

## COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY

MARCH 3, 2023

### TOWN MEETING



The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00 pm in the town hall. The following were in attendance: President John Buckle, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Brad Sears, Director of Operations David Crist, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Zoning Administrator Melissa Leonard, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, Michelle & Ralph Hurley, Rev. Chris Coffey, Victor Reynolds, Rick & Cathy Schwab, Sue Simmons, Christine Eckrich, Annie Rossi-Gill, Anna Mansfield, Clinton Gill Norma Pinkney. Via Zoom: Robin Martin, Valerie Douglass, Lilian Lone, Kelly Buckle, Magan Clarke, Marian Navarro, Jenifer Nesselroad, Renee Frankowski, Bob Rager, Christine Baiers, Heather Amador, Nancy Sears, Chad Leister, James Romph.

Rev. Chris Coffey gave the invocation. President Buckle opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve the February 3, 2025, town meeting minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Sears, approved.

#### STAFF REPORTS

##### CLERK-TREASURER

Commissioner Hurley made a motion to approve paying the bills, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Sears, all in favor, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$166,166.10, total sewer funds reconciled \$49,620.52, total water funds reconciled \$42,954.42. The new website is still under construction. We have been looking into options other than zoom for the town meetings. Escribe has submitted a quote that would streamline everything about the meeting, including the minutes. The service is \$5,200 and there would be annual costs. The commissioners discussed looking into other options first that are less expensive.

##### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Director Crist said that the softball lease for Martin Sutton Park is ready to sign. By the May meeting he is hoping to have the road project list ready for discussion. He is not anticipating anything major. He spoke with the contractor for the Maryland Ave and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street sidewalk project. They should be ready to go when the weather gets warmer. Spring cleanup is starting to include Martin Sutton Park, repainting stop bars, curbs, fire hydrants, grading the alleys, among other things. Bill Peterson owner of Central Skate is interested in redoing or making a new skate park. He has given his concept plans for a new park. Once a solid plan is ready, we will bring it to the meeting for review and decide if we move forward so that we can begin looking for funding. The preconstruction meeting for the Sunrise Avenue subdivision went well. The silt fence and staking should be starting tomorrow. The first draft of public works water and sewer budgets is complete. He is working on a list of town trees to mark for removal during FY26. We are at the end of our contract with Republic Services and have reached out to multiple companies to produce a bid for the trash collection service. We have also spoken to other towns to get their prospective on certain contractors. We will have a contract to review at the April meeting.

##### CAROLINE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Not present. Report attached.

## ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

There was a discussion about the bump-outs on Central Avenue. It is difficult getting volunteers to maintain them. They discussed removing the bump-outs. David said that he can check with SHA about their removal. Commissioner Hurley made a motion to remove the bump-outs, seconded by Commissioner Sears, all in favor. Rental inspections have begun. Tuckahoe Gardens will be renovated this spring. Sunrise Avenue subdivision is moving forward, and the contractor also has plans for 6 Maryland Avenue for new housing. Melissa explained the Comprehensive Plan process and that the meeting tomorrow at 5:00 pm in the town hall.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Gerald Sutton is collaborating closely with the staff on the FY26 budget.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The historical house tours in the county are in May. Marblehead in Ridgely is on the tour. Sonny Callahan of the Ridgely Historical Society recently passed away. He often participated in the Ridgely chat sessions. He had a collection of old Ridgely postcards and will be missed.

## OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

## NEW BUSINESS

Victor Reynolds of CASA talked about the upcoming Pinwheels for Prevention campaign held during April, which is Child Abuse Prevention Month. CASA's new director is Doris Mason. Commissioner Sears made a motion to sponsor the \$500 level in the Pinwheels campaign, seconded by Commissioner Hurley, all in favor, approved.

Alex Willis of Caroline Tennis Association asked the commissioners to pay for 1/3 of the power washing of the Martin Sutton Park tennis courts. Commissioner Sears made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Hurley, all in favor, approved the motion.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Sue Simmons asked the Commissioners to consider a proclamation for April 26<sup>th</sup> as a trails celebration day. The Commissioners agreed to make the proclamation at the April meeting.

Jennifer Nesselroad asked if the town should be responsible for the tennis courts. The cost is shared because CTA and Caroline County Board of Education have leases and get priority over the public. CTA is more than happy to share the cost.

Robin Martin asked what is discussed at a comp plan meeting. Melissa explained it is a broad document of the future of the town including growth, infrastructure, and other amenities.

Heather Amador requested a workshop meeting to discuss the Ridgely Police Department. Commissioners Sears led a discussion about what it would take to reestablish the department. They agreed to hold a meeting on March 19, 2025, at 6:00 pm.

Christine Eckrich asked how to get the form to sign up for the election and how to get an absentee ballot. Candidates must come to the town hall to see the Clerk and fill out a form before the Clerk. Submit a letter to Clerk requesting an absentee ballot before April 13, 2025.

Anna Mansfield discussed the Sheriff's department coverage (when the coverage is below 480hours/month and how it affects the budget, who is paying for the deputies to attend the academy and if the last quarter will be reevaluated to see if a surplus exists.

Heather Amador asked when the Charter update would be a priority. Commissioner Sears said we will be getting through the Comprehensive Plan first, then zoning amendments and finally the charter. He suggested we get a quote from an attorney to update the Charter.

Megan Clark and Jennifer Nesselroad asked if they could see the waiver for the town to have an ethics commission.

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephanie Berkey, CMC  
Clerk-Treasurer