

**COMMISSIONERS OF RIDGELY
MAY 2, 2022
TOWN MEETING**



Summary of the May 2, 2022 closed session:

DATE: May 2, 2022

TIME: 5:59 PM

PLACE: Town Hall

PURPOSE: To discuss personnel matters and to obtain legal advice.

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." §3-305 (b)(7)) "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice. §3-305 (b)(8) "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation."

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

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

- Personnel performance & compensation
- Legal advice from attorneys regarding pending litigation

ATTENDING: President Leonard Buckle, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Anthony Casey, Clerk-Treasurer Stephanie Berkey, Director of Public Works David Crist, Chief of Police Jeff Eckrich, Patrick Thomas Macleod Law Group, Ray Mulera LGIT

ACTION TAKEN: Compensation for personnel will be included in the FY23 Budget.

The Commissioners of Ridgely met on the above date at 7:00 pm in the town hall for the May 2022 town meeting. The following were in attendance: President Anthony Casey, Commissioner John Hurley, Commissioner Leonard 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, Ridgely Historical Society Rick & Cathy Schwab, Ella Martin, Connie Wilkerson, Christine Eckrich, Stephanie Larimore, Blake MacFarland, Brenda Walls, Rodney Dobson, Mike Ebaugh, Joe Anderson, Sue Cherry.

Outgoing President Leonard John Buckle opened the meeting.

Commissioner Casey made a motion to appoint Stephanie Berkey as the Clerk-Treasurer, 2nd Commissioner Hurley, all in favor, approved.

Stephanie Berkey swore in Leonard John Buckle as Commissioner.

Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2022 town meeting, 2nd Commissioner Hurley, all in favor approved.

STAFF REPORTS

CLERK-TREASURER

Commissioner Buckle made a motion to approve paying the bills, 2nd Commissioner Hurley, all in favor, approved. Total general funds reconciled \$224,937.22, sewer funds \$69,266.12, water funds \$48,560.04, ARPA funds \$705,403.20.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

Director of Public Works David Crist gave an update to the Commissioners on the improvements that are being done at Martin Sutton Park. All of the improvements are being completed with grant funding. All of the paving has been completed. The tennis and basketball courts will be lined by ATC with no color coating. There was a discussion about backfilling around the walking trail as it could be a tripping hazard. The parking lots are completed and we will be adding lines and bumpers. Once all the final bills are paid, we will look at remaining funds to purchase new benches and trash cans. The following paving projects have been completed: post office alley on 5th Street, Hutchison's alley on 5th Street, section on East 1st Street, section on single digit block of Caroline Avenue, Handicap area of town hall parking lot. Prices are being gathered for Sunrise Ave, Caroline Ave, 1st St extended by RVFD, apron off of 480 past Medifast driveway on Sunrise Ave and 5th St between Sunrise and Maple Ave. The sewer camera has been ordered and there is a concept plan being made to target the older sewer lines for replacement, with a bid package ready by October. Republic Services has doubled our trash service rates starting July 1, 2022. Tipping fees have also increased from 67 to 69.50. If we stay with Republic Services, it will be necessary to increase our rates from \$37.50 per quarter to \$64.00. Dumpsters will increase from \$87 a quarter to \$100 a month. We are still looking into other options.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Chief Eckrich said that they are continuing to interview for the vacant police positions. 82 traffic stops were done in April. He has been attending meetings for the reform laws that start July 1, 2022 and learning about the Police Accountability Board. He will be utilizing grant funding to purchase new rifle rated vests and evidence collection updates that are necessary.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Melissa Leonard said that they are patrolling for grass and untagged vehicles.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

Gerald Sutton commended the staff for their work on the FY23 budget that is being introduced tonight. Many hours went into this budget as the demands were very high, but we have not raised taxes in many years. It is a balanced budget.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Cathy Schwab thanked David Crist for moving the bike rack in the Railroad Park. The train station will be open for tours the first Saturday of the month from May to November. She asked if it would be possible to power wash the end of the train station. Caroline County was honored with a historic sight sign for Thomas Carney Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

President Casey introduced Ordinance No. 2022-290 FY23 Budget.

There was a discussion to have the town meetings permanently changed to 6:00 pm on the first Monday of the month. Commissioner Hurley made a motion for the change, 2nd Commissioner Buckle, all in favor, approved.

Commissioner Hurley led a discussion about the possibility of adding pickle ball lines to the tennis courts. David Crist will contact ATC to see how much that would be.

Brenda Walls requested that the town re-install the 2-hour parking signs that she had previously removed for her car show. Public Works will work on getting them re-installed. Locates will have to be done as there are two sewer lines that run along where the signs will go.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Stephanie Larrimore asked about the town hall office being open. It was explained that the office is open to the public, but for security and safety reasons you must ring the bell before being admitted. Ridgely is the only town in the area that has the police department inside of the town hall. There are times when this presents unsafe situations inside of the town hall, particularly when there is not an officer in the building.

Cathy Schwab asked how many benches were going to be put at Martin Sutton Park. David Crist said that originally it was 22, but the costs increased on the paving and we have to see what is leftover from that expense before we can order any benches. There was a discussion about putting plaques on the benches.

Sue Cherry thanked the Commissioners for replacing the signs on Belle Street. She asked if the recycle bins were going to come back in town. As of now, there is recycling available at the Holly Road landfill.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

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