

**COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY
DECEMBER 7, 2020
TOWN MEETING MINUTES**



Summary of the December 7, 2020 closed session:

DATE: December 7, 2020

TIME: 12:01 PM

PLACE: Town Hall and Zoom Teleconference

PURPOSE: To perform an administrative function not subject to the Open Meetings Act and to discuss personnel matters involving specific individuals over whom the Commissioners have jurisdiction

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Md. Code Ann., General Provision Article §3-305(b): (1) "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one of more specific individuals."

VOTE TO MEET IN CLOSED SESSION: In favor: President Hurley, Commissioner Buckle, Commissioner Casey; Opposed: none.

TOPICS DISCUSSED: Personnel matters involving specific individuals over whom the Commissioners have jurisdiction

ATTENDING: President John Hurley, Commissioner Leonard John Buckle, Commissioner Anthony Casey, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Public Works David Crist, Chief of Police Gary Manos, Lt. Jeff Eckrich.

ACTION TAKEN: Effective January 1, 2021 Lt. Jeff Eckrich will take over as Chief of Police. He will be sworn in at the January 4, 2021 Town Meeting. Chief Manos retirement date will be January 18, 2021.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to adjourn the closed session part of the meeting, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, approved. The closed session was adjourned at 12:20 PM.

The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date in the Town Hall at 1:00 pm for the December 2020 town meeting. The following were in attendance: President John Hurley, Commissioner Leonard John Buckle, Commissioner Anthony Casey, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Public Works David Crist, Chief Gary Manos, Lt. Jeff Eckrich, Cathy & Rick Schwab.

President Hurley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve the November 2, 2020 Town Meeting minutes, 2nd Commissioner Casey, approved.

STAFF REPORTS

CLERK-TREASURER

Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve paying the bills, 2nd Commissioner Casey, approved.

Total General Funds reconciled \$261,027.65, total Sewer Funds reconciled \$86,998.20, total Water Funds reconciled \$34,063.73. The second half of the RVFD Grant was discussed. The \$10,000 donation is usually presented at the January banquet, but due to COVID restrictions, there will not be a banquet. Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve paying the donation, 2nd Commissioner Casey, approved.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Railroad Park is completed with the Christmas decorations. The gator and the air compressor at the shop are torn up and having issues. David will work on getting numbers together to either repair or replace the equipment. There was a discussion on the issue of outstanding water bills and disconnection of services. The Governor has lifted the restrictions on disconnection as of November 15, 2020. As of December 4, 2020, we have \$36,235 outstanding with almost half of that being more than 90 days past due, and some residents owing multiple quarters. The next billing will be December 15, 2020. Melissa Leonard proposed to do the following to help residents: Reach out via phone/letter to all accounts which are past due, starting with those who are the most past due and offer a payment arrangement. This arrangement will break up the past due balance into monthly increments up to \$100 due on the 5th of each month. This will only be offered to delinquent accounts on the PAST DUE amounts and not go past December 15, 2021. For account holders that ignore our efforts and/or do not make any attempt to pay anything on their account, they will be disconnected as normal beginning with the February 16, 2021 disconnect date. Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve the proposal, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, all in favor.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Lt. Eckrich presented the report to the Commissioners. There have been multiple calls for domestics on Robin's Court. K9 Keita has been involved in several drug seizures. All Ridgely Police Officers are current on their in-service requirements.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Not present.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Gerald Sutton said that he agreed with the water bill discussion and proposal. The audit is almost complete and cash flow is good. We will plan to have a budget review meeting in January.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cathy & Rick Schwab thanked the town for the beautiful decorations in the Railroad Park. December 20, 2020 will be the decorating contest. It has been advertised on social media, the Caroline Review and on signs in town.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2020-386 RE: Chapter 78 (Burning, Outdoor) of the Code of the Town of Ridgely, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved. This will allow for the use of fire pits in town, provided that they are used within the guidelines of the Ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

Commissioner Buckle made a motion to adjourn the meeting, 2nd Commissioner Casey. The meeting was adjourned at 1:18 pm.

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