



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
BOARD and GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
First Baptist Church, Crofton  
September 11, 2023 – 7:30 PM**

**Present:**

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

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

President Anna O’Kelly opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in observance of 9/11.

Anna introduced Sgt. Jett who made the following announcements:

Sgt. Jett announced the Crofton Police Department has hired two new police officers, Ofc. Eric Redding, and Ofc. Kyle Gable. Both officers introduced themselves and spoke about their law enforcement experience.

Anna introduced the special guest speaker, James Kitchin, Director of Research and Special Initiatives, Anne Arundel County.

James provided an update on the Village Green infrastructure project. The County provided a grant to update the infrastructure, specifically to add a pathway for water and fire safety to the businesses there. The water piping and a new fire hydrant installation has been completed. There is a final inspection of old Sly Horse Inn property for their grease trap scheduled for next week. After inspection the property will be ready for a restaurant to occupy the space.

James reported on the status of the County’s purchase of the easement at the community’s front entrance. The paperwork for the purchase has been completed, and the community will receive a check for this purchase very soon.

James reported the County Executive signed an executive order for the creation of an advisory committee to oversee the Crownsville hospital property purchase for \$30,000,000 which was acquired from the State. This committee will assist in the creation of the overall vision for the property. Steuart Pittman envisions a green space that is at the heart of the County. A portion of it is an environmental easement. There is interest from some non-profit organizations, and a mental health center has been proposed. Local Senator Dawn Gile is on this committee that is tasked with helping to engage the public to determine the direction.

James reported that all Anne Arundel County Public Libraries now offer free gun locks as part of the County Executive’s Gun Violence Intervention Task Force.

James reported the County has created a nonprofit center in Crownsville, which is running a fundraising sustainability skill building cohort for county nonprofits. The County is accepting applications to participate in the next cohort.

James reported on local suburban transit provided by the County. There are two routes that have been expanded. The route for the Crofton Express runs from the Crofton Country Club to the shopping centers at Waugh Chapel, and to the Annapolis Mall. The Crofton Connector route runs from the MARC Train Station in Odenton to Fort Meade, Waugh Chapel, and Crofton Village. If you are over 65 or have a disability you may arrange for the shuttle to pick you up at your home. Ridership has increased to a few hundred passengers per month.

James reported on the Ride Safe to School Program. The program ensures that children who live within a one-mile radius to school have a safe route to walk there. Most are elementary school children. The County has partnered with the State Highway Administration to conduct traffic studies and has asked them to prioritize the study for the kids who cross Route 424.

James also mentioned an update to the County Master Plan to safely walk and bike in the area. The plan was revised to include a walking and biking path to Bell Branch Park from the intersection of MD Route 450 and 424 to the park. There is an estimated cost of \$5,700,000 for that project alone. James said that there is more in the Plan than Anne Arundel County could possibly budget for and that residents of Crofton will need to contact their representatives and ask them to prioritize the Bell Branch Park mixed use path during the Spring session of the County Council.

A resident asked about the responsibility of tree maintenance on the easement. James explained that the County is responsible for the maintenance of the 1,600 trees. They expect about half of the trees planted will not grow to maturity, which is why the initial planting is so dense. The resident asked if the County does a survey of the curb lawn trees in Crofton on a regular basis. James did not know the survey schedule but offered to follow up with the resident.

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

The Crofton Farmers Market continues on Saturdays in September at the Crofton Library from 8:00 AM to Noon and features local and regional produce, food, drinks, food trucks, and much more.

At the market on October 21st, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, Crofton’s 9th annual Chili Cook-Off will be hosted by Crofton Kiwanis and the CCA. Prizes will be awarded for the Chili Cook-Off Champion, the Chili Cook-Off People’s Choice, and a special prize for the Hottest Chili. The event will benefit the Crofton Christian Caring Council’s Food Pantry. Attendees can make a \$5 donation or donate a package food item, try each chili, and submit their ballot for the People’s Choice Award. Please see the sign-up form on the CCA website for additional details and registration.

Crofton’s 8th Annual Dog Show and Dog Pie Eating Contest sponsored by the CCA and Higgins and Friends Pet Sitting, LLC will be held in conjunction with the Higgins Pet Fair, which will take place at the Village Green in Crofton from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM on Saturday, September 16th. The dog show starts at 1:30 PM. Medals and prizes will be awarded for: Best of Show, Runner Up, Most Tricks, Most Original Trick, Best Costume, and Pet/ Pet Owner Look Alike. There will also be a dog pie-

eating contest. The first to finish their pie will win a prize. Registration for participants can be found on the Higgins and Friends website at [www.higginsandfriends.com](http://www.higginsandfriends.com). This is a free event. The dog show benefits Rude Ranch Animal rescue in Anne Arundel County.

On Saturday, September 16th from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM Historic Linthicum Walks presents a Behind the Book Lecture Series with mystery author Marcia Talley and friends. Talley and fellow writers will form a panel of mystery authors, and each will talk about their books and answer audience questions. Tickets may be purchased on their website at [www.historiclinthicumwalks.org](http://www.historiclinthicumwalks.org).

