



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING
First Baptist Church, Crofton
June 12, 2023 – 7:00 PM**

Present:

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

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

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

Announcements by President Anna O’Kelly:

The Crofton Farmer’s Summer Market continues from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM, at its new location at the Crofton Public Library parking lot on Riedel Road. At the Market on June 24th, the CCA and Crofton Kiwanis will sponsor the 8th annual pie bake off from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Slices will be sold during the Market. Proceeds will go to Crofton Christian Caring Council Food Pantry.

The CCA Summer Concert Series continues Sunday June 18th at the Crofton Country Club from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, featuring jazz music with the Bay Jazz Project:

- June 25th, pop to folk music with Wicked Olde
- July 2nd, classic rock with The Sandra Dean Band
- July 9th, country with a kick featuring Six Pack Rodeo
- July 16th, blues music with Moxie Blues
- July 23rd, rock & soul music with 40 Dollar Fine

Please bring a blanket or chair to sit on as there is no seating provided on the grass.

The 4th annual Crofton Pride Parade and Resource Fair will be held on June 17th along Crofton Parkway. The parade will kick off at 10:00 am and will travel from Crofton Elementary to Prince of Peace Church and return to Crofton Elementary School. This will be followed by a Resource Fair at the parking lot for Crofton Elementary School. Food trucks, music, and vendors will be on site. Parking will be street side. Festive Pride attire is encouraged.

Town Hall is Closed June 19th in observance of Juneteenth.

The next CCA Board meeting is scheduled for July 10th at 7:00 PM, here at the First Baptist Church.

The Anne Arundel County Office of Emergency Management will present an on-line Family and Community Emergency Preparedness Seminar on Monday, June 26, 2023, from 7:00-8:00 PM specifically for the residents of Crofton. (The presentation takes about 45 minutes, but this provides time for discussion.) A link to this Zoom meeting is posted on our website.

enSprout is looking for volunteers to tidy up the native pollinator garden at Swann Park on Sunday, July 9th from 12pm - 2pm. They will be weeding, mulching, and removing invasive plants. This is a family friendly event. A second clean-up day is scheduled for Saturday, August 5th from 10am - 12pm.

The annual National Night Out is scheduled for Tuesday August 1, 2023, at Crofton High School. Our Crofton police officers will be on hand. Details to follow.

The next CCA Board and General Membership meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2023, at 7:30 PM at the First Baptist Church, Crofton.

Typically, the Board takes off either July or August. Anna asked what the Board members prefer. The Board agreed to not holding a meeting for the month of August.

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

Martin reported that on May 18th he addressed the County Council's public hearing on the County Executive's Proposed FY24 Budget on behalf of the Crofton Police Department to seek the Council's cooperation in working with the County Executive to find a long-term solution regarding the shortage of school crossing guards in Crofton and all of Anne Arundel County. The proposed budget calls for an additional \$2 per hour rate increase (\$22 from \$20). He remains skeptical that this nominal increase would significantly help. He impressed the negative impact the shortage has placed on our small police department. He thanked Brian and Cpl. Sims for their assistance in preparing his remarks to the Council.

Martin expressed his regret that the 30th Anniversary of the Armed Forces and First Responders Parade was cancelled due to weather. He reported that the inaugural Crofton High School Parade on June 3rd was a success.

Martin reported there were 312 participants for the Kiwanis/Team Surlis 5/10K race that crossed the finish line last Saturday. Martin thanked the road crew working on the Village Green who removed the steel plates in the road to avoid a tripping hazard for the runners. He also thanked the Crofton PD, and the assistance of Anne Arundel County Police for their support of our events. Next Saturday is the Crofton Pride Parade. Our first two summer concerts were a success weatherwise and were well attended. This Sunday features *The Bay Jazz Project*.

Martin reported that the work on the Village Green waterline project is ongoing, however the road work is completed. The project should be completed soon.

Martin reported that the DPW tree service showed up unannounced last week and removed 14 dead and dying trees from the median on Crawford Boulevard and Crofton Parkway. They will return at a later time for grinding the stumps.

The County Forestry Board visited the front property to weed whack around the trees to provide breathing room from the undergrowth. They can no longer mow the area because of the tree density.

Martin reported on the playground projects since the bond initiative for the park equipment was approved. He is in contact with a state grant project manager who is assisting with the steps for the grant. His priority is finalizing the grading plan at Swann Park. This needs to be done before submitting the final grant application to the Department of General Services, who then reviews and submits it to the Department of Public Works, who requires six to eight weeks to review and approve the plan. During this time, the Maryland Historic Trust will complete an investigation determining that the new plans are not disruptive to any historically significant land. We cannot order any playground equipment until this process is completed.

