

COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY
NOVEMBER 6, 2023
TOWN MEETING



The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00 pm in the Ridgely Town Hall for the November 2023 town meeting. The following were in attendance: President John Hurley, Commissioner Leonard Buckle, Commissioner Anthony Casey, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Operations David Crist, Chief of Police Jeff Eckrich, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, Domingo Llanes, Brittany Gross, Cody Gross, Ryan Walls, Amber Llanes, Snot Harris, Cathy & Rick Schwab, Christine Eckrich, Lakia Pierce, Bradley.

President Hurley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve the October 2, 2023, town meeting minutes, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, approved.

STAFF REPORTS

CLERK-TREASURER

- Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve paying bills, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, approved.
- Total general funds reconciled \$211,213.38, total sewer funds reconciled \$46,325.04, total water funds reconciled \$40,101.69, total ARPA funds reconciled \$164,888.04.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

David Crist said that Public Works has been busy working on Christmas. Sherry Hollingworth is asking if the town would like to purchase the lot that is adjacent to the town hall for \$76,000. The Commissioners agreed that the price was too high. Leaf pickup will continue throughout the season. The new hire in public works did not work out and we will revisit the possibility of hiring someone in the spring.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Chief Eckrich said that the year end report shows that they responded to about the same number of calls as the previous year. They have a 5th officer that is going through the background check process now and hopefully will be able to start by February.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

David Crist spoke for Melissa Leonard. The developer that purchased Mr. Cole's property on Maryland Avenue is hoping to put an 18-unit apartment building on the lot.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cathy Schwab thanked David and Public Works for power washing the train station. The Lions Club will be providing cookies for visits with Santa at the train station after the parade. The Hannah Henry Circle visited Pinetown to see where Hannah Henry taught. It went very well.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

President Hurley introduced Ordinance No. 2023-395, a temporary moratorium on the processing, review, and approval of applications, site plans, permits and other authorizations for the locations, construction, and/or operation of businesses engaged in growing, processing, and/or selling cannabis for a period of 12 months. The Ordinance will be voted on at the December meeting.

Domingo Llanes of Caroline North Little League discussed that they are looking to put a seed container out at Cowbarn Park for storage. David Crist told him that they would need to get a site plan with everything on it. The electricity will need to be inspected. Domingo also said that they are hoping to put 3 scoreboards out on the fields. District All-Stars were happy with how the tournament turned out. CNLL has put in another bid to host the event in 2024. They discussed field maintenance, and they are looking to contract out the grass cutting. David said that the lease will be renewed in April and was based off a weekly cut. It is fine for them to use someone else, but that they cannot legally spray weed killer on public property and must have a license. There is a public website with a list of people that cannot have pesticides sprayed near them.

The Commissioners received a request from Wreaths Across America for a donation. Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve a \$500 donation, 2nd Commissioner Casey, all in favor, approved.

The Commissioners reviewed the letter from Lakie Pierce requesting the minutes of the October 2023 meeting and everything that David Crist had said. They agreed that since the minutes were now approved, she could receive the documents.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Cathy Schwab said that Mactoberfest went well. The high school tech center made \$281 by selling things they made. They do a lot of projects for the county and would like to see Ridgely donate.

Brittany Gross said that Caroline North Little League is seeking sponsors. She was asked to send the forms to the town office.

Lakia Pierce spoke to the Commissioners about her opposition of Ordinance No. 2023-395 that was introduced earlier this evening. She discussed how cannabis is a money maker for the community and this ordinance will burden the people getting the licenses. She had been proactive and attended the February town meeting to discuss her plans for a cannabis business in town. She said that in February 2019 a white person came to the meeting to discuss plans for a cannabis facility at the tech park and nothing was said to him. She feels she is being discriminated against because she is black and is asking the Commissioner to reconsider the ordinance.

Domingo Llanes thanked Chief Eckrich for helping with the Caroline Cougars.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie L. Berkey, CMC
Clerk-Treasurer

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Thank you for attending.

PLEASE PRINT NAME CLEARLY

Domingo Llanes

Larrie D Piere

Brian Hany Gross

Bradley R. R. W.

Cody Gross

Ryan Walts

Ambur Llanes

Snot Harris

Cathy & Rick Schwab

Luella Latta

Christine Eckrich