



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION
BOARD and BUDGET MEETING
Crofton Elementary School, Library Media Center
November 10th, 2025 – 7:00 PM**

Present:

Board Members: Anna O’Kelly, Stephen Tull, James Kitchin, Meredith Schramm, Charles See, Kitty Gross, John Sullivan.

Staff: Martin H. Simon, James Harvey, Chief Jason Jett, Cpl. Kyle Gable, Tara Gottschalck.

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

Announcements:

Anna announced the meeting was recorded to assist in the transcription of the minutes.

The final FY27 Budget meeting will be one week from tonight, on November 17th, right here at 7:00PM. We will conduct an overall review, make any necessary adjustments, determine the tax rate, and vote on the package.

The final CCA Board meeting of the year is scheduled for Monday, December 8th.

Town Hall will be closed tomorrow, November 11th, in observance of Veterans Day.

Town Hall will be closed on November 27th and 28th for Thanksgiving.

The Crofton Farmers Winter Market began on November 8th and will be held on certain Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Crofton Library through April 2026. The next markets are scheduled for November 22nd, December 6th and 20th. Stop by and get local and regional foods, crafts, and artwork. See Croftonfarmersmarket.com for details.

Crofton Flag Contest - We have had residents request an official Crofton Flag, and the CCA Board has decided to start the process of adopting an official Crofton Flag by holding a public design contest. Designers and Artists are asked to submit their contact information and upload their design at the contest form on our website at Croftoncommunity.org. All flag designs must be submitted by December 1st. The Board will select the winner at the December Board meeting. The winning Flag will be available to the public in the spring of 2026. The winner will receive a \$300 award.

The annual AVFD Christmas tree sale offers the most popular and best live trees in a variety of sizes, from tabletop 4ft trees to 10ft grand statements. The selection includes Fraser Firs, Canaan Firs, and Douglas Fir trees. Sales open on November 28th, the Friday after Thanksgiving! The lot is open every weekday from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM and it is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM. All proceeds benefit the Arundel Volunteer Fire Department.

Annual CCA Holiday Tree Lighting & Santa Visit is scheduled for Wednesday, December 3rd, at the Crofton Country Club. Join us at 6:00 PM out front for caroling with the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's Choir, Tree Lighting, and Santa's arrival by Arundel Volunteer Fire truck. Santa will be escorted inside to meet the children. Everyone can enjoy hot chocolate, cookies, and make and take crafts while you wait to visit Santa. AVFD will be accepting donations.

Light Up Crofton 2025 – Scout Troop 758 has scheduled this year's Light Up Crofton event for Sunday, December 14th. They are asking participants to put out their luminary kits and light the candles at 5:30 PM. You can be part of this community tradition of lighting up our neighborhoods with candle luminaries. Troop 758 sells the kits as an annual fundraiser for their troop. They will be taking luminary kit orders at the Crofton Farmers Market on November 22nd and on December 6th, as well as at our tree lighting event on December 3rd. You may also order online. See this month's E-Advocate or visit our CCA website to get the link. Online orders will be hand delivered to your home by December 14th.

Crofton Library Events: see full schedule at AACPL.net:

- November 13, 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM, Adult Book Club: Beautiful Ugly by Alice Feeney
- November 24, 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM, Crofton Houseplant Club
- November 26, Library Closes at 5:00 PM
- November 27, Library is closed for Thanksgiving
- November 28, Library Closed in Recognition of Native Heritage Month
- November 30, Library Closed for Sunday after Thanksgiving

FY2027 CSCBD Operations Overhead Budget –

Jim provided a summary of the Operations Overhead budget.

He noted that Property Taxes and Maintenance and Repair formerly under Building Expense have been moved to Maintenance and Operations.

The FY25 actual expense of Town Hall utilities plus 10% has been budgeted for the Utilities for Town Hall.

Payroll/Accounting under Contracted Services includes the time-management and payroll service from Buddy Punch. ADP has been dropped for all services except their poster service which will be shifted this year to SHRM's (Society for Human Resource Management) poster service.

Legal services arrangements have changed this year and have been moved to a retainer program budgeted at \$500 per month, plus there is the \$490 for ASCAP music license renewal for the Summer Concert Series, and \$5,000 additional for legal fees.