Comptroller's Report – *James Harvey*

Jim reported the interest rate on the ICS accounts through Shore United Bank has increased from 2.4% to 4.5% APR. Assuming an average monthly balance of about \$650,000 held in the account through 12 months of operation, this would translate to a fiscal year interest income of about \$29,250.

Jim reported the finance committee met on May 17th to discuss a plan for managing the year end surplus and reserves of FY23. Jim referred to the Appendix A handout for the FY23 capital reserve plan for the Board's consideration and approval. The actions contained in the plan must be completed by June 30th or the entire surplus will be lost to the FY25 budget in the form of income/money held over from FY23. Jim is suggesting we draw on this incrementally over time until it is manageable so as not to have a large change in the tax rate. Staff fulfillments as well as other expenses, the Maryland Family Leave Act for example, will cause the balance to decrease significantly. The auditor agrees with this proposal. Jim suggests the Board motion to adopt Appendix A the Capital Reserve Plan for FY2023.

Stephen motioned that the Board adopt Appendix A the Capital Reserve Plan for the close of FY2023. Hal seconded. Martin noted that Treasurer Renee Speer who is absent for this meeting supports this motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Jim reported that he changed the Registered Agent file with the State of Maryland from Barbara Swann to Martin H. Simon. He also completed the 2023 Maryland Property Tax filing, parroting previous filings, and has filed for a new Maryland Use and Sales Tax License. The sales tax license will be needed as the CCA begins to sell t-shirts, ornaments, greeting cards, and books online and at events in October and November of this year. We have obtained two Square[®] card readers as discussed last month but did not purchase the Square[®] terminal since it must work with WIFI and cannot be used readily at events. Martin and Jim will have the apps on their phones for use in sales at events such as the Farmers Market or the Festival on the Green. We now also have an annual license for music performances from the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP.) The \$420 per year license is required for public performances of music, such as the summer concert series or Summer Fest and is something we should have had in the past.

Jim reported the June edition of the E-Advocate was released last week. This edition introduced advertising, which contributes to the CCA account. Jim will be visiting local vendors to increase advertising opportunities. Tara reviewed and corrected errors in our email lists, which revised total distribution from around 1,200 to around 2,000 list entries. The issue was a WIX issue. If the effective list numbers recede again because of issues with WIX's policies, we will seek to move our email messaging to Constant Contact. We are also opening the Crofton Social Media Network to private neighborhood Facebook pages outside of the district.

The 60th Anniversary Committee met again in May and the focus was “Allied” programs put on by other Crofton organizations to celebrate the 60th. Program outlines have been prepared for each event that the CCA will organize, and the program is starting to take shape. The next meeting is scheduled for June 22nd at 6:30 PM at the First Baptist Church and will be dedicated to the Crofton History Project.

The Summer Concerts have scheduled regular Facebook and Instagram promotions through the end of July. The Crofton Pie Bake-off is scheduled for June 24th from 10:00 AM to Noon at the Crofton Farmers Market, which is held at the Crofton Library.

Committee Reports

Recreation Committee – *Daria DeLizio*

Daria had nothing new to report. She did attend the concert last night and remarked that it was very well attended.

Greater Crofton Council Liaison – *Chuck See*

Chuck reported he attended the last meeting of the GCC on May 9th at the Village Commons Community Center. It was their open meeting, with four people in attendance. They apologized that the last meeting was cancelled without notification to anyone. Tomorrow, June 13th from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM, they will host Senator Dawn Gile and Delegate Stuart Schmidt. On July 11th at 7:00 PM they will host a meeting with the State Highway Administration regarding the future of Route 3. Chuck will attend this meeting. Anna asked if they advertise their meetings. Chuck said they only post on their own website. Anna suggested that we advertise this meeting.

Covenant Review Committee – *Stephen Tull*

Stephen reported there were no requests this month.

Maintenance and Operations – *Rob Kendall*

Rob reported that the park clean-up day was successful. He thanked Spencer of Senator Gile’s office who assisted in spreading mulch.

Rob attended the County meeting of the Golf Stream Restoration Project. The stream runs from Davidsonville Road to Crofton Parkway. The County will begin channeling the area. The presentation showed photos of other similar area projects that looked good. They will have to remove some trees in order to accomplish the regrading. They will replant 500 native trees and plants. This will assist with the channeling of the water as it rises from storms.

Phase 2 of this project is scheduled for 2025. It includes the area from Crofton Parkway to Route 3. This portion has similar issues that need to be addressed. The County representatives did not mention that this is CCA property. Rob is unsure if they are aware of this. He asked about the portion of the stream on the golf course. The County has made plans for this section; however, they are at a standstill with the property owner. Martin asked about step down pools. Rob said they are included in the plan in order to slow down the water. Martin commented that the step-down pools that were

constructed years ago underneath the Parkway had the opposite effect causing more erosion in areas that there wasn't before. Rob gave the permit number so that everyone can look up the plans on the County website; #G02019569 Crofton Golf Course Stream Restoration.

