



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
BOARD MEETING  
First Baptist Church, Crofton  
November 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM**

**Present:**

**Board Members:** Anna O’Kelly, Marsha Perry, Brain Riley, Daria DeLizio, Charles See, Stephen Tull, Robert Kendall, and Hal Sheldon.

**Staff:** Martin H. Simon, James Harvey, Sgt. Jason Jett, Tara Gottschalck.

President Anna O’Kelly opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Announcements by President Anna O’Kelly:**

Anna announced that this meeting is being recorded to assist the Administrative Assistant with the transcription of the minutes.

The Crofton Winter Farmers Market returns Saturday November 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Crofton Library. The winter market will continue every other Saturday through April 20, 2024. The market features local and regional foods, crafts, and artwork. See [Croftonfarmersmarket.com](http://Croftonfarmersmarket.com) for details. The CCA 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tent will be on site selling greeting cards, ornaments, and Crofton history books to raise money in support of the events scheduled for next year.

A reminder that the Crofton Kiwanis Flags for Heroes display runs from November 4<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup>. American Flags are displayed near the Front Entrance on Route 3 at Lake Louise.

Town Hall is closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday and Friday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

Beginning on the Friday after Thanksgiving (November 24<sup>th</sup>), the annual AVFD Christmas Tree Sale is open every weekday from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM and on Saturday and Sunday from 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM at Station 7, 2380 Davidsonville Road, Gambrills, MD 21054. Come out and support the fire department’s annual holiday tradition. AVFD offers Fraser Firs, Canaan Firs, and Douglas Fir trees and has a variety of hand-made wreaths and pine ropes.

The CCA will hold its Annual Tree Lighting at the Crofton Country Club on Wednesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>. Caroling will begin at 6:00 PM while waiting for the tree lighting and Santa’s arrival on his fire truck. The party will then move inside where Santa will greet the children and take present requests. There will be make & take crafts, hot chocolate, and festive music. Our AVFD Santa will be accepting donations.

Light Up Crofton is scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. Participating homes line the street in front of their homes, driveways, and walkways with luminaria. Residents can drive around Crofton to enjoy the beauty of our illuminated community. Light Up Crofton is a fundraiser for Scout Troop 758.

They sell and deliver luminaria kits that each contain supplies for 10 luminaries: 10 white bags and 2-inch votive candles, sand, and instructions. To learn more and to order your luminaria kits, visit the CCA website at [Croftoncommunity.org](http://Croftoncommunity.org). Orders must be completed by December 5th and the scouts of Troop 758 will deliver your kits to your door (within the Crofton area). If you have questions, email [lightupcrofton@gmail.com](mailto:lightupcrofton@gmail.com).

The next CCA Board meeting is scheduled for Monday December 11th, at 7:00 PM at the First Baptist Church, Crofton.

### **Approval of Minutes –**

The minutes from the CCA Board meeting, held on October 16, 2023, require approval. There were no additional comments or revisions needed for these previously distributed minutes. The minutes were filed.

### **Town Manager's Report – Martin H. Simon**

Martin reported that the last month was busy with many community events. The Chili Cook-off and the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Booth at the Crofton Farmer's Market, the Community Awards Banquet, the inaugural Crofton Police Department's Trunk-or-Treat, the annual planting of flags for the Flags for Heroes display, the Halloween Parade and Party, the installation of the new benches at Hardy Field, and the filming of Marsha Perry and Friends history project.

Martin reported that Keith has been busy cleaning up the brick walls and iron works at the entrances.

Martin reported that Ballard Landscaping has adjusted overgrown plantings at the front entrance.

Martin mentioned the November E-Advocate highlights the participation in the County's survey of the preferences for the re-design of Crofton Park. He also mentioned contacting County staffer Tanya Asmin voicing support for the installation of a sidewalk along Route 424 from Staples Corner to Bell Branch Park. This sidewalk will provide a safe route for bicycle access to the park, as well as reducing vehicle traffic in and around the park.

Martin reported the Eagle Scout fundraiser for Jacob O'Sullivan's bench project at Hardy Field at Nando's Peri Peri raised \$651.73.

