

Barbara Ranson – Removal of the orange fence

Diana Temple – Standing Water Issue at 305 Tilghman Street

Margaret Munsch – Moorings

Lisa Bodensick, Postmaster – Paving Parking Lot

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Greer, I would like the orange fence added to the agenda for one of the next meetings. Is it okay for removal? The previous Town Manager had said that we were gonna take it down after July 4th. Assuming that the plantings are established enough and we can get a compromise on that, go ahead and do that. Commissioner Greer, thanked the Public Works over the weekend for when we had the storm for working around the clock. I did buy them pizza and a citizen brought them lunch, as they did do 24 hour staggered shifts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Davenport West 805 South Morris, I just wanna know if the new ordinance you just did tonight is gonna be posted online? And secondly, we were told, I don't know how many meetings ago, that the letters would be posted online and that seems to not be happening. Commissioner Greer stated, that's just a misunderstanding. Letters will be posted online; they will be attached to the approved meeting minutes.

Barbara Paca, Mill Street asked President Bell, I think perhaps when you mentioned letters, did you also refer to letters that we've written about professional conduct that seems to be missing from your list somehow? Is there a reason why you neglected to mention those letters? I believe many citizens felt they had the right to express their concern. I should like to request that one would respectfully post those letters in the minutes. Thank you. I have 13 letters here, none of which have ever been read and very few of which have ever been posted since 2023. So, thank you so much.

Not to beat a dead horse, but I went through about a year's worth of minutes of meetings and there's been one letter I found that was attached to the minutes. I wrote a letter to the town office and they said the only way to get the letters is to file a PIA with the town.

Commissioner Bell stated that we are working on figuring out how we're best going to post the letters.

Susan Cordell, 510 Strand, I want to give a big thumbs up because I think that's a great idea to have a consent agenda for this meeting. Are the reports and documents that are part of the consent agenda going to be posted on the website prior to the meeting so that the citizens can submit questions about it in a timely manner so that you guys can consider the questions, answer the questions before voting on it in the actual Tuesday regular meeting? When will they be posted? What is the deadline for putting the consent agenda together and having those materials and having them up on the website? Friday before the meeting? Thursday before the meeting? Commissioner Greer stated, four days before the meeting is what we're hoping to get to. The staff has to submit their items for the agenda a week before and then the consent agenda is... Four days would be close of business on Friday prior to Tuesday. Three days in advance of the regularly scheduled commissioner's meeting. Susan Cordell asked then after it's approved, are all of those materials going to be included in the meeting minutes slash document that is posted online on the website? Commissioner Greer stated I don't see why not. It's really part of our whole agenda.

Chooch Oristian, Doc' Sunset Grille, I just want to publicly thank Liza Ledford and the entire Oxford Community Center. You know, obviously we had flooding down at the restaurant on the weekend and they allowed us to put a 70-person rehearsal dinner in their auditorium. So, saved the day for us.

Graham Norbury, the fire company reports need to be submitted how many days before the meeting? Commissioner Bell stated, we'd like to get it Thursday, Friday, the week before the meeting. Commissioner Greer stated, that all department reports and OVFC reports are being moved to once a month.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Greer stated, we will be having a closed session meeting to discuss the contract for the search committee on Friday. So, there will be a closed session announced, and then we're probably going to announce who we've selected for the search committee and do a public meeting next Tuesday. So, we can get that process rolling.

Commissioner Bell, back up a little bit, the process we've been running is, Katrina found seven firms, search firms. We've looked at data from five. We developed a matrix of must-haves. We evaluated those five based on that matrix, worked it down. We need some due diligence work on the companies that we hope to get done by Friday. If all goes well, we will have a meeting next Tuesday, six o'clock, a special Commissioner's meeting to vote on the firm.

Future Commissioner's meetings, August 27th and September 10th.

Commissioner Bell asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Costigan motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Greer seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Vickie Sharp, Clerk/Treasurer

*Letters discussed in these minutes are attached and available upon request at the Town Office.
Commissioner Meetings are now live streaming and are archived on townhallstreams.com*

From: townoffice@goeaston.net
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 11:42 AM
To: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net
Subject: FW: Proposed Ordinance #2412

From: Richard Leggett <rolegett@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 7, 2024 11:26 AM
To: oxfordmanager@goeaston.net; Town Office - Lisa <townoffice@goeaston.net>
Cc: normanbell45@gmail.com; Tom Costigan <dc2ox4d@verizon.net>
Subject: Proposed Ordinance #2412

Dear Town of Oxford Commissioners,
As a local business owner, I am writing to share my views and request an exemption in advance of your August 27th hearing regarding proposed Ordinance #2412 prohibiting retail establishments from providing customers with single use disposable plastic bags.

Specifically, we are supportive of the ordinance for most uses -- merchandise, non-frozen goods, etc., - but, would respectfully request an exemption be included in the ordinance as it relates to the use of single-use disposable plastic bags specifically for transporting ice cream and frozen goods.

At SHC and OXS, we purposely use plastic bags when packaging our take-away frozen foods such as ice cream pints, quarts and frozen meals (at Oxford Social) as these goods are not well suited for paper bags as they create condensation which would ultimately weaken and break a paper bag and result in the destruction of the product. In addition, paper bags would result in faster melt times for the product. The combination of these two factors would ultimately create dissatisfaction among our customers.

In researching other jurisdictions that have also banned single-use plastic bags, we have consistently found exemptions to their rules specifically for frozen foods or fresh refrigerated goods (ex: PG County, Easton, etc.). As an example, in Prince George's County, the exemption includes

- *Package bulk items, including fruit, vegetables, nuts, grains, candy, or small hardware items;*
- **Contain or wrap frozen foods, meat, or fish, whether prepackaged or not;**
- *Contain or wrap flowers, potted plants, or other damp items;*
- *Contain unwrapped prepared foods or bakery goods;*

As such, we respectfully formally ask that Ordinance #2412 also be amended to provide such an exemption specifically for frozen foods. I am available for further discussion at your convenience at 646.483.3835.

Sincerely,
Richard Leggett
Owner, The Scottish Highland Creamery and Oxford Social Cafe

*Susan Campbell
105 Myrtle Street
Oxford, MD 21654*

August 5, 2024

To the Commissioners of Oxford:

In regards to the plastic ban – I believe in the small town of Oxford this isn't the highest priority. There are limited businesses that it would effect and most are not using plastic bags at this point - Mystery Loves Company and The Treasure Chest already use paper bags.

I may be mistaken but in Easton it is geared for the “larger establishments” such as grocery stores, major department stores, etc. There is not a large amount of plastic bags being used at the marinas and if they are used it is for items that are heavy and a paper bag would probably not work. At Campbell's we do not use plastic bags already but that is not saying that we feel a ban should be the right thing to incorporate.

