

## COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY

MAY 1, 2023

### TOWN MEETING



Summary of the April 24, 2023, closed session:

DATE: April 24, 2023

TIME: 10:00 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: Commissioner Hurley, Commissioner Buckle; Opposed: none.

TOPICS DISCUSSED: Zoning Administrator Position, FY24 Budget Employee Compensation

ATTENDING: President Anthony Casey, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner John Buckle, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Public Works David Crist, Financial Assistant Gerald Sutton, Chief Jeff Eckrich.

ACTION TAKEN: Proposed compensation for employees will be included in the FY24 Budget. Zoning Administrator job description will be updated.

The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 6:00PM in the town hall for the May 2023 town meeting. The following were in attendance: President Anthony Casey, 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, Rick & Cathy Schwab, Christine Eckrich, Joel Berger, Joann Dawson, and Norma Pinkney.

President Hurley opened the meeting at 6pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to appoint Stephanie Berkey as the Clerk-Treasurer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2023, vote to go into closed session, March 28, 2023, closed session and April 3, 2023, town meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

##### **CLERK-TREASURER**

Commissioner Casey made a motion to approve paying the bills, seconded by Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$135,337.59, total sewer funds reconciled \$47,065.62, total water funds reconciled \$38,546.39, total ARPA funds reconciled \$967,114.12.

##### **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS**

David Crist discussed the upcoming street paving projects for FY24 and presented the quote from Bramble. The following items are included in the quote: Sunrise from MD 480 to HMA Joint at Greenridge Avenue, Sunrise from 5<sup>th</sup> to MD 480, Caroline from Railroad to 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Street Extension from Sunset Boulevard to past firehouse rear entrance, Fifth Street from Sunrise to Maple for \$305,950.00. Commissioner Buckle made a motion to accept the bid from Bramble, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Casey, all in favor, approved. David Crist discussed

the upcoming FY24 equipment purchases that are planned for the budget, including a Kubota and a new tractor. He asked for approval to use ARPA funding for the purchases. Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve using ARPA funding for the new equipment, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Casey, all in favor, approved. He has also received three bids for the new pole buildings at that Wastewater treatment plant. The Commissioner agreed to go with the Director of Public Works recommendation for the bid and Commissioner Casey made a motion to use ARPA funding for the purchase, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

### **CHIEF OF POLICE**

Chief Eckrich has hired James Joles as a new officer. He will be sworn in during the June town meeting. We currently have a fifth officer going through the academy and by July 2023 the police department will be fully staffed.

### **ZONING ADMINISTRATOR**

Melissa Leonard said that the Sunrise Avenue subdivision is moving forward, and they are working on infrastructure plans. A discussion was had that the developer still needed to reserve water and sewer allocations for the proposed subdivision.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANT**

Gerald Sutton said that the FY24 budget was challenging to put together. It included several streets being paved (utilizing Highway User Revenue). We are going to be using our positive fund balance to help fund the budget. Several loans will be paid off in FY24 and the loan position of the town over the next two to three years looks very good. He is concerned that cash flow issues could be a problem in FY24 and indicated that the town may need to establish a line of credit to ensure there were no cash flow issues. FY23 is looking good with revenue vs. expenses.

### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Cathy wanted everyone to know that the Train Station will be open on the first Saturday of the month from 10-1 throughout the warm season. She thanked Commissioner Buckle for speaking at Hannah Henry Day. It was a nice celebration and well attended. The Historical Society would like to use the Town Hall for a Ridgely Chat Session on June 17, 2023, from 10-12. They will be set up at the Strawberry Festival.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

President Hurley introduced Ordinance No. 2023-393 FY24 Budget.

Joel Berger discussed his property that is adjacent to the cemetery. He has 10 acres and is requesting permission to connect to the town sewer. Only a portion of the property is located in town limits, and it is zoned highway commercial. A discussion followed. David Crist said that it will all come down to how many Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDU's) he will need, and we would need to know much more about what type of building and business would be going at the location. He would also need to get information from State Highway about right of way and would need to hire an engineering firm to help with these issues. The Commissioners suggested that he get more information and then bring the information and requests to planning and zoning.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Cathy Schwab asked if Danny Hutchison would be taking care of the bump outs on Central Avenue. Melissa Leonard said that she has submitted a request for him to do them again this year.

President Hurley discussed the North Carolina Band of Blue's request for a donation. Commissioner Casey made a motion to donate \$500, 2<sup>nd</sup> Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

David Crist wanted to mention that the trash rates from Republic Services for FY24 would again be increasing, but that the town was covering the cost of the increase this year. There is no planned increase from MES.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm.

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