Martin provided the police overtime report. There were zero hours to report for our special events. Cpl. Sims used 4 ½ hours for a neighborhood watch meeting on October 21<sup>st</sup>. On November 2<sup>nd</sup> Cpl. Sims was held over his regular shift due to an emergency petition.

### **Comptroller's Report – James Harvey**

Jim reported that the County released the assessable base numbers on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The last of the large insurance installments have been paid.

Jim reported that his focus this last month has been on 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities. He has fifteen fitness companies signed up for the Let's Move! Crofton Fitness week in January. He hopes to have a draft for review by the committee on Thursday. This program offers free passes to the public for a

class or a training session at area fitness clubs. The program will be open to five hundred recipients. The first 100 people to pick up their Let's Move! passports from Town Hall will receive a swag bag from.

Jim reported that the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Student Art Contest has concluded, and the winning art has been converted into greeting cards, which are being packaged at Town Hall, and are for sale for \$15.00 for a pack of ten.

The online 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary store has been created. Social media posts went out today. We have received a few orders already. This is the CCA store, which is different from the Spirit Store, which sold shirts and was open for a three week period. On the CCA's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Store we will sell ornaments, totes bags, and the Student Art card package. Jim will manage a 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary booth at the Farmers Market this weekend, and again on November 18<sup>th</sup>.

Marsha asked about the teen program. Jim said it is in development. Jim mentioned that the E-Advocate will promote Nettie Crafts website, who has created cutting boards and other 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary merchandise for sale.

Stephen Tull commented he would like the police statistics to be in the front of the newsletter rather than at the end. Jim responded that the statistics are collected at the end of the month, and he begins piecing things together early in the month, paying special attention to time sensitive materials. He said he will try to revise the format for the next issue.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Recreation Committee** – *Daria DeLizio*

Daria had nothing to report.

### **Greater Crofton Council Liaison** – *Chuck See*

Chuck reported there were two GCC meetings over the last few weeks. The first was November 1<sup>st</sup>, with Senator Gile and Delegate Pruski in attendance. Marsha and Martin also attended. The meeting focused on issues in the Gambrills, Crofton, and Odenton areas. The Federal Government placed a temporary stop to the permit for the Odenton landfill. MDE will not continue processing the permit until it receives explicit communication from the County stating the landfill has met all requirements.

The second meeting was last Tuesday, with speaker Nestor Flores, the Anne Arundel County Traffic Engineer. One of the main topics was the safety concerns of Riedel Road. There is increased concern after the recent accident where a teenager was struck by a truck. The County is working with the GCC to affect change and improvements on traffic in the area. Mr. Flores announced that the County approved the use of speed cameras two years ago and are now implementing systems throughout the County. The first phase will be school speed zones. Temporary speed cameras will be positioned by the elementary school off Riedel Road. Phase two of the process will be setting up speed cameras in neighborhood zones. County traffic engineering is also working on repaving Riedel Road, installing a bike path, resurfacing sidewalks, and the installation of traffic islands to limit traffic passing. Residents have complained about people passing on the one lane, and large trucks and tractor-

trailers driving through as a Route 3 bypass. There will be a Homeowners group meeting January 16<sup>th</sup>. The next GCC meeting is tomorrow night, 7pm, at the Waugh Chapel Community Center. Chuck referred to some traffic statistics reported by Nestor Flores. There were 106 crashes on Riedel Road from 2018-2023, and 49 crashes on Johns Hopkins Road. The Riedel Road group is setting up a website that will contain this information. Chuck will let us know when the website is up so that the CCA can promote it.

### **Covenant Review Committee** – *Stephen Tull*

Stephen reported that a fence on West Regents Park Road was approved.

Marsha asked about the alleged covenant violation of the porch and addition to a residence on Crofton Parkway near the Price of Peace Church. Stephen responded that there was a waiver by the County, and the structure has been built.

### **Maintenance and Operations** – *Rob Kendall*

Rob had nothing to report.

### **Education Committee** – *Hal Sheldon*

Hal is still looking for volunteers to report on school events.

He provided updates from Crofton High School:

Vibhav Puvvala was named a National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalist. The fall play, Heaven Can Wait, ran this past weekend. The field hockey team won the State Championship for the second year in a row. Three sports teams were recently named regional champs - Field Hockey, Boys Soccer, and Boys Cross Country. Owen Newberry won the State Golf Championship this fall.