I certainly hope Scottish Highland Creamery knows about the Ordinance because not allowing them (one of the biggest retailers in the Town) to use plastic bags for frozen ice cream would be the wrong move – having quarts of ice cream in paper bags would be a disaster.

If plastic bags are banned in Town what about the “doggie” pick up stations – those stations are used and should be used – but many times that is the bags that you see that have come off the roller or dropped by walkers.

I guess I am trying to say that I do not feel a Plastic Ban Ordinance is the correct approach in a tourist town that basically doesn't have a problem.

Thank you!

Susan Campbell

oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net

From: townoffice@goeaston.net
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:46 AM
To: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net
Subject: FW: Plastic bags

Please see below.

Message for next Tuesday's meeting.

Thanks!

Lisa

-----Original Message-----

From: Anthony Passarella <apass@atlanticbb.net>
Sent: Monday, August 5, 2024 11:21 AM
To: townoffice@goeaston.net
Subject: Plastic bags

It would seem that if you ban plastic bags from the few stores in Oxford you should also ban the usage of plastic bags to use for trash pickup on Mondays. I am not in favor of banning plastic bags from the retail stores or the market in Oxford
Sent from my iPhone

July 30, 2024

To Oxford Commissioners,

I am against a ban on single- use plastic bags in Oxford.

1. Any resident or Oxford visitor currently has a choice of whether to use their own bag or tote.
2. Plastic bags can be recycled or repurposed or reused, the same as paper bags. In fact, the town has curbside recycling.

Please provide specific data that such a ban would reduce plastic pollution in the town and its surrounding waterways. Personally, I see very little evidence that this is even a problem.

Sincerely,

Liz Hasbrouck
110 Norton Street

OXFORD MARKET

CHRIS MCKELVY

7/30/2024

CONTACT

4102260015
jcmck@verizon.net

Oxford Commissioners

I'm writing to you about the proposed plastic bag ban. We at Oxford Market are opposed to the plastic bag ban for many reasons. Most if not all the people we give bags to treat them responsibly. They are reused as trash bags or dogpoop bags. Boaters need the bags to take their provisions back to their boat and many of them use the bag for trash bags also.

RECIPIENT

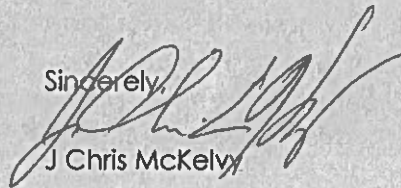
Oxford Town Commissioners
Oxford Md.

I don't think that banning plastic bags in Oxford would impact the world's plastic problem. I have lived in Oxford for 43 years and have never seen a plastic bag on the street in any gutters or ditches. A large percentage of our good are already packed in plastic, all our sandwiches are wrapped in plastic, all our deli salads are sold in plastic containers, therefore a plastic bag ban would seem like a moot point, or unneeded.

At the Oxford Market we already have several choices for bags paper, plastic, or you can purchase a reusable bag. We don't think we need to be told what bag we can and cannot use.

Last but not least we feel that a bag ban would create more division in town, and I don't think anyone wants that.

Sincerely,



J Chris McKelvy

P.S. If the ban passes I will be sending Wane Sard to the town office so, you can explain why he can't have a bag.

Just Kidding



OXFORD
MARINA & BOATYARD

P.O. BOX 340 | 402 EAST STRAND | OXFORD, MD 21654
410.226.5101 • BYY.COM

Commissioners of Oxford
PO Box 339
Oxford, MD 21654

August 6, 2024

Dear Commissioners Bell, Costigan, & Greer,

I am writing this letter in my capacity as the general manager of Safe Harbor Oxford, to express my company's opposition to proposed Ordinance number 2412.

While I understand the intent of the ordinance is to minimize both proper and improper disposal of plastic waste in the form of "single use" plastic bags provided by retail establishments, rules such as those contained within ordinance 2412 would negatively impact our business disproportionately compared to the items being sold in them.

Our primary business is that of a marina and boatyard, storing, repairing, and refitting recreational vessels, however we do offer retail sales of marine and general hardware at our ship store, and a small selection of snacks, refreshments, clothing, and toiletries from our fuel dock. If ordinance 2412 were to be enacted, the primary impact would be to our retail sales from our ship store. Many of the sales taking place in the ship store comprise low volume, physically small hardware, such as screws, nuts, bolts, electrical connectors, fuses, bulbs etc. The items themselves are typically not typically expensive but are easy to misplace due to their size, so for convenience we often pass them to our customers in small zip-lock bags. If we were to replace the plastic bags with paper, not only would the small parts be much harder to see, but the mandated \$0.10 cost of the bag could match or exceed the cost of the hardware it contained. E.g. #8 stainless steel flat washers are just \$0.04/each.

Oxford is a small town with few retail establishments. As such, the volume of disposable plastic bags that could be eliminated by adoption of this ordinance is going to be statistically insignificant and totally meaningless in terms of furthering the health and welfare of Town citizens. I would therefore hope that the Honorable Commissioners of Oxford would focus their efforts where they may be better served, such as dealing with flooding on The Strand caused by the impervious berms of the new living shoreline.

Sincerely,

Graham Norbury
General Manager

From: Joan Nubie <joannubie@me.com>
Sent: Sunday, July 28, 2024 10:34 PM
To: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net
Subject: Comments on Ordinance 2412

Good evening Commissioners Bell, Greer, and Costigan, and Oxford Town Clerk Vickie Sharp,

I would like to comment on the upcoming agenda item Ordinance 2412 banning retail establishments from providing single use plastic bags. For someone to propose this ordinance proves to me that they do not know Oxford, that they do not shop in Oxford. If you knew Oxford, you would know that we do not have an abundance of plastic bags being distributed. If you shop Oxford you would know that The Treasure Chest uses paper shopping bags. If you knew Oxford, you would know that the bookstore currently uses only paper bags, as well as Vintage store is paper bags only. The coffee shop, while probably not under the retail establishment definition, only uses paper bags. The Treasure Chest, bookstore and Oxford Market all have reuseable grocery tote bags available for purchase if someone would prefer to buy a multi-use bag. Some of the restaurants probably use plastic bags but they would be exempt from this ordinance as exceptions are made for carryout food. The only 2 retail establishments using single use plastic bags that would be hugely impacted from this plastic bag ban are The Scottish Highland Creamery and The Oxford Market. The creamery has a frozen item - ice cream - that would best be suited in a plastic bag, because to take a quart of cold ice cream home in a paper bag could lead to to soggy wet bag that could potentially break, with a container of ice cream falling to the ground and breaking - leading to unhappy customers. Keep in mind that the creamery customers are not just located here in Oxford with a quick trip home to pop their ice cream in the freezer, but potentially farther to places such as Easton and beyond with 20-30 minute car ride in a bag. Even that plastic bag becomes soaking wet with condensation off the frozen ice cream after 20 minutes in a car, but it certainly performs better than a paper bag. A paper bag would be useless after a longer car ride home. The Oxford Market also sells ice cream products same as the creamery, and other frozen foods that would be best suited in a plastic bag. The market has their deli with hot and cold carryout foods. Based on ordinance 2412, the carry-out food from the market would be exempt from any plastic bag ban, so they would be allowed to distribute plastic bags for those items. Would that be potentially half the bags the market hands out? My point is that the amount of bags being handed out by these 2 businesses is really on such a small scale considering the size of our town and the size of the businesses. We are not talking about a full scale grocery store just a small convenience store, and the creamery is closed several months a year, with limited hours about a third of the year. The plastic bag ban isn't going to eliminate the distribution of all plastic bags because using them for carry out is allowed, so why ban it at all. We have a high rate of tourist traffic that comes to town that may not be aware of a bag ban, and therefore unprepared with their own multi-use bags. They may need a bag, particularly a bag with handles to walk back to their hotel or marina. If only paper grocery bags are available, it will be more difficult for a transient boater to walk back as far as Safe Harbor marina with provisions for a boat. Plastic bags with handles can manage more items more easily for them.