The Audit budget has been kept the same even though the new auditor charged less than what was budgeted this year. The new service does more work than our previous auditors and it is fair to expect them to be paid more.

Office Operations – The telephone budget has increased from FY25 actual expense plus 5% to accommodate the current phones and police cell phones with FirstNet, plus the addition of two new cell phones for the Town Manager and the Comptroller. The two new cell phones are needed for login verifications tied to online systems.

Equipment Maintenance - The buyout for the copier is March 2026. The cost will be \$150 per quarter for maintenance, thereafter, if we buyout the current copier.

Supplies – John asked if we could reduce postage by having folks opt out of receiving the hard copy newsletter. Jim explained that this section is for office supplies such as postage stamps, stationery, copy paper, etc., not the newsletter. He commented further that the 2025 Crofton Community Survey comments reveal that many retired residents age 65 and older said they do not use any online services, and do not receive the E-Advocate, so eliminating the paper copy would exclude them from receiving communications. James added that we do not have the authority to make any changes until the new By-Laws have passed. Stephen asked how much telephones consist of the internet/telephone budget. Jim explained that it is all of that expense line-item.

Furniture and Equipment is budgeted for \$1,000. There are no current plans to purchase new furniture.

General Fund – This is used for Citizen of the Year and Police Officer of the Year awards, memorials, and the holiday staff party.

Dues and subscriptions include GAN, and the Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce.

The discretionary bonus has no changes from last year.

IT support covers the monthly maintenance by Cheaper Than a Geek plus 10%.

Software and Licensing contain Microsoft Office 365 licensing plus 10%, and the old 8690 line plus 25%. This also includes licensing for services such as Adobe, ZOOM, and website hosting by Wix.

Insurance – Jim explained that costs for general liability insurance were exceedingly high before joining LGIT (Local Government Insurance Trust), which has lowered rates by almost \$100,000. A 10% increase was budgeted here over the new LGIT rates.

The Employee Performance Bond through Travelers Insurance was budgeted using the actual plus 15%.

ADA Expense – There was nothing added here for FY27.

Contingency Expense – This includes auto deductibles.

Chuck Cook asked what Inland Marine insurance covers. Jim explained it covers the computers in the police cruisers since off-site computers require a separate rider.

With no additional questions, Jim proceeded to the Reserve Planning Budget.

Jim explained that reserve numbers on the revenue side of the page were carried over from the previous budget and did not account for things the Board was doing during the current fiscal year. In this budget positions for each reserve fund include both budgeted and projected changes for FY26. The three categories for long-term savings used for replacements are the Police Vehicle Fund, the Maintenance Vehicle Fund, and the Park Equipment Fund. The contingency fund of \$5,000 will be adjusted once the tax rate is finalized to account for any rounding.

The Property Tax Income Gap Fund is the \$480,000 budgeted for what is needed to fund operations from July to December when we receive our first property tax payment from the county. We have spent \$420,000 so far on operations since July 2025.

Jim will send out version 3 of the FY27 budget to the Board for the final review.

Jim provided a summary of the CCA Budget.

Income

There was \$3,000 in Interest Earned due to the money made during the 60th Anniversary.

Donations are not anticipated. Police income is also not expected; however, they do sell challenge coins, and patches.

There is a steady income of advertising revenue from the *E-Advocate* and the printed *Advocate*, and we have estimated \$7,000.

\$2,500 of income has also been estimated for the Crofton Salutes Our Heroes Program.

The \$2,500 Anne Arundel County Arts Council grant is not guaranteed, though it is usually approved annually and used to fund the Summer Concert Series.

Expenses

\$4,000 has been budgeted for legal fees for covenant enforcement.

Money was added to office supplies and accounting. Because the association made money last year due to the 60th Anniversary, there needs to be an additional accounting expense for preparing our long-form N990 tax return.

There is nothing budgeted for the election of Board members since it occurs every other year. The next election after FY27 is in FY28.

For the Crofton Salutes Our Heroes program, half the income is the cost of the hardware and banner. If banners deteriorate over time, we will ask the sponsors if they wish to replace the banner at a cost of approximately \$80.

Police Equipment expenses are decided by the Chief. Donations or money made from patches can be used for things like uniforms, gun sights, or the Trunk-or-Treat event.

