

MAYOR AND COMMISSIONERS

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

May 22, 2024

The Town Meeting was called to order by Mayor Kelly A. Benson at 7:00 P.M. Present were Commissioners Catherine Bernard-Dutton, Hilary Crothers-Moore, and Kimberly Davis. Also present were Police Chief Stephan Yates, Maintenance Supervisor Richard Gregg, Water Superintendent Ron Carter, Director of Finance Vonnie Stemen, Town Administrator Melissa Cook-MacKenzie, Assistant Town Administrator, Grant Handley and Town Clerk Stephanie Racine-Dean. Absent from tonight's meeting, Director of Planning and Zoning Betsy Vennell.

A moment of silence was observed.

-PUBLIC HEARING-

The Public Hearing was called to order by Mayor Benson at 7:01 p.m. Mayor Benson welcomed the public and gave a brief statement. The Town Administrator, Melissa Cook-MacKenzie gave an opening summary:

The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East (the "Town") will conduct a Public Hearing to obtain the views of citizens on COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING NEEDS, and to offer citizens the opportunity to review an application to be submitted to the State of Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development ("DHCD"). The proposed funding will support the acquisition of land at 125 Railroad Lane, North East, Maryland for use as a multifamily apartment complex. The Town proposes to submit to the State on or before the June 11, 2024 deadline for same. The hearing will be held at the North East Town Hall Meeting Room at 106 South Main Street, North East, Maryland.

There were no comments from the public nor the Board; Mayor Benson closed the Public Hearing at 7:13 p.m.

-APPROVAL OF MINUTES-

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2024 meeting, as presented, was made by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Bernard-Dutton and approved by all.

-OATH OF OFFICE-

None

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-PUBLIC COMMENT-

None

-GUESTS-

None

-INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES-

None

-ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES-

Ordinance 2024-05-01 Adopts the General Fund, Capital Projects Fund and the Enterprise Fund (Water Fund) and Establishes Water Rates, Connection Fees, Major Facilities Fees, Ready-To-Serve Fees, Bulk Fees, EDU'S, etc.

Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-05-01, Commissioner Davis, seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

-ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS-

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board, a summary of the listed Resolutions for adoption:

- Resolution 2024-05-01 Adopts the Amount the Town will contribute toward premiums for Medical Insurance
- Resolution 2024-05-02 Adopts the Amount the Town will contribute toward premiums for Dental and Vision Insurance
- Resolution 2024-05-03 Adopts the Face Amount which the Town will contribute toward a Life Insurance Policy for each full time employee

Commissioner Davis made a motion to adopt Resolutions No. 2024-05-01, 2024-05-02 and 2024-05-03. Commissioner Crothers-Moore seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all.

Resolution 2024-05-04 Circuit Rider/Town Manager Grant Program Fiscal Year 2024 & 2025
Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-05-04, Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Resolution 2024-05-05 Maryland Community Block Grant Application

Commissioner Crothers-Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 2024-05-05, Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

-REPORTS-

Mayor Benson

Mayor Benson reported he attended the following meetings since the May 8, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- May 14th met with Town Administration and staff on various items and projects
- May 21st met with Chief Yates and the Maintenance Supervisor regarding several ongoing projects
- Met with Assistant Town Administrator regarding several grant opportunities. The first, a study on ways to move individuals traveling in and out of town without congestion. Secondly, a façade improvement grant that would bring external funds into the town for commercial entities to improve and stimulate the structure

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton

None

Commissioner Crothers-Moore

None

Commissioner Davis

Commissioner Davis reported she visited the North East Community Park on Saturday, May 11th and enjoyed the new additions that have been added such as, the new Veterans Memorial along with the new improvements.

Commissioner Davis thanked the Maintenance Supervisor for the repairs he did on Hickory Drive from a major water leak that damaged the road.

Town Administrator

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she attended the following meetings since the May 8, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- Department Head weekly meetings
- Attended the pre-construction meeting for the Crouch Pavilion
- Attended a meeting with the North East Fire Department regarding the sidewalk project
- Working with the Director of Finance regarding the ARPA funds
- Several meetings with Mayor Benson and the Assistant Town Administrator
- Meeting with Cindy Stone regarding several projects, one regarding the acquisition of 2 parcels and how to move forward
- Two interviews with the North East Police Department
- Attended the North East Economic Development Commission meeting
- Open enrollment with town staff regarding insurance for fiscal year 2025
- Quarterly meeting with Sandra Edward, Economic Development Manager
- Meeting with Sandy Turner, Director of Tourism and John Ford regarding the IKE Foundation Tournament which will be held Saturday, June 1st

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported at 4:52 p.m. this evening, she received an email from the Maryland Department of Water Quality Financing Administration confirming the town received \$941,173.00 in grant funds. These funds will go towards the Leslie Treatment Plant pond and also the Powered Activation Carbon installation at the Rolling Mill and Leslie Treatment Plant.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported she has seen the new Maintenance Department trash truck in operation. She thanked the Maintenance Supervisor, Rich Gregg for his vision for the future of the town and his department.

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie reported the town received a reimbursement check from Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) in the amount of \$117,648.36. This was an insurance pool that was set up several years ago by the previous Director of Finance.