Hal reported the following upcoming events at Crofton High School:

November 17 at 7pm - Songbirds vocal ensemble will be joining the choirs from Anne Arundel Community College, Southern High School, and Northeast High School for a combined choral concert. Tickets for the concert are \$10 and can be purchased online at Eventbrite or at the door.

November 20-24 - School closed for Thanksgiving

December 6, 7 pm - Chorus Winter Concert

December 11, 7 pm - Jazz Band Concert

December 12, 7 pm - Orchestra Concert

December 13, 7 pm - Band Concert

Hal reported the Crofton cluster of schools are taking part in a pilot program where bus riders are being asked to scan a badge when they get on and off the bus to and from school to increase safety, determine who is on the bus in the event of emergency, and determine whether to expand the program to the rest of AACPS.

**Public Safety Committee** – *Brian Riley*

Brian reported that last Thursday Martin submitted proposed revisions to the Policies and Procedures Manual to the Board. The changes include the addition of the Sergeant position, and the job descriptions for all officers, and the pay table has been updated.

Brian made a motion to adopt the proposed changes to the Policies and Procedures Manual. Chuck seconded. During the discussion, Martin mentioned there was a slight change added to the pay table in Annex J where the term “bi-weekly” was added for clarification. Anna pointed out two typographical errors on page 32, and on page 33 and 34 suggested some language revisions. All were in favor of adopting the revised section of the manual. The motion carried.

**Planning & Zoning** – *Marsha Perry*

Marsha commented on the importance of community outreach and was very pleased that Senator Gile and Delegate Pruski had attended the GCC meeting.

Marsha reported that she attended the Community Awards Baquet in October and was honored to present the CCA Citizen of the Year Award to Lynn Pollock.

Marsha mentioned an Op-Ed article published in The Capital last week that regarded housing as being the next civil rights issue. There is another article in today’s Capital by Matt Minahan on affordable housing, and the amendments made to the current bill that the County Council is working on. There are provisions for workforce housing. Currently it states that any new development of 20 units or more must have 15% (up from 10%) of its sales as affordable housing. They are working out the qualifications. One example given was a family of two earning an income of \$70,000, or a monthly rent of \$1,500. This bill should be completed soon.

The GAN annual meeting will be held by Zoom and in person, on November 16, 2023, from 6:30 to 8:30, at the Busch Library on West Street. The meeting will focus on housing, growth, and Anne Arundel County’s sustainable future, featuring County Executive Steuart Pittman. Marsha will attend and can provide the Zoom link to anyone who wishes to attend.

Marsha reported that there was discussion during the Region 2 planning session involving the owners of the Jessup racetrack. They are considering turning over a portion of the racetrack land to the County. The area is considered open space. This is concerning because it will set a precedent in the County. Marsha commented further stating that historically County planning and zoning has turned over previously designated open spaces to commercial zoning.

**Finance Committee** – *Renee Speer*

No Report.

**Police Chief Report** – *Sgt. Jason Jett, Acting Chief*

Sgt. Jett reported on the statistics for the month of October. There were 1,197 calls for service. The last three months have seen an average of 1000 calls per month. This reflects the increase in staff, rather than an increase in crime. There were 757 traffic stops, down from 908 last month. Sgt. Jett believes this is due to the aggressive speed patrolling the previous month. He reported there has been an

increase in Emergency Petition calls the last three months. This is a typical seasonal increase where individuals experience mental crisis and involves transporting them to a medical facility for treatment. These incidents can become hazardous. All Crofton officers are trained in this area. Sgt. Jett has requested any updated training from the Anne Arundel County Crisis Intervention team.

Sgt. Jett provided an update on crime in the community.

On October 13<sup>th</sup> a resident on Eton Way was threatening violence towards his parents and barricaded himself inside the home. Police who arrived on the scene were also met with threats of violence. The police officers obtained a key to the locked room, were able to enter, placed the individual into custody, then transferred the individual to Anne Arundel Medical Center for evaluation. The incident ended peacefully.

On October 26<sup>th</sup> a resident of Tipton Drive accidentally discharged a rifle. A bullet passed from the bedroom window to the dining room of the residence next door. No one was injured. The weapon was seized, and the individual was charged with two citations.