Balance of Assets

The Land is the largest asset. The land value increases each year as the loan for the front property purchase continues to be paid and the principal owed is reduced.

Regarding the buildings, Town Hall was purchased many years ago for \$26,000. Previous accountants have decided to depreciate the value completely, which will become a problem whenever we decide to sell this building.

The Enclave loan balance continues to decline as it is paid annually.

Temporary Restricted Assets

\$5,000 has been placed into a restrictive fund as seed money for the 70th anniversary.

\$6,500 has been placed into a covenant enforcement fund. If a donation is marked for a specific category, such as covenant enforcement or police equipment, it cannot be used anywhere else.

The Forest Conservation Proceeds Fund is money paid by the county for the forest easement at the front entrance. This has been invested in a CD that earns interest.

Police equipment reserve fund – Jim reminded everyone that donations to the police cannot be moved or used for any other purchases. Sales from other things like badges and coins are separate from this fund.

James asked about 1501 Land. Once the properties are downzoned by the county from C3 to open space, how this will affect the balance sheet. Jim is unsure and expects we will have to have it re-appraised for the land value.

Approval of Minutes –

The previously distributed minutes of the Board and Budget meeting held on October 13th require approval. One edit was reported. No additional changes were needed. The minutes were filed as revised.

Town Manager's Report – Martin H. Simon

Martin attended the Community Awards banquet last week and congratulated Cpl. Kyle Gable for his receipt of the Officer of the Year award. He congratulated resident Littany Hollerbach who received the Crofton Citizen of the Year award.

The E-Advocate that went out last week contained a summary of the results of the recent community survey. Martin distributed the survey comments to Board members. The survey

results will be posted to our website. Overall, the responses were positive. He provided some highlights.

Public Safety

66% reported seeing the CPD patrolling their neighborhood
62% felt CPD patrol coverage was excellent or good
61% felt traffic enforcement was excellent or good
69% felt the CPD is keeping the tax district safe
77% were aware of the CPD outreach programs
44% felt CPD staff should remain at five officers, and many of those felt schedules should be revised to include overnight and weekend coverage
56% were in favor of adding more officers to increase community coverage
Many reported they would like increased patrols in neighborhoods off of Crofton Parkway
Parkway traffic and speeding are main concerns, especially at the intersection of Duke of Kent Drive and Crofton Parkway
Many reported parking concerns of RV's and trailers along Crofton Parkway
Of the 275 respondents, 3 reported they would like to do away with the Crofton Police Department

Grounds Maintenance

93% reported the maintenance of the common areas as excellent or good
24% reported interest in a picnic table and shelter at Swann Park
25% have visited Hardy Field
52% liked the idea of a walking path around the front yard forest
54% liked the Cherry Tree Program, and 22% feel the program needs to move faster; 28 trees were ordered, payments are coming in, and plantings will begin soon
71% liked the idea of installing benches along Crofton Parkway; An Eagle Scout has already been scheduled to install the first three benches at the Crofton natural area by North Forest Apartments, Marty Mows will donate and install the ADA compliant concrete pads

Communications

Residents reported receiving the printed *Advocate* and *E-Advocate* at 76% and 88% respectively
Read rates are 86% and 92% respectively
57% reported receiving emails from Town Hall
38% reported visiting the website
35% have never visited the website

Advocacy

54% reported they are aware of CCA advocacy
57% have never been to a CCA meeting; new lawn signs have been made and put out announcing the meetings to help increase attendance

Covenants

37% of respondents reported that the current set of covenants is adequate
22% reported they are not
41% reported they are unsure

When asked to move to a single set of universal covenants, 2/3 of respondents said no

Recreation

All twenty programs were reported favorably: 44% for the Pie Bake-off, 85% for the Tree Lighting & Santa Visit. There were 5% of respondents who do not like the Flags for Heroes display at the front entrance. There was limited interest in the four potential new events; the full-day concert being the most popular at 34%. Most respondents listed no opinion on the new events.

Martin provided a police overtime report. Twenty-six hours were used for special events, three hours were used for court appearances, and ten hours were used for late calls for service.

Comptroller's Report – *James Harvey*

Jim encouraged Board members to read all the survey comments and said that there are many good ideas and suggestions from the community.