Assistant Town Administrator

Mr. Grant Handley reported he attended the following meetings since the May 8, 2024 Town Board Meeting:

- The municipal parking lot has been milled and paved
- North East Community Park restrooms are continuing renovations
- Crouch Pavilion at the North East Community Park has been demolished, reconstruction is underway
- Decorative street sign poles should be installed this week, weather permitting
- Veterans Memorial bricks have been sealed with clear coating. Next step, finishing the memorial stone work
- Gathering estimates for various ARPA projects
- Working with the Water Department on projects towards SCADA
- Submitting various grant applications
- Working with the Maintenance Supervisor along with the North East Fire Department President regarding the sidewalk project scope of work

Director of Finance

Mrs. Stemen entered in the record the list of payments issued since the last Board Meeting. In addition Mrs. Stemen reported the following:

- Statement of Revenue and Expenditures ending 4.1.24 to 4.30.24
- General Fund Balance Sheet as of 4.30.24

Mrs. Stemen reported she is making adjustments amending the budget for the ARPA projects, which will continue to the end of this year.

Maintenance Supervisor

Mr. Gregg entered into the record the April 2024 Monthly Report for the Town of North East Maintenance Department. In addition, Mr. Gregg reported the following:

- The Veterans Memorial headstone is being set by Robert Crouch at the North East Community Park

- Crouch Pavilion has been demolished and they will be moving forward with the new structure
- Mulch has been applied around the new exercise equipment which is located around the walking trail at the park

Chief of Police

Chief Yates wanted to thank the Town Administrator, Assistant Town Administrator and the Director of Finance for their hard work regarding projects that have been completed with ARPA funds the town received.

Chief Yates entered into the record the April 2024 Crime and Traffic Breakdown Report for the North East Police Department. In addition, Chief Yates reported the following:

- Attended Breaking Bread, Saturday, May 25th
- Maryland Cruisin' for a Cause Car Show , Calvert Regional Park, 304 Brick Meeting Road House Road, North East
- Will be attending the IKE Foundation Tournament which will be held Saturday, June 1st

Water Plant Superintendent

Mr. Carter entered into the record the April 2024 Monthly Report for the North East Rolling Mill and Leslie Water Plants. In addition Mr. Carter reported the following.

Mayor Benson asked for an update regarding the I-95 Water Tower. Mr. Carter advised the report is being completed as we speak and a letter will be going out to customers by May 29th. This item was the previous violation that was received from the Maryland Department of Environmental (MDE) regarding the Total Trihalomethanes (TTHMs) and Rejuvenating Hydrator (HA5's). With the mixer now being installed at the I-95 Water Tower, this will help with the future sampling by MDE.

-UNFINISHED BUSINESS-

None

-NEW BUSINESS-

North East Fire Company Sidewalk Replacement

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie presented to the Board an explanation regarding the North East Fire Company sidewalk replacement. This will be off Roney Avenue that runs adjacent to their facility. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie explained this is the existing sidewalk which has drainage, slope, elevation and handicap issues that does not meet code. The Maintenance Supervisor met with contractors and evaluated the situation along with the President of the North East Fire Company. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie did stress this sidewalk is truly a liability.

Commissioner Bernard-Dutton had several questions regarding the contractor and who the town is considering to do the replacement of the sidewalk. Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie advised

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RCM Paving, Hickory Drive, North East who has done several projects for the town. The Maintenance Supervisor is very satisfied with their work. He will get the additional information the Board requested, such as the breakdown of the work, the status with the State of Maryland, commercial license and if a business license has been issued.

-MISCELLANEOUS-

Mrs. Cook-MacKenzie update the Board regarding, 104 Water Street, North East. This property is adjacent to the yellow house. The owner is continuing to work through the process in reviewing the offer the town has given, at the appraised value. The town's attorney, David Beste, will be preparing the settlement paperwork.

Russell Polo, 4 North Main Street North East, saw a report from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding several town's water systems, and found defaults regarding passwords and miscellaneous items. The Water Superintendent advised Mr. Polo, the water treatment plant does not have Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system at this time but will be getting soon. The system will be used for controlling, monitoring, and analyzing industrial devices and process.

-APPROPRIATIONS-

Requisition R4-02290 – RCM Paving – North East Fire Company Sidewalk Replacement:
ARPA Funds

A motion to approve Requisition R4-02290 to RCM Paving for North East Fire Company Sidewalk Replacement in the amount of \$56,972.00 with the conditions such as, contractor is in good standing with the State of Maryland, currently licensed and insured, was made by Commissioner Crothers-Moore, seconded by Commissioner Davis and approved by all.

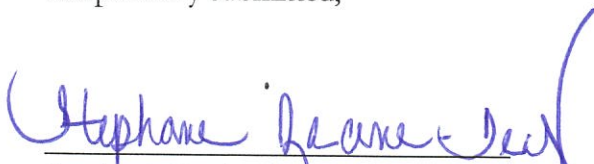
-BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR-

None


-ADJOURNMENT-

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Crothers-Moore and approved by all. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Stephanie Racine-Dean, Town Clerk

ATTEST:


Kelly A. Benson, Mayor