As far as costs, since my store offers paper bags, I am well aware of the costs of these bags. A dime doesn't cover it! A flat paper bag that fits a greeting card (about 8x10) is \$.04, a paper bag with handles in a 5x7 size or 8x10 is \$.40 (yes, same price!). My larger bags go up from there at \$.60 and \$1.00. I don't have as much traffic as the market or the creamery, and therefore I do not hand out as many bags as them. With the added costs for paper bags, the costs to these 2 businesses could be substantial, and to pass the cost on the the customer would just make the customer angry and upset with our businesses, and our town. Don't we have enough contention in our town? Do we really need to add to it at this time?

I would ask that you do NOT pass this ordinance at this time. I think it would be best to move forward with this ordinance when it is done on a countywide scale. If Talbot county passes this ordinance, then adopt it then. Yes, the environment is important. But if the number of retail establishments in St. Michaels isn't following the same ordinance, how would

the relatively small amount of bags regulated here by 2 businesses really make a difference if all the bags in St. Michaels are still overburdening the landfills, causing sorting machines to break down, constituting a nuisance and eyesore to the area, still being produced with fossil fuels and contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, pose a threat to marine wildlife, etc. as written in the ordinance. The Oxford Market is still going to be allowed to use plastic bags for carry out. Potentially the creamery will be able to use bags for their ice cream depending on how you as commissioners interpret it (is ice cream carry out?) This ordinance will not significantly reduce the use of plastic bags in Oxford because as I said before, the businesses either aren't using them, or only a small amount will be eliminated through the ban, not all the plastic bags will be eliminated, so I say again, why ban them at all? If you should move forward with this ordinance, I would ask that you will fairly and equally treat these 2 businesses since they both have ice cream. Another way would be to talk to these businesses as neighbors and friends to ask if they will voluntarily offer a paper option to the customer in addition to plastic bags. Would you like paper or plastic? This could possibly cut down on the use of the plastic bags, yet still have plastic bags available to use to properly handle their food products.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments in your decision. If you have any further questions for me, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Joan Nubie-Miscall
Owner, The Treasure Chest

From: Dick Deerin <ddeerin@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, August 3, 2024 4:58 PM
To: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net
Subject: Ordinance 2412 - Single Use Plastic Bags

I understand that the town government has a full plate of issues to deal with in the near future, not the least of which is hiring a new town manager. However, I believe the proposed ordinance to restrict retail establishments from providing single use plastic bags is an important step our town can take to protect our environment and our health in the future.

Plastic bags have become ubiquitous in our daily lives, offering convenience at the cost of severe environmental consequences. Restricting plastic bags is a critical step toward protecting our environment and promoting sustainable living. These lightweight, single-use items contribute significantly to pollution and pose a serious threat to wildlife and ecosystems.

Plastic bags are a major pollutant. Made from non-biodegradable petrochemicals, they can take hundreds of years to decompose. During this time, they break down into microplastics that contaminate soil and water, entering the food chain and affecting human health. Oceans are particularly impacted, with millions of plastic bags ending up in waterways each year, contributing to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch and harming marine life. Animals often mistake plastic bags for food, leading to ingestion and, frequently, death. Turtles, for example, confuse plastic bags with jellyfish, a primary food source, resulting in fatal blockages in their digestive systems.

Furthermore, plastic bag production is resource-intensive. The manufacturing process consumes large amounts of fossil fuels and water, releasing greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change. Reducing plastic bag usage can thus significantly lower carbon footprints and conserve valuable resources. Implementing a ban would also encourage the adoption of reusable alternatives, such as cloth or jute bags, fostering a culture of sustainability and environmental consciousness.

Economically, banning plastic bags can lead to cost savings in waste management and pollution control. Governments spend substantial amounts on cleaning up plastic waste, funds that could be redirected toward other essential services. Additionally, the ban can stimulate innovation and create jobs in the production of eco-friendly alternatives.

Restricting plastic bags is a necessary action to safeguard our environment, protect wildlife, and promote sustainable practices. While it may require an adjustment period, the long-term benefits far outweigh the inconveniences. By embracing reusable bags and reducing our reliance on single-use plastics, we can pave the way for a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations.

Thank you.

Dick Deerin
301 S. Moris Street, Oxford

Dick Deerin
Cell: 301-518-3755

From: Nonym noname.hyberg@gmail.com
Subject: Concern for Oxford
Date: August 6, 2024 at 5:30 PM
To: Norman Bell normanbell45@gmail.com, Tom Costigan dc2ox4d@verizon.net, Katrina Greer katrinahgreer@icloud.com, Katrina Greer katrina4commissioner@gmail.com
Cc: Bob Hyberg noname.hyberg@gmail.com

Dear commissioners Bell, Costigan and Greer,

I just read Jan Greenhawk latest entry in her "Radio Free Oxford" site, "**Who's In Charge In Oxford?**" I will not elaborate on my personal thoughts but I do want to ask each of you a question. Who and when are any of you going to speak up and defend the town employees against these attacks? Yes there is the risk of being targeted, at least a few of you, but these two new employees are very competent and have already shown value in the town operations. I hope they feel like they are making a contribution but they also take pride in their personal reputations. If you don't start to defend them I believe they too will leave. Note, I just learned of Lisa planned exit.

For some of you, you may view this and other commentary as beneficial to driving a sense of transparency. I contend this has gone beyond and endangers the Town of Oxford as a community and its reputation outside our borders. I have friends wondering about what is going on in our town. I am not sure how to answer them.