On October 29<sup>th</sup> the local theft from auto suspect Demar Caldwell was arrested by Anne Arundel County police. Sgt. Jett had served a warrant for his arrest previously, but Caldwell was later released from custody. Sgt. Jett will speak to the States Attorney's office to see if there is anything additional that can be done to keep Mr. Caldwell off the street.

Sgt. Jett reported that the first annual Trunk-or-Treat event was a huge success. He thanked all community leaders, businesses, and participants who made the event possible. There were approximately five hundred people who attended. He plans to run the event again next year.

Sgt. Jett reported that the Halloween Parade and Town Hall Party was also a successful event. Both he and Cpl. Sims were on patrol Halloween night, and there were no incidents to report.

Sgt. Jett reported that two old mobile data computers (MDC) have been replaced. All officers now have new MDCs. There is one older computer held in place for the current open police position.

Sgt. Jett reported that the Crofton Police social media page continues to grow. All the police community outreach events have been well attended. He is very pleased with the progress of the events, his staff, and the support they have received from the community.

Daria asked if the department has begun patrolling on weekends. Sgt. Jett responded that this is not possible due to the continuing coverage of school crossings. Once the school crossings are again covered by the County, he can then reschedule shifts for weekend coverage.

Anna asked if anyone found out where traffic counters around the community were from. Martin responded that the County was going to investigate, and to his knowledge they were unable to determine who was running the study.

Hal asked if anyone is aware of what business is moving into the former Giant site. Anna responded that it will be a Fresh Market, a specialty grocery store chain.

Stephen asked for specifics on the types of service calls that the police respond to. Sgt. Jett explained that they cover response calls and regular patrol checks. Patrol checks include Crofton Center, Village Green and other local businesses, area schools, and other locations in the community. These locations are not always response calls.

Stephen also asked about the residence on Harcourt that had two abandoned vehicles parked on Crofton Parkway. Sgt. Jett said the police did not have anything to do with that. Martin commented the owner seems to be taking steps to clean up the property lately.

### **Other Business –**

Jim stated the FY25 budget requires approval. He explained there were several versions sent to the Board for approval. The Board chose version 7(a). The increase is 3.9%. There were no additional questions. Stephen motioned for the Board to accept the final FY25 Budget as proposed. Brian seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Jim explained that the budget will be published in the December Advocate and formally presented to the community at the General Membership Meeting in January.

Anna stated the Board needs to vote on the new tax rate increase which is 0.1%. This will be an average increase of \$13.41 per year per household. Hal motioned to accept the 0.1% tax rate increase. Chuck seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

Anna stated that the Board needs to vote to adopt the CCA FY25 Budget. Stephen motioned to accept the CCA FY25 Budget. Hal seconded. All were in favor. The motion carried.

### **Citizen Questions or Comments –**

Resident Sheliah Bradley asked about the status of the repairs to Hardy Field. Martin responded that the exposed rebar coming out of the steps has been temporarily repaired by Keith. The additional repairs are to be made by an agreement we have with the Crofton Athletic Council. The steps will be rebuilt, and the water line changes will be made. He expects to have the repairs completed soon.

There is a proposal that may include funding for changing that entrance to Hardy Field. It would not be ADA compliant but would make the area more accessible for individuals with limited mobility by eliminating the steps completely and creating a slope to access that area. He believes this project will move quickly.

Sheliah said that today there are new railroad ties and rock with a torn up muddy area. Martin will investigate it.

Sheliah asked about County funding for upgrades to the park. Martin explained there is a multipronged approach to making changes to the park in progress.

Sheliah asked about the possibility of combining the Halloween Parade and the Trunk-or-Treat since they are very large events that are within 12 hours of each other. Jim explained that Kiwanis does the

Parade, CCA does the after party, and the Crofton PD does the Trunk-or-Treat. It would be difficult to have the police provide traffic control at the Parade then set up a Trunk-or-Treat for later that evening. We can look at the possibility of combining these events next year.

With no other questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned for an Executive Session to discuss Personnel and Legal Matters.

*Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Administrative Assistant (December 4 , 2023)*

MS/JH/JJ(tg)