

**MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF NORTH EAST
106 S. MAIN STREET
NORTH EAST, MARYLAND 21901**

January 13, 2016

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Robert F. McKnight at 7:00 PM. Present were Commissioners Michael Kline, Paul Stark and Hilary Crothers Moore. Also present were Chief of Police Darrell Hamilton, Maintenance Supervisor Phillip Meekins, Town Administrator Melissa B. Cook-Mac Kenzie, Director of Finance and Administration Kendrick Natale and Head Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Absent from the meeting, Commissioner Eric Braley.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of December 21, 2015 with corrections was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Kline.

GUEST-

None.

-APPOINTMENTS-

None.

-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None.

OATH OF OFFICE-

None.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCES-

None.

REPORTS-

Mayor McKnight

None.

Commissioner Kline

Commissioner Kline entered into the record the November 2015 and December 2015 Maintenance Department Monthly Report.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None.

Commissioner Stark

Commissioner Stark entered into the record the December 2015 Crime and Traffic breakdown for the North East Police Department.

Director of Finance and Administration, Ken Natale

Mr. Natale reported the office staff is working on the December 2015 water bills, they will go out the week of January 18th, 2016.

Mr. Natale reported that direct deposit for employee payroll will begin in the early part of February 2016.

Mr. Natale reported he estimates for Highway User Revenues were received for the Fiscal Year 2017 and 2018. The revenue is expected to remain flat at around \$21,000.00, this is estimated for the next several years. Mr. Natale stated this year the town's budget revenue that was given from the Highway Fund will be \$78,000.00. However, that does include \$57,000.00 in "one time grant" money.

Mr. Natale reported the Constant Yield for property tax rate will be received the month of February. However, the town should not expect to see any growth.

Mr. Natale reported the Governor's Budget is due the month of January. This will provide information of what funding the state will have. The Governor is submitting a balanced budget which mean the General Assembly will not have the ability to add additional funding above what the Governor proposes.

Mr. Natale reported he will begin working on redesigning the town's website with Image Builders.

Mr. Natale reported on both Town of North East General Fund Profit and Loss Statement and Water Fund Profit and Loss Statement for the current year November 2015.

Town Administrator, Melissa B. Cook-Mac Kenzie

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported working with the Bond Counsel for Chesapeake Club H2 and H3, this is in regards to the default of the Public Works Agreement. The bond amount for the Chesapeake Club, \$455,914.50. After that process is done then the work will go to bid.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported working with the Bond Counsel for Ridgely Forest regarding their default. The bond amount for Ridgely Forest, \$2,449,411.90. The work that needs to be done is landscaping, public improvements and water lines.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported working with the Town's Engineer in regards to the I-95 Water Tower as far as looking at its value.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported the Street and Sidewalk Project is nearing completion. There are still several items on the punch list that needs to be addressed before the project is completed. There are two concerns: the green sidewalk and the clean up on Main Street. Ms. Cook-Mac Kenzie stated she brought up a concern that Commissioner Crothers-Moore had regarding some property pins.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported finalizing the job description, for the open position at the Town of North East Water Treatment Plant.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported she and the Director of Planning are preparing for a Board of Appeals case in regards to a property on Wallace Ave.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie reported working on several personnel matters regarding past, present and future employees.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

Franchise Agreement – Chesapeake Utilities

Mayor McKnight reported on the negotiations with the Utility. The agreed amount for the franchise is \$10,000.00 up front and \$2,000.00 per year with an escalation clause tied to the Consumer Price Index. The contract is being drawn up and will be brought to the Commissioners for approval.

-NEW BUSINESS-

Contingency Request – Irishtown Pump Station Roof

Director of Finance and Administration, on behalf of the Water requested \$15,000 from the Water Fund's contingency line in order to replace the roof on the Irishtown Pump Station. Per the Water Department Superintendent, Mr. Carter, the existing roof is failing and water leaking behind the electrical panels. Mr. Natale stated at the beginning of the year there was \$125,000.00 in the Contingency Line. Previously \$28,000 was moved for the purchase of trucks, which brought the balance to \$97,000.00. If the request is approved for the new roof, the balance would be 82,432 for the remainder of the year. Mr. Natale stated, at this point the town is not anticipating any large cost overruns the line would need to absorb.

A motion to approve the Contingency Request for Irishtown Pump Station Roof at the cost not to exceed \$15,000.00 was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Stark and approved by all.

Vanguard Utility Service Contract Change Order No. 1

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie is requesting the Vanguard Utility Service Contract Change Order No. 1 to be approved. The change of order removes the requirement the contractor move fifty nine meter assemblies from inside of houses to exterior meter pits. In addition, other various unused bid items were removed from the contract. These deduct items total the amount of \$96,622.15. Additional costs are the material cost only for items needed to complete the fifty nine new meter assemblies the Town will do the work to move on its own and other various spare materials for the Town inventory. These additional items total \$56,401.03. Ms. Cook-Mac Kenzie does recommend the town to except the change order as presented by the town's engineer, Entech.

A motion to approve the Vanguard Utility Service Contract Change Order No. 1 was made by Commissioner Stark, seconded by Commissioner Kline and approved by all.

Elections

Ms. Cook-Mac Kenzie asked the Board for their feelings regarding amending the Charter to eliminate elections when incumbents are running unopposed. The Election Board has reviewed this in the past and recommends the change. It is something the board can legal do and it would be a cost savings to the town.

Mayor McKnight requested for more research to be done and to see what others throughout the county are practicing. So the Board can decide if this is something the town wants to follow through with after further discussion.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mayor McKnight was asked by The Cecil County Chamber of Commerce to attend a press conference on January 14, 2016 about a new ad campaign for Cecil County.

Mayor McKnight and Commissioner Kline will be attending Cecil County Night in Annapolis. Members of the General Assembly as well as other elected officials from Cecil County will be in attendance.

Mrs. Cook-Mac Kenzie advised the closing for nominations for the 2016 elections was Monday, January 11, 2016 at 4:30. The Incumbents are the only parties running on February 8, 2016.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

A motion to approve Purchase Order No. 13148 to Vanguard Utility Service, Inc. in the amount of \$125,295.64 for materials and work that was completed, was made by Commissioner Kline, seconded by Commissioner Stark and approved by all.

A motion to approve the invoices presented tonight for payment was made by Commissioner Stark, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all.

-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Stark, and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 7:18 P.M.

Attest:

Respectfully submitted,

Robert F. McKnight, Mayor

Stephanie Racine-Dean, Head Clerk