Here is the link to Jan Greenhawk's latest contribution:

<https://radiofreeoxford.substack.com/p/whos-in-charge-in-oxford>

One last thought. In the interest of those demanding greater transparency, may I suggest it is fair for those who do not choose to burden the PIA process, the town begin to publish a list of submitted PIAs stating its purpose and the name of the requesting author. This serves two functions 1.) Eliminate potential duplicate submission(s) and 2.) Allow those with interest in the subject to seek the author for the results of the findings, each of which is public record.

Thank you for reading and considerations.

Sincerely,
Robert Hyberg
112 First St.
(302) 864-8008

oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net

From: townoffice@goeaston.net
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 3:08 PM
To: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net
Subject: FW: Orange Fence/ Strand- to the commissioners.

Importance: High

From: Barbara Ranson <babbs338@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2024 10:49 AM
To: Lisa <townoffice@goeaston.net>
Subject: Orange Fence/ Strand- to the commissioners.

Barbara Ranson
206 E. Strand,
Oxford, MD 21654

Dear Oxford Commissioners.

I am writing to request the removal of the orange fence currently installed on the Strand. This fence poses a safety hazard as pedestrians traverse the roadway, as there is no longer a place for them to walk. Earlier today, there was an incident with a runner and two cars traveling in opposite directions. The runner, wearing headphones, attempted to cross over the Strand and turn onto Norton and was nearly hit.

One remedy could be relocating this fence closer to the water and out of the walkway. All materials could be reused, thus eliminating the expense.

Also, in the meeting with the three project partners, held at the community center, it was discussed that a walkway would be available near the edge of the water running the length of the entire waterfront. I want to remind you all that this is an important element to some of us, and we know you are accountable for making certain this aspect of the project comes to fruition along with the platforms to allow disabled persons to access the beach.

Regards,
Barbara Ranson

oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net

From: Diana Temple <dianatemple16@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 9:48 AM
To: townoffice@goeaston.net
Cc: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net; oxfordplanner@goeaston.net
Subject: Re: Standing Water Issue at 305 Tilghman

Dear Lisa,

Thank you so very much for your reply and for forwarding the email. I was not sure who to contact since Cheryl's retirement.

I will wait to hear from Mrs. Sharp or Ms. Williams on what can be done.

Thank you and have a great day.
Diana

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 31, 2024, at 9:10 AM, townoffice@goeaston.net wrote:

Good morning Ms. Temple,

I have received your email and have forwarded it over to our Clerk-Treasurer Vickie Sharp and Town Planner Marilyn Williams. Our previous town manager, Cheryl Lewis, has retired and the email address for her you used in your message below is no longer in use.

Either Mrs. Sharp or Ms. Williams should be contacting you shortly.

If I can be of any further assistance to you, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Lisa
(Lisa Willoughby/Asst. Clerk)

From: Diana Temple <dianatemple16@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 7:47 AM
To: townoffice@goeaston.net; oxfordmanager@goeaston.net
Subject: Standing Water Issue at 305 Tilghman

July 31, 2024

RE: Flooding and Continuous Standing Water at 305 Tilghman Street

Dear Town of Oxford Commissioners,

I am reaching out to ask for your permission to be able to manage the water level rise and flooding issues that are currently occurring on my property at 305 Tilghman Street. I realize that this a continuous concern that impacts all of us throughout the town of Oxford, however, the problem seems to have escalated for my house and needs immediate help.

Until recently, I have always been able to mow the lawn, both front and back, weekly, however, that is now not possible due to continuous standing water. This condition is beginning to kill the grass in the backyard and the overflow of standing water is starting to kill plant beds and shrubs that I have growing in the front yard as well. It is also becoming difficult for me to access the side door to the house because of the standing water. This situation, and the inability to drain the water from underneath my house is becoming an emergency and I need some help to get a resolve!

It appears as though the drainage that was designed to allow tidal water and rainfall behind the properties immediately north of my house (307 and 309 Tilghman) is no longer functioning to allow water to move off of my property. I don't know if the level of the drainage has changed, but it does not appear to be working. It looks as though some modification with additional bulk rocks is causing the backup of water and not allowing the water to flow from my yard as it has before. Was some work done by the Town to regrade this drainage? If so, was the elevation of my property, particularly at the NW corner, taken into account to allow for continued drainage? If not, can you please re-assess this drainage area and provide me with an assessment of how this situation can be rectified?

When I bought my property at 305 Tilghman street I was aware that all of the adjacent properties sat at higher elevations. The properties had been improved and the ground level elevated to mitigate the sea level rise, tidal fluxes and run off from rainfall events. Historically, it is my understanding that my house had been elevated on a new foundation after completely flooding during hurricane Isabelle in 2003. As it appears I assume that some of the neighboring homes brought in fill dirt to grade their properties to try and prevent future flooding. This leaves my property the low spot to where the surrounding properties drain. I had planned to regrade my property after I purchased it, bring in enough fill to elevate the grade away from the house foundation and follow the existing drainage pattern to the NW corner of my property and include a rain garden to support tidal and rain water. The natural drainage is to the NW corner of the backyard of the property where the outflow behind 307 and 309 Tilghman runs toward the Mill street stormwater drain. I do not think that it's in the best interest of the town or the neighborhood for my property and house to be continually submerged or maintain constant standing water.

I feel that this is quickly becoming an emergency situation. Will you please review this situation and my request and provide your approval for me to mitigate this situation? I would like to be able to remove the existing stumps in the back NW corner of the property and align the surface level in that corner of the property to allow for water drainage. A significant amount of this corner of the property will be designated as a rain garden detention area for excess water during flooding and rainfall events. I fully understand the necessity for this area to support excess water, just not my entire property.

Thank you in advance for your review and consideration.

Best regards,

Diana L. Temple

Dianatemple16@gmail.com

(443) 786-0505

From: Margaret Munsch <margaretpmunsch@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 27, 2024 12:33 PM
To: kgreer@goeaston.net; nbell@goeaston.net; tcostigan@goeaston.net
Cc: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net; Ray Munsch
Subject: Moorings

Good morning, Katrina, Norm and Tom,

Ray and I returned yesterday from a three-week trip on our boat so we are trying to catch up on emails and town meetings during that time.

We have read Ordinance 2413 regarding moorings and support the defined mooring requirements as well as the establishment of an escrow account for each mooring in the amount of \$350.

We also understand that the yearly fee for our mooring will be raised from \$25 to \$350. We certainly feel that the yearly fee should cover any time spent by the town office to administer our mooring. Since we personally contact Jeff Mathias of Mathias Marine Services for yearly maintenance and ensure his report is sent to the town office, the only time spent by the office should be receiving that report, recording that we are in compliance and sending out a yearly bill. This should take an hour, at most, so \$350 seems excessive. Please let us know if we are missing something regarding the town's time in administration of our mooring.

