

**COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY**  
**AUGUST 5, 2024**  
**TOWN MEETING**



The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00 pm in the town hall for the August 2024 town meeting. The following were in attendance: Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Brad Sears, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Operations David Crist, Zoning Administrator Melissa Leonard, Sgt. Keith Collison, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, Connie Connolly, Jessica Duerstine, Cera Fimbres, Joshua Duerstine, Brenda Walls, Tony Misciolo, Joe Anderson, Kristie Thompson, Rich & Cathy Schwab, Steve Lone, Kathleen Mann, Domingo Llanes, Lacia Pierce, Jamie Romph, Lilian Lone, Robin Martin, Christine Eckrich, Jeff Eckrich, Bobby Utz, Richard Smith, Clint Gill, Annie Rossi-Gill, Anna Mansfield, Cathy Bowrey, Megan Callahan, Greg Nesselroad, Patrice Flamer, Norma Pinkney, Carla Mosley, Barbie Utz. Attending via Zoom: Matthew Malinowski, Jen, Megan Clarke, Nathan King, R.F. Chad Leister, Scott Barron, Valerie Douglas, Brandon Samuel, Timothy Eckrich, Heather Redgraves, Chris Clarke, Iphone user, Brianna Puffenbarger, Sarah Dominsky.

Commissioner Hurley opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Sears made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2024, town meeting and the July 1, 2024, town meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Hurley, approved.

**STAFF REPORTS**  
**CLERK-TREASURER**

Commissioner Sears made a motion to pay bills, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Hurley, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$149,879.10, total sewer funds reconciled \$47,785.46, total water funds reconciled \$41,365.90, total ARPA funds reconciled \$8,733.77. Ridgely Lions Club, Haven Ministries and Choptank Community Foundation were all requesting sponsorship of their golf tournaments. Commissioner Sears made a motion to sponsor each group, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Hurley, approved. Commissioner Sears acknowledged the packet of requested budget information that some residents had requested. He said that after the town meeting, those that would like to can stay after the meeting to go over the information.

**DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

David Crist presented the attached report to the Commissioners. In addition, we are getting quotes from Midshore Technology to upgrade the camera system. We have been experiencing difficulties with the current system. We are waiting for confirmation of the telephone exchange roofing grant to see if the project will need to be rebid. Public works is busy this week preparing for Hurricane Debbie. David said that he has continued to do testing on the water for those residents that have had complaints and at Daysprings. All have come back in the accepted norms range. Commissioner Sears said that he had spoken with Caroline Commissioner Larry Porter about the water at Daysprings, and he had indicated that all the testing done at that site was normal.

**CAROLINE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

Sgt. Collison said that the report system at the County office has crashed and that he was unable to print out a report for this month. He will post the report as soon as possible. He said that they had about 200 calls for service.

**ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

Chad Leister was presented as a candidate for the zoning board. Commissioner Sears made a motion to appoint Chad to the zoning board, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Hurley, approved. Danny's Lawn & Landscaping is taking care of the bump outs on Central Avenue. There will be no August comprehensive plan meeting. The next one is September 10, 2024, at 5pm. Commissioner Sears would like to spotlight local business on the website. Melissa Leonard said that we will be updating our accounting system tomorrow to a cloud-based system. Computers will be down for most of the day. The September meeting is on a holiday, and we need to set a date for the meeting. The Commissioners agreed to have the meeting on Monday September 9, 2024, at 6:00 pm.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANT**

Jerry Sutton said that the auditors will be back in September for the financial audit. FY24 was a challenging budget, and we did use some positive fund balance

## **HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Cathy Schwab discussed the high school's summer career enrichment program teaching kids about animation, app development, drone technology and other topics. The train station was open last Saturday with 9 visitors.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Brad Sears read his attached statement that he prepared for the August 6, 2024, County Commissioners meeting.

Cathy Bowery of Caroline Goes purple discussed what Caroline Goes Purple does and requested the commissioners make a proclamation for the month of September. Commissioner Sears motioned to make it a perennial proclamation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Hurley, approved.

Christy Thompson informed the Commissioners of the "Safe Station" part of the Caroline County Sheriff's Office and the services they provide. They partner with Midshore Behavioral Health and help with the recovery journey. It is free to individuals 24/7. On average, they help about 15 people a month.

Patrice Flamer of Spirit and Mind told the Commissioners that they received \$99,000 grant funding for playground equipment at Martin Sutton Park. Commissioner Sears thanked her and asked if she could please forward the original application and information to Melissa as it becomes available.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Joe Anderson of CTS Solutions requested that the Commissioners reconsider opening the police department.

Anna Mansfield asked Sgt. Collison how many hours were covered and how many RPD vehicles the Sheriff's department had. She is worried that we are paying for coverage that we are not getting. Sgt. Collison said he would get the numbers and that they have 3 of the vehicles. Commissioner Hurley said that the town pays the county on a quarterly basis, with the first payment due in September.

Jamie Romph said that the police department has been cleared by the Office of State Prosecutor 2 weeks ago. He asked why the town did not make a statement about that. David Crist said that he received the confidential memo and was advised by the town attorney not to talk about it. He did not inform the Commissioners. Commissioner Sears said that it is still a personnel matter that can by law be discussed publicly.

Barbie Utz said the commissioners should be ashamed. 8 people were let go.

Robin Martin asked about the budget. She also said the Charter makes way for an ethics commission. Three town residents for 3 years would review documents and such. In the interest of being transparent, she would like to see this established. Commissioner Sears thanked her and said they would take it under advisement.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephanie Berkey, CMC  
Clerk-Treasurer