

**COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY
NOVEMBER 7, 2022
TOWN MEETING MINUTES**



The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00 pm in the town hall for the November 2022 town meeting. The following were in attendance: President Anthony Casey, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner John Buckle, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Public Works David Crist, Chief of Police Jeff Eckrich, Zoning Administrator Melissa Leonard, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, Stefanie Johnson, Brenda Walls, Stephanie Larimore, Christine Eckrich, Beth Wall, Theresa (unable to read handwriting of last name) Sue Cherry, Linda Walls, Bobby Walls, Florence Sheets and one signature that could not be deciphered.

President Casey opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2022, town meeting, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

STAFF REPORTS

CLERK-TREASURER

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve paying the bills, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$157,919.82, total sewer funds reconciled \$46,184.40, total water funds reconciled \$37,824.68, total ARPA funds reconciled \$1,239,876.88. As of today, we have received \$21,000 in sponsorships and donations to the Christmas in Ridgely Winter Festival. Commissioner Buckle said he would like to donate and gave \$100.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

David Crist said that public works has been busy for the past month working on Christmas in Ridgely in the park.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Chief Eckrich said that the swearing in of Officer De Crispino is being postponed due to illness. Chief Eckrich will be off for the next 2 weeks and Lt. Geesey will be in charge. The RPD website is currently under construction. They have received a grant to upgrade body cameras for five years more storage and three cameras.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Melissa Leonard had nothing to report for planning and zoning but brought up that the January meeting would fall on a holiday. The commissioners agreed to move the meeting to Monday January 9, 2023 at 6pm.

FINANCIAL AUDIT

Gerald Sutton said that we are still waiting on the final audit report from UHY.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Gerald Sutton thanked the town for the roof grant for the telephone exchange building. Melvin Faulkner fixed the railings on the building for free.

NEW BUSINESS

President Casey presented a Proclamation to Stefanie Johnson of His Hope Ministries proclaiming National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

Brenda Walls, owner of the Ridgely Pharmacy and Gift Shop, was upset that she was not consulted in the planning and preparation for the Christmas in Ridgely Winter Festival, that she was only asked to sponsor the event. She was upset that Belle Street would be closed and would interrupt access to her business. She discussed that last year during the parade Belly Bustin' Grill was allowed to set up in front of her business without her permission. She wants to do her Christmas on Belle Street event, but because of the town's events, she is limited on dates. She said that instead of participating in the Winter Festival, she was going to have her event on the same day as the Winter Festival and be open until 9:00 pm. The Commissioners discussed having someone at the alley to allow for access to the pharmacy during the road closures.

Sue Cherry was excited about the display and festival but requested that the day-to-day Christmas music that is played at the train station be limited to 1-9pm and the volume be lowered. A discussion followed about changing the time of the music to turn off at 9:30 pm. The noise ordinance allows it until 10 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephanie Berkey addressed Brenda Walls and said that in reference to last December and Belly Bustin' Grill setting up on Belle Street, she was upset that Brenda made it sound like the town was personally trying to upset her. They were not told to set up in front of her business, they were told to set up park side in front of the drive thru of Provident State Bank, like what she does when she brings in food vendors for her cruise-in events, but on the park side of the street.

Florence Sheets was upset that the music was getting changed for one person. She enjoys the holiday music and does not think it is too loud. At this point there was a loud and lengthy discussion among the members of the audience regarding the music. President Casey used the gavel to stop the discussion.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 pm.

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