If the fee is set at \$350 in order to make money for the town, we think that is inappropriate. Our mooring was legally permitted and in place before the town annexed the river bottom in front of our house and our mooring continues to be within our riparian rights. In general, towns that charge significant yearly amounts for moorings do so because the moorings are in public space, are maintained by the town and dockage is limited. Launch service, pump out service and trash pickup is provided for the yearly fee.

In closing, we continue to support the regulations set by the Town to manage the waterfront. We support the mooring requirements, the escrow fee and a realistic raise in the yearly rate to cover administration costs.

Thank you,
Margaret Munsch

From: Bodensick, Lisa K - Oxford, MD <lisa.k.bodensick@usps.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 3:12 PM
To: Oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net
Subject: Request for Parking Lot resurfacing for Oxford Post Office

Dear Ms. Sharp,

I, Lisa K Bodensick, Postmaster Oxford, MD 21654, am requesting the Parking Lot to be resurfaced as soon as possible. Per my conversation with Cheryl Lewis & Mr. Costigan, when the town acquired the Oxford Post Office located at 101 Wilson St., we discussed the need for the parking lot to be addressed. The parking lot has been an issue for a while, and the prior owner had been notified of the need of a new resurfacing. Please feel free to contact me about this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Lisa K. Bodensick

Postmaster

410-226-5629

RESOLUTION NO. 24_____

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD TO
AMEND THE RULES FOR CONDUCT AT COMMISSION
MEETINGS**

WHEREAS, Section 3C-4 of the Oxford Town Charter provides, "All meeting [meetings] of the Commissioners shall be open to the public, and the rules of the Commissioners shall provide that residents of the Town shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting in regard to any municipal question"; and

WHEREAS, Section C3-7 of the Charter provides, "The Commission shall determine its own rules and order of business", and

WHEREAS, historically, the Commission has encouraged the public to attend and observe the proceedings and has provided on the meeting agenda, a time at the end of each meeting of the Commissioners for "public comment"; and

WHEREAS, the public is encouraged to communicate with the Commissioners prior to any meeting by letters and emails any comments and/or questions at any time; and

WHEREAS, in the recent past members of the public have sought to make comments and ask questions during times other than the time designated for public comment at end of the Commissioner's meeting; and

WHEREAS, allowing sporadic comments and questions during the time when the Commissioners are conducting the public business is disruptive and prevents the Commissioners from conducting efficient and fair meetings; and

WHEREAS, although photographing and videotaping of meetings is permitted, such actions can be a distraction to the general audience.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commissioners of Oxford hereby adopt the following rule regarding participation in by the general public in open meetings of the Oxford Town Commissioners.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS OF THE OXFORD COMMISSIONERS

1. At any open meeting on the Oxford Town Commissioners, the general public is invited to attend and observe.
2. Except as provided below and except in instances when the Commissioners of Oxford expressly invite public testimony, questions, comments or other forms of public participation, or when public participation is otherwise authorized by law, no member of the public attending an open session may participate in the session.
3. At the conclusion of the business session of each meeting of the Oxford Town Commissioners, the agenda shall provide a time during which members of the general public may make comments/questions, provided that:
 - a. The individual wishing to make a comment or present a question shall utilize the microphone and identify him or herself by name and address;
 - b. Direct all comments and questions to the Commissioners; and
 - c. Limit comments/questions to three minutes.
4. One or more of the Commissioners or appropriate staff will provide answers to any questions put forth by a commenter as soon as practicable after the close of the meeting. The form of the answer shall be in written form (letter or email) and attached to the minutes of the meeting.
5. All meeting participants must act in a courteous and civil manner. Defamatory comments, profanity and obscenity will not be tolerated.
6. The Commissioners will make every reasonable effort to post on the Town website the meeting agenda by the close of business on the Thursday prior to each regular Oxford Commissioners meeting. The public is encouraged to file written comments to the Commissioners. This will provide time for interested parties to file written comments and questions regarding items on the agenda. Items on the agenda may be added or deleted to the agenda by a majority of the Commissioners without regard to this provision.
7. A member of the public, including any representative of the news media, may record discussions of the Oxford Town Commissioners at an open session by means of a tape recorder or any other recording device if the device does not disturb members of the Oxford Town Commissioners or other person attending the session.
8. A member of the public, including any representative of the news media, may photograph or videotape the proceedings of the Oxford Town Commissioners at any open session if the equipment
 - a. is operated without excessively bright artificial light that disturbs members of the Oxford Town Commissioners or other persons attending the session,
 - b. does not create an excessive noise that disturbs members of the Oxford Town Commissioners or other persons attending the session,
 - c. and does not block in whole or in part the view of any persons attending the session.

DRAFT 2 Commissioner's Meeting Procedures

All such equipment and its operation will be done in a specific designated area to maintain the orderly conduct of the meeting.

9. A recording of an open session made by a member of the public, or any transcript derived from such recording, shall not be deemed a part of the record or any proceeding of the Oxford Town Commissioners.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution 24_____ shall become effective upon the favorable vote of a majority of the Commissioners of Oxford.

RESOLVED, this _____ day of _____, 2024

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD:

Norman Bell, President

Tom Costigan, Commissioner

Katrina Greer, Commissioner

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was passed by a yea and nay vote of the Commissioners of Oxford on the _____ day of _____, 2024.

Attest: _____

Vickie Sharp, Clerk/Treasurer

Town of Oxford

RESOLUTION NO. 2415

**A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD ADOPTING THE REVISED
2024 TOWN OF OXFORD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN.**

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford recognize the need to establish procedures and actions to be taken by citizens, staff and visitors to Oxford if an adverse weather event is imminent; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford adopted an Emergency Operations Plan in 2007 and revised said plan in 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford recognize that periodic updates and revisions may need to be made to the Emergency Operations Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford are authorized to develop and adopt said plans, which are designed to protect the Town's citizens and infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford have determined that it is desirable to adopt the revised 2024 Town of Oxford Emergency Operations Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. That the 2024 Town of Oxford Emergency Operations Plan, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein, be and is hereby **ADOPTED**.

Section 2. This Resolution shall become effective immediately.

RESOLVED by the Town Commissioners of Oxford on this ____ day of _____, 2024.

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD:

Norman Bell, President

Tom Costigan, Commissioner

Katrina Greer, Commissioner

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 24__ of the Town of Oxford was duly adopted pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Charter of the Town of Oxford on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

Vickie Sharp, Clerk/Treasurer
Town of Oxford

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD

Ordinance No. 2414

Introduced by: Marilyn Williams

Date: September 24, 2024

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND THE FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF "SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT" REMOVING THE DATE OF "JULY 1, 2013" AND SUBSTITUTING "THE PREVIOUS FIVE (5) YEARS (1,825 DAYS)" AND TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF "AGREEMENT TO SUBMIT AN ELEVATION CERTIFICATE" TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT FOR A FLOOD ELEVATION CERTIFICATE UPON PLACEMENT OF THE LOWEST FLOOR AND SUBSTITUTING THE REQUIREMENT FOR WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OF LOWEST FLOOR HEIGHT FROM A LICENSED ENGINEER OR SURVEYOR.

