

**COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY  
JULY 3, 2023  
TOWN MEETING**



Summary of the June 21, 2023, closed session: *(notes recorded by David Crist)*

DATE: June 21, 2023

TIME: 10:30 AM

PLACE: Town Hall

PURPOSE: To discuss personnel matters

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 or more specific individuals."

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

TOPICS DISCUSSED: Police Admin position, Zoning Administrator Position, town management.

ATTENDING: President John Hurley, Commissioner Anthony Casey, Commissioner John Buckle, Director of Public Works David Crist, Chief Jeff Eckrich, Christine Eckrich.

ACTION TAKEN: Barbi Utz will be hired to be the police admin/victim rights advocate, zoning administrator role was defined, David Crist was promoted to Director of Operations and will oversee town management.

The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00 pm in the town hall for the July 2023 town meeting. The following were in attendance: President John Hurley, Commissioner Leonard John Buckle, Commissioner Anthony Casey, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Operations David Crist, Chief of Police Jeff Eckrich, Barbi Utz, Bobby Utz, James Joles, Cathy & Rick Schwab, Christine Eckrich.

President Hurley opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2023, town meeting, seconded by Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

**STAFF REPORTS  
CLERK-TREASURER**

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve paying the bills, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$196,798.74, total sewer funds reconciled \$47,434.99, total water funds reconciled \$38,848.90, total ARPA funds reconciled \$963,403.25. The Christmas in July drive to raise money for the winter festival has begun. Donation boxes are at Shore United Bank, Provident State Bank, and the town hall. We are also selling Christmas in Ridgely Christmas ornaments as a fundraiser.

## **DIRECTOR OF OPERATION**

David Crist gave an update on the upcoming street paving. First street extended, 5<sup>th</sup> Street between Sunrise and Maple and Sunrise Avenue extended apron have all been completed. He has not received a date for the remainder of the work but is expecting it to be soon. East Bell Street falls outside of the MDOT right of way. We are waiting for the County's contractor to give us a price and schedule so that we can move forward.

Everything is moving forward with the town hall and telephone exchange roofing grants. All bids are due by the end of the day on July 11, 2023. The only issue found during the process so far is the asbestos on the telephone exchange building. This could potentially be a cost increase that will fall outside of the grant budget.

Rauch Engineering helped us apply for funding for the water tower. We came in 85<sup>th</sup>, 86<sup>th</sup> and 87<sup>th</sup> out of 92 for the grant submitted. It is not likely that we will be awarded any grant funding for the project. We could qualify for low interest loans through MDE. It was the same situation with the applications for grant funding for sewer line replacement. We came in 59<sup>th</sup> out of 87 applicants. Because of this situation, David Crist requested approval from the Commissioners to adjust our capacity management plan buffers and hold out on 20% of our allocations for a reserve. This would be an increase from 9,000 to 40,000 in both water and sewer. The Commissioners agreed.

There is a need to start looking for new members for the planning and zoning board. We have been having issues meeting a quorum.

We are waiting for Wallace Montgomery to get back to us with a quote to have the comprehensive plan and the planning and zoning ordinance updated.

## **CHIEF OF POLICE**

Chief Eckrich introduced Barbi Utz as the new victim's right coordinator and administrative assistant and Officer James Joles as our newest police officer. Officer Joles was sworn in.

Chief Eckrich asked to use ARPA funding for the purchase of a new police vehicle.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve the purchase, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

They are looking into adding alcohol and marijuana to an ordinance to have citations with fines payable to the municipality. He is also looking into increasing the fees for parking tickets to \$200.

The license plate reader is in and will be installed in Officer Joles vehicle.

National Night out will be August 1, 2023, from 6-8pm at Martin Sutton Park.

## **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

Not present.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANT**

Not present.

## **HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Cathy Schwab said that the train station was open on July 1<sup>st</sup> and had 6 visitors. Hannah Henry Circle is meeting at the train station for their next meeting. They have chat sessions at Trinity Church. Cathy asked David about painting the backs of the electric boxes at the railroad park. David said they could proceed. Rick Schwab asked about having the train station power washed.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **PUBLIC HEARING FOR ORDINANCE NO 2023-394**

President Hurley read the summary of legislation: for the purpose of amending chapter 79 business licenses to increase the amount of the fee charged for business licenses issued by the town of Ridgely from \$50 to \$100 and amending chapter 105 impact fees to increase amounts of the public safety impact fee and parks and recreation /open space development and maintenance fee charged by the town from \$1,000 to \$2,000. Commissioner Casey made a motion to open the public hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Buckle, all in favor. President Hurley asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment. Commissioner Casey made a motion to close the public hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor. Commissioner Casey made a motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-394, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

### **PUBLIC HEARING FOR RESOLUTION NO 2023-03**

President Hurley read the summary of legislation: Amending the current water and sewer connection charges, system development fees, hook-up fees, hook-up to Bell Street pump station, and street repaving and repair fee. It has become necessary to raise these fees because of inflation and increased costs the town encumbers. The fees will be changed as follows:  
Water connection charge (tap in fee) from \$1,000 to \$2,000 per 5/8" connection.  
System development fee/sewer from \$5,000 to \$6,000 per EDU.  
Hook up to Bell Street pump station from \$500 to \$800 per EDU  
Street paving/repair fee from \$500 to \$800  
Commissioner Casey made a motion to open the public hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor. President Hurley asked if there was any public comment. There was none. Commissioner Casey made a motion to close the public hearing, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor. Commissioner Casey made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2023-03, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23 pm.

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