

**COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY
NOVEMBER 4, 2024
TOWN MEETING**



Summary of November 4, 2024, closed session:

DATE: November 4, 2024 TIME: 10:00 am PLACE: Town Hall

PURPOSE: To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Md. Code Ann., General Provision Article §3-305(b)(7)" To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice."

VOTE TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION: In favor: President Buckle, Commissioner Hurley, Commissioner Sears; Opposed: None

TOPICS DISCUSSED: Unauthorized bond initiative submitted to the state of Maryland naming the town as the requestor and recipient.

ACTION TAKEN: The state has been made aware of the unauthorized submission and will not move forward with the application.

The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00 pm for the November town meeting.

The following were in attendance: President John Buckle, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Brad Sears, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Operations David Crist, Zoning Administrator Melissa Leonard, Sgt. Keith Collison, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, Kelly Buckle, Robert Anderson, Marian Rehbein, Ashley Windsor, Calvin Huber, Archalenna Knight, Darlene Lovelace, Marissa Evans, Clinton Gill, Annie Rossi-Gill, Kathleen Dormody, Christine Eckrich, Jeffrey Eckrich, Rick & Cathy Schwab, Jerry Newman, Jerome T. Burton, Joshua & Jessica Duerstine, Jenifer & Gary Nesselroad, Norma Pinkney, Patrice Flamer, Lokia Pierce, William Coffin, Commander Post 77, Leroy Harris, Andre Gould, Charles Henry

The following were in attendance via Zoom: Sabotage, Scott Barron, Scott Anderson, Jamie Romph, Megan Clarke, (B) iphone, Robin Martin, Heidi Olson King, Valerie Douglas, Heather Redgraves, Lokia Pierce, Daphine Thomas Croom

President Buckle opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the 10/7/24. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sears, all in favor.

**STAFF REPORTS
CLERK-TREASURER**

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve payment of the bills, second Commissioner Sears, all in favor approved. Total general funds reconciled \$117,353.68,

total sewer funds reconciled \$48,859.64, total water funds reconciled \$42,295.75, total ARPA funds reconciled \$30,157.05. There was a donation request from the Delmarva Raptors. A motion was made by President Hurley to give a \$500 donation. It was seconded by Commissioner Sears, all in favor.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

David Crist discussed the sidewalk situation, specifically around Mr. Maxie's intersection on Maryland Ave. He explained that there are contractors that are shying away from ADA compliance for liability issues. He has received one quote to the tune of about eight thousand dollars. He is still looking for prices. In the meantime, we will allocate up to eight thousand. Commissioner Hurley asked if we could use ARPA funds to which he replied that we would have to reach out to Valerie to confirm. There was a discussion explaining to Commissioner Sears what all is required during the process.

Sewer system collection is still in discussion with the federal, state, and County governments working together. We will soon get engineering assistance as well. We want to make sure we are doing this properly and economically. We are all working together, but it will take time. Commissioner Sears stated that the sewer system is complex. David explained at this point there's no idea as to the cost but once it's completed, we won't have to worry about it for another 150 years. It'll be a great investment.

CAROLINE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sgt. Collison was unable to retrieve a copy of his report but will make one available as soon as possible. Both the elementary school parade and Trick or Treating on Halloween went well.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Melissa Leonard thanked all the participants, volunteers and others for their time, effort and donations received.

She also said the Comprehensive Plan meeting will not meet again until January 2025.

The Sunrise Ave lots have been sent for Engineering review and should be returned to us sooner rather than later, as the new owner is using the same plans previously approved.

The cannabis moratorium is expiring soon. We will be working on legislation for that in the coming months

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Gerald Sutton said that we are still waiting for the FY24 audit report. He also stated that we have been having a cash flow issue and reminded everyone that we have not raised rates in over ten years. We are trying to keep things down to not burden to the citizens.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Thanked all the veterans in attendance for their service.

Robert "Bob" Anderson (Stephanie's dad) has worked over the past nine months building a replica of the train station. Tonight, he is presenting it to the town. He gave a brief speech explaining his background and what it meant to be able to do this. He was given a round of applause.

Cathy Schwab said this has been an exciting week and thanked everyone for their help with Halloween. They were at the telephone exchange building. The Tracks & Transmissions event with Easton Amateur Radio was a success with people from all over in attendance. They would like to return in the future. There were riders from the Tuckahoe Equestrian Center who inquired about adding hitching posts in the Railroad Park. David stated he would have to reach out to MDOT for them to say if this is allowed.

There was a meeting with the Caroline County Historical Society and there is a telegraph pole near where the old train station was in Denton years ago. RHS would like to have it moved to Ridgely and placed close to the caboose. The current owner is JR Smith, and he would be willing to donate it. David said that it should not be a problem if they can get it done within the next two weeks, otherwise it would have to wait until February.

OLD BUSINESS

Patrice Flamer gave an update on the Martin Sutton Park grant project. They met Owen Bailey on Oct. 29th with regards to Phase I and would like David and Melissa to talk to him as well. They also have an upcoming meeting with the State to discuss what the money can be spent on. Ms. Flamer expressed that the grant is a process and any ideas from the community should be brought to her attention.

NEW BUSINESS

A proclamation for His Hope Ministries was read by Commissioner Sears for National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. Stefanie Johnson was not in attendance.

American Legion Auxiliary – Joan Harris Brooks of Post 193 was in attendance. She thanked all that served and asked them to stand for appreciation. She is advocating to have small towns participate in the Hometown Hero's and would like to have Ridgely be a part as well. These are the banners you see hanging in Preston and they just began in Easton as well. It gives a sense of pride in honoring all who have served. She gave a presentation on how it works. She would also include police and fire men/women as well. She is asking for the town's approval to bring the program here. It would not require any monetary input from the town. The banners will be paid for by the hero or their families. Each double-sided banner costs \$200 and includes brackets. The commissioners unanimously approved, and Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve a \$500 donation, Brad Sears second and all approved.

Partners in Care is a volunteer-based non-profit group that helps adults sixty years old and over. Kathleen Dormady came to make us aware of their existence and how they operate. They do things like transportation to medical appointments, food banks, light maintenance and learning opportunities. She explained that they need volunteers in Ridgely and Caroline County. She left information in the lobby.

Marissa Evan of Compass Hospice & Palliative Care is a program that serves chronically ill patients of Caroline, Kent and Queen Anne's Counties. Their philosophy is on living, not at the end of life. They also offer support groups for the family that is left behind.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lakia Pierce asked if we would request a 12 million dollar bond bill for the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Regionald Brown requested the Commissioners of Ridgely call the state senator and request a \$20,000,000 bond bill to include the LBI process for terracotta pipes leading to the Dayspring pump. He has apparently spoken to district representatives at a town hall style meeting.

Leroy Harris thanks David Crist for the water testing and his swift response time. He is also hoping for a swift response to the \$20,000,000 request.

Jennifer Nesselroad questioned 500k from the ARPA funds. She thinks it is mismanagement of funds. She went on to ask why the officers weren't brought back.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Berkey, CMC
Clerk-Treasurer