Introduced, read first time, ordered posted, and public hearing scheduled on **October 22, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.** at the Oxford Town Meeting Room, Market Street, Oxford, Maryland 21654.

By Order _____
Vickie Sharp, Clerk/Treasurer

I hereby certify that the foregoing **Ordinance No. 2414** of the Town of Oxford was duly read, advertised, and enacted in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Charter of the Town of Oxford on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Attest: _____
Vickie Sharp, Clerk/Treasurer
Town of Oxford

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD

ORDINANCE NUMBER 2414

INTRODUCED BY: Marilyn Williams

DATE OF INTRODUCTION: September 24, 2024

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD TO AMEND THE FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT ORDINANCE TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF “SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT” REMOVING THE DATE OF “JULY 1, 2013” AND SUBSTITUTING “THE PREVIOUS FIVE (5) YEARS” AND TO REVISE THE DEFINITION OF “AGREEMENT TO SUBMIT AN ELEVATION CERTIFICATE” TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT FOR A FLOOD ELEVATION CERTIFICATE UPON PLACEMENT OF THE LOWEST FLOOR AND SUBSTITUTING THE REQUIREMENT FOR WRITTEN CONFIRMATION OF LOWEST FLOOR HEIGHT FROM A LICENSED ENGINEER OR SURVEYOR.

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford are authorized by the Maryland Annotated Code, Title 4 of the Land Use Article to provide regulations for the orderly development and use of land and structures, and to promote the general health, safety and welfare of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford, by resolution, agreed to meet all of the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program and was accepted for participation in the program on September 28, 1984; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford adopted an updated Floodplain Management Ordinance by Ordinance 1609 in 2016; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford recognize that using the date of July 1, 2013 to establish whether reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition and other improvements to a structure constitute a Substantial Improvement constitutes an excessive timeframe; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford also recognize that the requirement of a formal Flood Elevation Certificate for a foundation check, or upon the placement of the lower floor, presents an unnecessary burden on homeowners and is not required for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP); and

WHEREAS, the Commissioners of Oxford have determined that it is desirable and in the public interest to amend the Floodplain Management Ordinance to revise §2.0 Definitions;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: The Oxford Floodplain Management Ordinance, Section 2.0 is hereby amended as follows:

Substantial Improvement: Any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement of a building or structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the building or structure before the start of construction of the improvement. ~~Improvements have been tracked since July 1, 2013.~~ When cumulative improvements made ~~since July 1, 2013~~ **within the previous five (5) years (1,825 days)** to a building or a structure become substantial, the entire building or structure must be brought into compliance. The term includes structures which have incurred substantial damage, regardless of the actual repair work performed. The term does not, however, include either:

- (1) Any project for improvement of a building or structure to correct existing violations of State or local health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official prior to submission of an application for a permit and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions; or
- (2) Any alteration of a historic structure, provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure.

[Note: See "Substantial Improvement/Substantial Damage Desk Reference" (FEMA P-758).]

Agreement to Submit an Elevation Certificate: A form on which the applicant for a permit to construct a building or structure, to construct certain horizontal additions, to place or replace a manufactured home, to substantially improve a building, structure, or manufactured home, agrees to have an Elevation Certificate prepared by a licensed professional engineer or licensed professional surveyor, as specified by the Floodplain Administrator, and to submit the certificate:

- (1) With a building permit application; **and**
- ~~(2) Upon placement of the lowest floor and prior to further vertical construction; and~~
- ~~(3)~~ **(2)** Prior to the final inspection and issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy.

In accordance with adopted Building Codes and floodplain management practices, written confirmation of the actual elevation of the lowest floor is required from a licensed professional engineer or licensed professional surveyor upon placement of the lowest floor and prior to further vertical construction.

Section 2. This ordinance and the rules, regulations, provisions, requirements, orders and matters established and adopted hereby shall take effect and be in full force and on the ____ day of _____ 2024.

ENACTED this ____ day of _____, 2024.

COMMISSIONERS OF OXFORD:

Norman Bell, President

Tom Costigan, Commissioner

Katrina Greer, Commissioner

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance Number 24__ of the Town of Oxford was duly read, advertised, and enacted with the applicable provisions of the Charter of the Town of Oxford on this ____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST:

Vickie Sharp, Clerk/Treasurer
Town of Oxford

Purpose of the Commissioner's Meeting

- ~~IS to do the work of the people~~
- The purpose of this policy is to create an atmosphere where the elected officials, staff, and members of the public can attend to business efficiently, fairly, and with full participation.

Meetings will be driven by the agenda

- ~~Do the people's work first~~
 - ~~No public comments during this part of the meeting unless the meeting is opened for a public hearing~~
 - ~~Public comments after the people's work is done~~
 - Comments must be related to relevant public business **when comments are related to an item to be voted on in the agenda during the meeting**
 - Public Comment period at the end of may be on any topic
 - ~~This part of the meeting is not a question and answer period. If a question is asked, it will not be answered.~~
 - The individual making the comment ~~must sit at the comment table and~~ speak into the microphone, and state their name
 - Limit comments to 3 minutes
 - Direct all comments to the Commissioners
 - ~~Consider requiring commenters to pre-register, and limit total comment period to some time (45 minutes? One hour?)~~
 - Cheering, booing, interrupting during the meeting, or other forms of heckling will not be tolerated as such behavior discourages people from participating and is disruptive

Personal Video and/or Audio Taping of the Meeting

- Cannot prevent someone from recording the meeting if they do not disrupt the meeting
- If someone wants to record the meeting, they must do so from a designated area in the meeting room
 - ~~Cannot walk around to move the equipment as this is a disruption of the meeting~~

Decorum at the Meeting

- All meeting participants must act in a courteous, civil manner
- Respect all people
- No defamatory comments will be tolerated
- No profanity or obscenity will be tolerated
- ~~Obey the direction of the President as to when and how long you may speak~~

The Commissioners of Oxford encourage public engagement, participation, and communication. Individuals may provide public comment during the public comment period at regular Commissioner Meetings, or by submitting a letter or email to the Commissioners and/or Town Office at least 5 days prior to a scheduled Commissioner Meeting. Letters or emails that are intended to be public comment should reference "public comment".

In addition, individuals may submit emails, letters, or requests to the Town Office for consideration, which communications are not intended as public comment and will not be made a part of the Meeting record. Communications that are received that do not reference public comment will be treated as communications and will not be referenced in a Commissioner Meeting or posted with the minutes. However, these communications will be stored at the Town Office as part of the Town's public records and subject to review or disclosure.