On September 16th, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at AACC Arundel Mills Campus there is an Emergency Preparedness Expo presented by the AA County Office of Emergency Management.

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee will hold its next meeting at 6:30 PM, at the First Baptist Church Crofton.

The Croton Chamber of Commerce will host its annual Fall Festival on the Green Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Crofton Country Club parking area, 1691 Crofton Parkway. There will be local vendors, food trucks, crafts, and entertainment for the kids. The CCA and Crofton PD will participate in this event. Please stop by our booth and say hello to our Board members, officers, and staff. This event is rain or shine.

The AVFD Station 7 Terror Trail begins on September 30<sup>th</sup> and runs every Friday and Saturday evening from 7:30 PM to 10:00 PM, through October 28th. Tickets may be purchased on their website at [Station7terrortrail.com](http://Station7terrortrail.com).

The St. Paul Quilter's is holding their annual Quilt Sale charity benefit. The sale benefits multiple charities in the area the event will be held from 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Friday, October 6th, 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Saturday, October 7th, and from 8:00 AM to Noon on Sunday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 1370 Defense Highway, Gambrills.

On October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> the FY25 CSCBD and CCA Budget Meetings will be held at 7:00 PM, at the First Baptist Church, Crofton.

October 16<sup>th</sup> is the next CCA Board and Budget meeting at 7:00 PM, at the First Baptist Church. The FY25 CSCBD budget will be finalized, and the CCA FY25 budget will be presented and finalized.

October 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, the Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce will hold a Shred Event at their offices at 2126 Espey Court, Crofton. You may shred up to 4 file boxes.

On October 24<sup>th</sup> the Crofton Chamber of Commerce will host its annual Crofton Community Awards Banquet from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Blue Dolphin Seafood Bar and Grill. The banquet honors individuals who have made a significant contribution to the community. Tickets are \$40 per person and may be purchased through the Crofton Chamber's website at [Croftonchamber.com](http://Croftonchamber.com). The Crofton Civic Association and the Crofton Police Department will be participating in this event.

Information on all events can be found in our CCA E-Advocate. If you wish to sign up for the newsletter, please contact Town Hall at [info@Croftontownhall.org](mailto:info@Croftontownhall.org) and provide you name, address, and email address.

### **Approval of Minutes –**

The minutes from the July 10, 2023, CCA Board meeting 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 new hard copy Advocate is now published in color. Martin reported that the Ice Cream Social at Town Hall yesterday was a success.

Martin recognized Eagle Scout applicant Jacob O'Sullivan, who is volunteering to build park benches for the community. The location of the installed benches will be Hardy Field behind the back stop where there is currently no seating. Jacob has estimated a \$300 cost and will be conducting a fundraising program to build them. Martin offered to promote the program once the information is set.

Martin reported on the improvement plans for Swann and Willows parks. The capitol grants approvals process requires that the Maryland Historical Trust reviews the properties at Swann and Willows parks to certify there is no historical designation. This is a formality given the project consists of rebuilding the park structures. This should be completed by the next regular Board meeting.

Martin reported that the check for the easement of the Forestry Conservation project is imminent. He anticipates it will be received before the next Board meeting in October.

Martin reminded residents about the maintenance of falling leaves. He encouraged everyone to keep curbs and gutters clear to keep streets safe and water flowing.

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

Jim reported that the FY23 budget closed with \$282,382.21 of the planned budget unspent. This balance moved to reserves established before the close of the year, minus the Board approved additions to reserves held for future uses, and \$196,702.21 of that amount was set aside for use in the FY25 budget. In the past it was referred to as our "surplus," but we are required to count that money as income in FY25 to offset the property tax needs/collections. The balance sheet (attached) shows the negative net assets balance against the net income, resulting in \$0 of actual income. This is the accounting practice we will use moving forward. Jim explained that bringing the budget to zero means that the Board needs to formally vote to release money held in the Revolving Account and Money Held for FY24 reserves so that Town Hall can operate from July 1 to December 5, when we receive tax money from the County. Jim sent the Board members this information (attached). Anna asked the Board for a motion to release reserve funds.

Renee motioned to release the funds held in reserve for FY24 and the Revolving Account funds to the operating budget. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Jim reported that the FY23 budget audit was successful.

Jim reported that the current published minimum and maximum wage ranges in the Policies and Procedures Manual for Town Hall staff were not correct for new hires, as they were based on what previous employees made, some of which had significant time-in-grade and has revised them accordingly. Jim asked the Board for a vote to correct the wage table (attachment). Renee motioned to accept the revised wage ranges. Chuck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Jim reported on the website and social media projects. The listserv messaging system has been moved to Constant Contact, and we are dropping our email contract with WIX. The September E-Advocate was published last week and included ads from two new advertisers: Ace Hardware and Crofton Dental Center. Advertising revenue goes to the CCA for program funding. The website has had increased visiting traffic, and several new sign-ups for the listserv to receive the E-Advocate. The CCA website now shows the full calendar of community events, as in the E-Advocate, rather than CCA-only events.