Jim summarized the new financial report as suggested by the auditor, previously distributed to the Board. He explained that we receive approximately 70% of our money from the county in December, then the balance of property taxes in March. This report lets you know what we have spent, where we stand against our budget, and what our cash balance is.

Jim reported that the county rejected our audit due to \$5.01 from their balance sheet last year that was not accrued. The other reason was that the new auditor is not peer-reviewed yet. The new auditor has 18 months to finish peer review since it is their first time conducting a SCBD audit.

Jim reported that the Maryland FMLA has been budgeted for FY27. It has been delayed three times so far.

He reported the IRS will be sending our refund of approximately \$3,000 in the next six to eight weeks.

New Board members have completed three Easy Llama training programs.

Social media postings have been very heavy due to our events, but will be lighter for the remainder of the year.

Jim is researching a new Town Hall sign. The current sign is older and deteriorating. The new sign will include the Crofton Police Department and its emblem.

The Cherry Tree invoices were sent out on November 4th. Nine trees have been paid for so far.

Jim has scheduled a new coffee-tasting social event for the new year on January 27th, from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. It will be a "Coffee with Candidates" event with a tour of the Chesapeake Coffee Roasters facility. Jim has done this before for his magazine, and 80 people attended. This event will be limited to 100 people.

Both the Cherry Blossom Festival and the Easter Egg Hunt are scheduled for the same day next year, Saturday, March 28th.

Police Chief Report – *Chief Jason Jett*

Chief Jett reported that many residents have stated concerns several times over the last month of traffic accidents on Route 3 that resulted in the road closure with traffic diverting through the community. The road closure led to smaller accidents from the diverted traffic that needed to be attended to. The police department assists county police with traffic safety and rerouting during road closures, especially through the community.

The Chief reported that theft in the area has been increasing. He asked folks to remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the police department. The department will begin operation CHEER (Crofton Holiday Enhanced Enforcement Response), by increasing the number of patrols with later and weekend hours from November 28th through December 24th. Patrols will increase in both Crofton Centre, and in the community, helping to reduce package and retail thefts. He believes this will help to satisfy the residents that responded to the survey wanting to see increased patrols with extended coverage in the community.

The Chief reported on crime in the community. He reported that Governor Wes Moore has declared a State of Emergency due to the absence of SNAP benefits caused by the government shutdown and has alerted law enforcement agencies of increased threats ahead of looting and theft. There have been incidents of theft at Ace Hardware and Giant. Cpl. Gable has apprehended and charged eight suspects related to these thefts.

The Chief reported a home invasion with an assault on Parkridge Circle. The suspect was the son of the 88-year-old resident. He was apprehended and charged with assault.

Chief Jett reported on community engagement events. On October 24th, the department hosted its 3rd annual Trunk-Or-Treat event. It was very well attended. The department provided traffic safety for the annual Kiwanis Halloween Parade on October 25th.

Chief Jett reported on the two newly installed Flock Safety Cameras. He displayed on screen the live feed of the newly installed LPR camera at the intersection of Good Hope Drive and Defense Highway. The remaining cameras are due to be installed on November 12th. Once all cameras are installed, the cameras will begin sharing information with the county's Real Time Information Center (RTIC). They have already captured two traffic accidents. It has also helped to track a suspect that hit multiple vehicles at Crofton Centre. The suspect was arrested and charged with a DUI. There was also a hit on a wanted U-Haul vehicle from Arizona. The department retains data for 30 days. The Chief directed the Board to the article in the *Capital* today on the Flock Safety system, and the reduction of crime in the county.

The Chief reported the State Police has a newly appointed superintendent. He is waiting on the MOU with State Police regarding information related to the "hot list" with all MVA records of wanted vehicles. He hopes to have this within the next two weeks.

The Chief reported the grant application from the state was denied. There is money in reserves to continue the system after the two-month trial period, which begins once the system is fully installed next week. He will provide the data collected during that time.

Kitty asked about shift changes for evening coverage. The Chief clarified there are no patrols on weekends. He is looking at schedule changes and additional overtime to address this. Kitty agrees that we should investigate adding additional officers as confirmed by the recent community survey results.