Individuals may also submit emails, letters or requests directly to the Commissioners which are considered communications not intended as public comment and will not be made a part of the Meeting record. These comments will not be stored at the Town Office and will not become part of the Town's public records.

Meeting procedures and public comments



Mail Customer Services <patchettsmith@atlanticbb.net>

To: oxfordclerktreasurer@goeaston.net; nbell@goeaston.net; kgreer@goeaston.net; tcostigan@goeaston.net



Tue 9/17/2024 3:08 PM

Common sense changes should be made to the proposed draft regarding public comments.

All residents/taxpayers should have the opportunity to speak prior to any vote on an item.

Voting by the commissioners on any agenda item should not take place until after the public is asked to comment.

If any resident/taxpayer has a question on any subject concerning the town (whether or not it is on the agenda) and the commissioners have the ability to answer, they should answer all questions.

And finally it seems undemocratic to require residents/taxpayers to pre-register to comment or to allow the President to decide who, when and how long a resident/taxpayer can speak. A reasonable time limit would be adequate and fair to all.

Thank you,

Donna Patchett

106 Riverview Ave

September 18, 2024

To the Oxford Commissioners and Town Officials:

Rather than encourage citizens to share their thoughts on various issues, the proposed Meetings Policy includes so many rules of behavior, it will stifle participation. In a town of 700, most over the age of 60, it is an insult to have our elected officials produce such a condescending proposal better directed at first graders.

The “purpose” as stated makes me question who’s in charge. Isn’t it the President’s job to “create an atmosphere {for those present} to see our government “attend to business efficiently, fairly and with full participation.”?

It is certainly fair to have a Meeting Policy that explains the order of business and when public comments are appropriate. But to prohibit every sort of vocal response (applause seems to be banned along with cheering, booing, etc.) is an insult to the taxpayers of Oxford. These proposed rules are a knee-jerk response to the very few people who generally behave with rude remarks and a desire to hear themselves talk. They certainly have been effective.

Please distinguish between written notes to be entered into the record, and a chance to speak up at a meeting. You want to see all remarks in writing two days before? I have no idea what I might want to say at a Commissioners meeting, much less ask permission to say it. But I certainly have the right to speak about any town issue during the public comments period. A three-minute limit is reasonable, but it would be less intimidating if a microphone was put on a stand rather than require people to sit at a table.

The agenda could simply state the meeting rules at the bottom of the page. *The public is asked to withhold comments or questions as town business is conducted. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, including verbal and physical unwarranted interruptions, and a refusal to abide by rules of public participation and common courtesy. The Commissioners reserve the right to unanimously require an offender to leave.*

It is unreasonable to discourage public participation when there are so few opportunities for the public to address their fellow citizens and town officials. If the Commission cannot run a civil, organized meeting to serve the citizens of Oxford, please find someone who can.

Respectfully,

Emilie Knud-Hansen

215 Bonfield Ave, Oxford

104 E Strand POB 31
Oxford, MD 21654
(202) 236-9040

September 5, 2024

Commissioners of the Town of Oxford
Norm Bell, President
Tom Costigan, Commissioner
Katrina Greer, Commissioner

Commissioners,

Thank you for your attention to the importance of allowing public participation in Oxford Commissioners meetings, as noted by the issuance of proposed rules for public comment. While I am now a resident and registered voter in Oxford, I grew up in New England, where many decisions about local governance are made in town meetings in which residents actively deliberate policies and budget proposals, and town officials listen and answer questions. New England's town meetings have been described as the "purest form of democracy." I spent many hours growing up listening to my neighbors and our elected officials engage in mostly civilized – but sometimes highly contentious – debates over the direction of the town at these meetings. I am not suggesting that the Town of Oxford adopt a town meeting format for its Commission proceedings, but the town in all its commissions should encourage public comment and allow for elected and appointed officials and town staff to respond immediately when possible to residents' questions and concerns.

The public comment proposal issued this week includes a number of provisions that appear intended to limit public discourse, rather than encourage it, and I would suggest that the new procedures begin with a preamble that public comments are welcome (see example of [Takoma Park City Council website](https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/meetings-and-documents/current-and-past-agendas/public-comments-at-city-council-meetings/)¹, screenshot below). Listening and responding to constituents' concerns is an essential part of a government official's job, and therefore the public comment period of a public meeting is as important as the other items on the Commission's agenda. In no way should you distinguish the conduct of regular business from the solicitation of public input when describing the Commission's mission

¹ <https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/meetings-and-documents/current-and-past-agendas/public-comments-at-city-council-meetings/>

“to do the work of the people.” I suggest removing any references to “the work of the people” from this document.

I would also urge you to allow staff and elected officials to respond to residents’ comments immediately when possible. The public interest is not well-served if you allow easily answered questions, as many residents ask at Oxford meetings, to go unanswered. I suggest deleting the bullet related to questions and answers.

The Commission’s proposal for public comment at your meetings also contains some provisions that seem contrary both to the town’s Charter and to court rulings concerning citizens’ First Amendment rights at public meetings. The Charter states that “all meetings of the Commissioners shall be open to the public, and the rules of the Commissioners shall provide that residents of the Town shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting *in regard to any municipal question.*” The proposed process for public comment states that “comments must be related to relevant public business,” which is contrary to the Charter language. Furthermore, public comment periods at government meetings are considered “designated public forums” in which the government should not make content-based restrictions on First Amendment speech. This does not preclude you from preventing disruptive conduct or setting time limits for speakers, but the Commission should not limit the topics on which a speaker provides comments. I suggest deleting any requirement that Oxford residents must only speak on matters “related to relevant public business”.

The proposal includes the possibility of requiring residents to pre-register and limit the total time for comments. Both of these provisions should be deleted. Regarding pre-registering, residents in the audience who develop questions or concerns about current business before the Commission *during* the meeting should not be prohibited from speaking during the public comment period, which pre-registering would do. This is especially important if you prevent any back-and-forth with residents for clarification during the business meeting. An overall time limit for public comment would in effect disenfranchise some residents from providing comments if there are matters before the Commission that generate significant public interest.

If the Commission decides to adopt a time limit for public comment, I suggest that the town invest in a timer designed for public meetings that is visible to the Commission, the speaker, and the audience. This timer would ideally have red, green and yellow lights to alert the Commissioners and speaker when the time limit has expired. A small timer for a

podium is around \$200, although timers with larger digital faces may be more expensive.² The meeting chair should be the enforcer of any time limits. Your final procedure should note that if residents need more than the time limit to express their views, they should provide their comments in writing.

