

COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY
JANUARY 5, 2026, TOWN MEETING



Location: Town Hall, Ridgely

Attendees: President Brad Sears, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Chad Leister, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Asst Clerk-Treasurer/Zoning Admin Melissa Leonard, Brenda Walls, Cathy & Rick Schwab, Andrew Myer, Anna Mansfield, Linda Friday, Sherri Sparks, Henry Sparks, Mason Sparks, Christine Eckrich, Norma Pinkney, Robin Martin, Dawn S. Chase.

President Sears opened the meeting with the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve December 1, 2025, town meeting and December 8, 2025, workshop minutes, 2nd Commissioner Leister, all in favor, approved.

CLERK-TREASURER

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to pay the bills, 2nd Commissioner Leister, all in favor, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$60,431.79, total sewer funds reconciled \$8,033.00, total water funds reconciled, \$18,930.20, total ARPA funds reconciled \$30,247.65.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Not present.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Nothing to report.

CAROLINE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff's Office provided December statistics, highlighting animal control calls, property checks, and traffic stops.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Not Present.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cathy Schwab acknowledged the community and business support for the holiday decorating contest. She thanked the town for the Winter Festival, where they acquired a new member.

OLD BUSINESS

President Sears introduced Ordinance No. 2026-400 making provisions to allow poultry in town.

NEW BUSINESS

President Sears introduced Charter Amendment Resolution 2026-01 to repeal outdated provisions and update town attorney requirements. A public hearing will be held at the February town meeting.

President Sears introduced Ordinance No. 2026-401 regarding outdated code provisions.

There was a discussion on Sheriff's Office staffing and the proposal to continue with a corporal instead of a sergeant for cost savings. The corporal will still have supervisor training and there is always a sergeant on duty within the county. It could save the town roughly \$10,000 annually. The MOU would need to be reworked.

President Sears called for volunteer applications for the newly reestablished Economic Development Commission. An independent selection committee will conduct interviews for the applicants.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robin Martin asked the commissioners to consider having community input for the reworking of the County Sheriff's MOU.

Andrew Myers noted the approved changes to Ordinance 2026-400 that were not shown in the Ordinance. They will be corrected for the vote in February.

Brenda Walls would like to head up adding the Hometown Hero flags to the telephone poles in town. She will include not only military, but emergency services as well.

Anna Mansfield raised her concern about the Sheriff's office changing the staffing. She is worried it will affect community policing efforts in the town.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM. The next town meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Berkey, CMC
Clerk-Treasurer