Jim reported on the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary programs. The Student Art Contest is underway and the deadline for submissions is October 6<sup>th</sup>. The Student Art Show at the Crofton Library on January 20<sup>th</sup> will kick off the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events for 2024. The program schedule has been added to the website. There is also a Crofton 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Facebook page. Three hundred holiday ornaments have been ordered and will be for sale at the Fall Festival on the Green on September 30<sup>th</sup> and online at our website. Town Hall staff will be assisting Marsha Perry with collecting input for her book on Crofton history. Volunteers are needed for this project. Please contact Jim if interested. The next 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee meeting is scheduled for September 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 PM at the First Baptist Church.

## **Committee Reports**

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

Marcia Richard, member of the Crofton 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, spoke in Marsha Perry's absence. Marcia explained that Marsha Perry is putting together a publication of stories related to Crofton's history. She is asking for contributions that can be as short as a sentence, a paragraph, or a chapter on anything related to Crofton. Stories may be sent to Jim Harvey at Town Hall.

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

Brian had nothing new to report.

### **Finance Committee** – *Renee Speer*

Renee reported that since the replacement of management at Town Hall, it was determined that the processes, procedures, and technology were not up to date. There have been improvements made in the last year. The Board of Directors will continue to oversee that internal controls specific to fraud protection are implemented. While rules have been revised, the processes of implementing them have not. She handed out an article to Board members on this topic authored by the American Institute of Public Accountants (AICPA). The article supports that the process begins with the self-education of Board members. The purpose is to ensure our tax dollars are protected. Updating the technology is necessary for this.

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

Daria had nothing to report.

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

Chuck reported he will attend the next Greater Crofton Council meeting tomorrow evening at the Village Commons Community Center in Waugh Chapel. The meeting will focus on updates regarding the development on Route 3 North at St. Stephens Church Road. The construction continues with water piping, and the re-configuring of lanes.

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

Stephen had nothing to report.

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

Rob reported that the main project is the replacement of playground equipment at Swann Park and the park at The Willows. Once the funds are received from the State, the process can begin.

**Education Committee** – *Hal Sheldon*

Hal reported on the first Crofton 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Program, which is a Student Art Contest. Elementary school children will creatively portray life in Crofton. The contest is open to grades K through 5, with participation from Crofton Elementary, Crofton Woods Elementary, Crofton Meadows Elementary, Nantucket Elementary, and the School of the Incarnation. The students' art will be submitted to Town Hall. One winner from each school will be announced on October 20<sup>th</sup>. Winners will receive a \$50 gift certificate and a package of greeting cards that feature their artwork. The CCA will produce a greeting card package from the winning art that will be available for sale to fund the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary programs. The winners and prizes will be presented on January 20<sup>th</sup> at the Crofton Library between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM. The winning art will be displayed at the Crofton Library from January 17<sup>th</sup> through February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Hal announced the Crofton High School Coral Connection will perform a live concert on Thursday October 19th at 6:60 PM.

Hal requested volunteers to assist him with school events at area schools.

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

Sgt. Jett reported on the police statistics for August. He has updated the reporting system, which will include additional information on their call responses. This will provide a clearer picture of what is happening in the Community. Sgt. Jett pointed out the increase in response to calls in just the first month due to the additional police personnel. He acknowledged and thanked the community for their support.

Sgt. Jett reported that the National Night Out was success, and their booth had many visitors.

Sgt. Jett and the Crofton Police Department were invited to and participated in the back-to-school celebration held at Crofton Elementary School. He strongly believes that community engagement is important.

Sgt. Jett has received some complaints from residents who live near Town Hall regarding parking. Now that the police staff has increased, parking has become restrictive at Town Hall. Some police personnel

are parking their vehicles at the Village Green, and Ofc. Gable has been bringing his police car to and from his home on Eton Way. He hopes that these actions will help free up parking by Town Hall.

Sgt. Jett reported that theft from auto incidents is still occurring in the community. He urges people to remember to lock their vehicles and remove valuables from their cars.

Sgt. Jett reported that the Crofton Police Department is seeking to hire an additional officer. The applicants must be Certified MPTC individuals.

Sgt. Jett mentioned his first preliminary budget meeting went well.

He reported the department continues to assist in school crossing guard duties during the shortage. These duties include 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon. The County currently has a deficit of 44 crossing guards.

### **Other Business:**

Jim Harvey asked Board members to schedule a time to meet with him regarding their budgets before budget meetings begin in October.

### **Citizen Questions or Comments**

A resident asked about safety concerns of walkers and joggers in the street, especially on Eton Way where the sidewalks are unlevel. Another resident reported observing e-bike riders riding around the community without helmets.

Sgt. Jett responded that he is aware of these concerns in the community and has planned to begin a series of public safety announcements and information that will be included in the E-Advocate each month.

With no other questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned for an Executive Session to discuss the Citizen of the Year nominations, and legal matters.

*Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Administrative Assistant (October 11, 2023)*