Committee Reports

Covenant Review Committee – *Stephen Tull*

Stephen reported the committee approved a replacement fence. He also reported a concern with an unapproved shed construction and is waiting on a response from the homeowner.

Public Safety Committee – *Brian Riley*

Brian was not present and did not submit a report.

Finance Committee – *James Kitchin*

James had nothing additional to report.

Recreation Committee – *Meredith Schramm*

Meredith reported she is coordinating with Kathy on the upcoming Tree Lighting and other events.

Greater Crofton Council Liaison – *Chuck See*

Chuck reported there are no announcements for upcoming GCC meetings at this time.

Education and Civic Affairs – *Chuck Cook*

Chuck reported there was a third school redistricting meeting held last Monday night. The amendments put forward by members of the Crofton area who wished to keep the current cluster together were not accepted. Wednesday there will be a public review, Thursday will be an additional public comment period. The accepted plan will split some students from Nantucket Elementary School that will join the Arundel cluster. Kitty asked about how funding will be changed for schools if Nantucket does not redistrict its students. Chuck explained the Interagency on School Construction determines funding by the number of students in each county. If a school is 100% at capacity or over, it can be resolved through redistricting. If the school does not comply, they lose their state funding to expand school construction and capital improvement in the area.

Pat Huecker commented that the meeting was poorly organized and had to be shut down for an hour because the groups could not get their motions straight. The current plan has 15 students who will be sent to the Arundel cluster. She commented the law does not state that South River High School will not get their funding if 103 students (15 each year) do not go to Arundel middle and high schools, as one instructor suggested. She hopes the Board will support

Nantucket. This is not a good practice. She encouraged folks to follow their redistricting advocacy Facebook page.

Chuck continued that the next meeting is Wednesday, which is the public presentation for the final plan. Thursday is the hearing for the public at the headquarters of the Board of Education.

James asked if the Board could pass a resolution in support Nantucket Elementary School. After discussion, the Board could not agree on a resolution without offering a solution. Pat encouraged Board members to review all the information on the Facebook group page on this matter.

Maintenance and Operations – Kitty Gross

Kitty reported on the rain garden refurbishment project. She found that according to the Forestry Service, the top three inches are what needs to be removed and then replace a number of the plants. New planting will be considered where there are drainage issues.

Kitty reported that some residents in her area are frustrated by the overgrowth of shrubs from the golf course property on to the curb on Swinburne Avenue. The Crofton Country Club has ignored resident requests to clean up the area. Some of the residents will clean up the area themselves. Martin commented he has not yet been able to schedule a meeting with the new manager of the club.

Planning and Zoning – John Sullivan

John said he included in his usual report Pat's guest analysis report on MD Route 3 development and Bill 75-24 zoning districts recently added since October.

He reported the GAN planning meeting is scheduled for November 18th. Traffic analysis and development will be discussed.

Citizen Comments

Pat added information on development modifications. She explained that before Covid you were able to go to the county and get all the information on any property. Post covid there is no allowance to do this. Recently the county developed an area online where this information is available with the Tax ID number. When she went back to the website, the information was removed. She was looking up the modifications issued regarding specimen trees. The county said it is available through their land use system, though it's not complete or interactive. She pointed out she can also request information through the Maryland Public Information Act, though this is time-consuming.

A resident stated that he reported an issue directly to the country club on their Facebook page, and it was resolved right away.

A resident reported a safety concern of trailers blocking sight lines on Crofton Parkway. He suggested building a parking lot on CCA property and charge trailers to park there. He asked if there was any authority to ticket those individuals. James responded that these vehicles are

parked legally under county regulations and cannot be ticketed. He explained further that the CCA has requested the assistance of local legislators to revise parking regulations, but there is no interest in doing this. Martin commented we have been working with DPW to get parking regulations changes for certain areas and are waiting on the signage.

A resident stated he appreciates the efforts of the CCA's staff and Board of Directors. He appreciates the increase in communications, and the recent community survey.

With no additional questions, the meeting was adjourned for an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter.

After the Executive Session, a motion was made by email by James to compensate Martin with an \$8000 bonus effective immediately. The motion was discussed and approved.

Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Administrative Assistant (December 10, 2025)

MS/JH/JJ(tg)