Finally, rules for public comment must be applied evenhandedly. The last clause of the proposal (“Obey the direction of the President as to when and how long you may speak”) is unnecessary if the new rules describe when the public comment period occurs in the meetings, how speakers queue up to provide comments, and how long they can speak. I urge you to drop this clause.

Thank you for your consideration of these suggested edits.

Sincerely,



Karen G. Wayland, Ph.D.

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(202) 236-9040



² https://www.bhphotovideo.com/c/buy/presentation-timers-displays/ci/20585/N/4034387043?gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwxY-3BhAuEiwAu7Y6szoxceTtCJH2j8ZKSF8bnQe3aoMHUDHvwyeLix01Bg4u8FGDfEcixoCnAAQAvD_BwE



Barbara Paca, Ph.D., O.B.E.
101 and 103 Mill Street
Oxford 21654

15 September, 2024

Oxford Commissioner President Norm Bell
cc: Lindsay Ryan, Esq, Commissioner Katrina Greer and Tom Costigan
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OXFORD REVISED MEETINGS POLICY

Dear Commissioners,

I live in a quaint town in the United States. Or at least so I thought, until I received new guidelines re. (poorly written) revised protocol for Oxford Commissioner Meetings.

Is there a new unwritten prerequisite requiring staff to write directives to try to further swindle the population responsible for paying their salaries out of basic truths and the fundamental American right of requesting so when they are merely requesting transparency?

These bizarre amendments are not only counterproductive, they are un-American!

With All Good Wishes, Yours Sincerely,

Barbarapaca.

Dr. Barbara Paca, O.B.E.

N.B.: For some reason, members of Oxford staff appear to be unable to respond to letters with even the most basic courtesy of a "received" or "noted." Perhaps one is unfamiliar with etiquette/professional practice, therefore I must insist that this letter be made a part of the Town Minutes at the next meeting. Kindly confirm receipt and state your intention as to whether or not this commission plans to follow professional protocol re. documenting letters written by concerned citizens.

David R. Poe
301 N. Morris Street
P.O. Box 163
Oxford, Maryland 21654

September 19, 2024

Commissioners of Oxford
PO Box 339
Oxford, MD 21654-0339

RE: Comments On Proposed Meeting Procedures Circulated at the
Commissioners' Meeting of September 10, 2024

Dear Commissioners:

The following represent my comments as an individual to the proposed Meeting Procedures that were circulated at the last Commissioners' meeting on September 10, 2024.

First, the fundamental approach of having meetings of the Commissioners being driven by an agenda published ahead of time is sound and consistent with the Maryland Public Information Act. There should be an established cut-off date by which agenda items may be proposed so that the agenda may be made available to the public by posting/publication. This procedure will allow all interested citizens to be aware of items coming before the Commissioners for decision, and to express their views to the Commissioners before the meeting during which the items are to be considered. Of course, there needs to be provision for the Commissioners to consider items on an emergency basis, without prior publication, but that should be only if exceptional, unforeseeable circumstances require it.

The preferred method by which citizens should pose their questions and/or state their concerns regarding Town government should be in written form, either in written documents or emails, addressed to all Commissioners. Again, this is consistent with the Maryland Public Information Act. Of course, the Commissioners have the discretion to schedule meetings for the purpose of receiving public oral comment, or to allow a portion of any regular Commissioner meeting to be devoted to receiving such public comment. However, the proposed Meeting Procedures have it essentially right that the regularly scheduled Commissioner meetings should be mostly for the open process of Town government to operate: i.e. to receive information relevant to the needs of the

Town, to consider solutions to the issues presented and to make decisions in the Town's best interests.

Third, reasonable restrictions on personal conduct of members of the public attending meetings of the Commissioners are not only appropriate but necessary. There are dozens if not hundreds of meetings, at all levels of government within Maryland, in which the public is permitted if not encouraged to attend, and most of them have rules of public conduct. Some are judicial, such as the various courts, some are legislative and some are administrative. But all require that public participation and dialogue not be disruptive. In all that I am aware of, the presiding officer has the authority to rule on the orderly conduct of individuals and exclude from further participation those whose conduct is determined to infringe on the rights of others in attendance. Without commenting on the specifics of the public conduct provisions of the proposed Meeting Procedures, I wholeheartedly support the concept.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David R. Poe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and "P".

David R. Poe

Members of the Commission:

Comments on the PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSIONER'S MEETING:

#1. Is this document an Ordinance; a Resolution; a Policy?

#2. As to the stated purpose of the proposed changes-the regulations concerning the Personal Video/Audio Taping are reasonable.

#3. The suggested Decorum at the Meeting are acceptable EXCEPT the last statement.

In America, citizens obey the law-not individuals.

PUBLIC COMMENT section would appear to be inconsistent with the Town Charter:

- a. Section C3-4 "the rules of the Commissioners shall provide that the residents of the Town shall have a reasonable opportunity to be heard at any meeting in regard to ANY municipal question."
- b. All citizens should use a standing microphone located in the aisle of the meeting room. All citizens-both in person and streaming- will have a better opportunity to hear the comments.
- c. The statement should be limited to 3 minutes to move the meeting forward in a timely fashion.

Town Charter (Section C3-4)

The only power/responsibility of the elected President is to "preside over the Commission meeting":

Therefore, the President should exercise this responsibility by ensuring the meeting progresses in a timely fashion.

Dorothy Tenenick
Sept. 18, 2024

I present these facts in the hope that they will be considered during any considerations of the future of Oxford.

In 2010, the town of Oxford had a population of 652 taxpayers, 3 Commissioners, 2 staff members in the Town Hall, 2 policemen and 4 maintenance men and 0% population growth. A water bill for a 2-person household was \$89.00 a quarter.

In 2015, the Oxford population was 618 with -0.64% population growth.

In 2020, the Oxford population was 608 with a 0% population growth.

On September 1, 2024, the town of Oxford had a population of 597 taxpayers, 3 Commissioners, 4 staff members (3 on payroll, one slot in process of recruitment) in the Town Hall, 3 policeman and 5 maintenance men with a projected -0.05% population growth. A water bill for a 2-person household is \$318.00 a quarter.

In 2029, the projected population will be 584 taxpayers with a projected -0.34% growth rate.

Given the continuing decline in population-estimated at 1.6% annually - perhaps it is an opportune time to consider the current spending/hiring patterns of the Oxford administration.

Dorothy Fenwick, PhD; 211 Tred Avon; taxpayer since 1987

Statistics based on latest US Census estimates (released May 2024). The last official US Census in 2020 recorded the population at 608. *

2010	652 taxpayers	0% growth
2015	618 taxpayers	-0.64%
2020	608 taxpayers	0%
2024	597 taxpayers	-0.03%
2029	584 taxpayers	-0.34% (projected)

Additional data from the World Population Review ([.com/us-cities/maryland/oxford](https://www.worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/maryland/oxford))