Education Committee – *Hal Sheldon*

Hal reported that Anne Arundel County Schools are closed this week for the summer. He mentioned that new crossing guards will be training from June 15th through August 15th.

Public Safety Committee – *Brian Riley*

Brian reported on the Neighborhood Watch project. People do not seem to be interested in the program. After consulting with Cpl. Sims, it was decided that a monthly posting of safety articles in the E-Advocate would be an appropriate alternative. Brian suggested to Jim that we also make social media posts and share them with outside private groups.

Planning & Zoning – *Marsha Perry*

Marsha reported on the County Council meeting she attended last Monday with Pat Heucker. The highlighted issue was the plastic bag ban bill. The bill passed. There was one no vote by local representative Leadbetter.

Pat Huecker reported the school adequate facilities bill was finally introduced. It makes 3 changes that determine when schools are open or closed; the date presented, the method used for the determination, and the inclusion of actual numbers rather than a range, included with the projections. The bill also includes two provisions. Development is considered "open" in adjacent schools even if one may be at capacity while the other is not. The other provision exempts all school districts from Adequate Public Facilities (APF) compliance if they are building workforce housing. The Federal government Fair Housing Act does not allow this. GAN (Growth Action Network) supports this bill. This is up for a vote on July 3rd. It may be amended.

Pat reported that the office of Planning and Zoning is now open since it's closing in 2020.

Pat also spoke about the warehouse property on Route 3 North. This project requires state permits. She will review the project file now that Planning and Zoning is open to the public.

Marsha reported the next GAN meeting is June 28th. She encouraged Board members to attend. The CCA is a member of GAN. GAN supports environmentally sustainable land use and quality of life.

Marsha reported she will attend the Crofton Kiwanis meeting Wednesday at 7:00 PM at the Crofton Library, with special guest speaker Sheriff Sesker. She encouraged Board members to attend to meet the new Sheriff.

Marsha reported that GAN has submitted questions for the County Council. She suggests that we should ask similar questions regarding the development of workforce housing.

Marsha reported the Chesapeake Bay foundation has a new Executive Director; her focus is sustainable fishing.

Marsha reported that she continues to assist Crofton Colony with their flooding situation.

Marsha attended the South County Democratic Club meeting; County Executive Steuart Pittman was guest speaker. The recent Scotus decision that no longer allows the EPA to protect small area wetlands has prompted her to apply for a seat on the region 9 area planning board. She continued that at this meeting, the County Executive reported that Governor Wes Moore has appointed someone from the County to work at DNR to deal with specifically wetlands issues.

Marsha thanked Pat Huecker for her assistance on all these issues.

Finance Committee – *Renee Speer*

No report.

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

Sgt. Jett reported department statistics for May. There were 446 calls for service, 246 patrol checks, 26 traffic enforcement, 30 school crossings, and 128 administrative duties. Statistics are slightly lower this month due to vacation time of both officers.

Sgt. Jett reported on crime in the community. On May 15th, 2023, there were two fentanyl overdoses reported. One resulted in a fatality which is under investigation by the State Medical Examiner's Office. The suspected fentanyl was recovered by Crofton Police and placed into evidence. While uncommon in this community, officers do carry Narcan in patrol vehicles in case someone is in need due to fentanyl exposure, which can be deadly.

Sgt. Jett reported on May 21st at approximately 9:00 PM, a resident jogging on Crofton Parkway in the area of Village Green was followed by a gray Toyota Highlander. Two male subjects in the vehicle slowed down taking photos of the jogger. As they began to exit their vehicle, he became alarmed and ran to a neighbor's home to call for assistance. A search of the area was completed with negative results. Sgt. Jett followed up with the individual the next day to gather any additional information. No further pertinent information of this incident was discovered.

Sgt. Jett reported on May 24th, 2023, at approximately 12:00 PM, various personal belongings including credit cards were stolen from three unlocked vehicles parked at the Crofton Country Club. Two male suspects can be seen on surveillance video driving a suspected white Ford Edge. Upon entering the lot, the driver can be seen exiting the vehicle and pulling on various car door handles. Sgt. Jett reminds residents to please lock their vehicles and remove any valuables.

Sgt. Jett reported an incident at the Crofton Country Club on June 5th, 2023, at approximately 11:00 AM, a vehicle collided with the front doors of the club. The female driver attempted to flee from the scene but was stopped by employees on Crofton Parkway by the Village Green. Upon investigation, Crofton Police determined the subject was having a mental health crisis. The subject was transported by paramedics to Anne Arundel County Medical Center. Training in mental health incidents allowed police to perform their duties resulting in a safe outcome for all involved.

Sgt. Jett referred to his report in the recent edition of the E-Advocate. While there are some who believe that crime has increased in the triangle, this is not the case. It is the reporting of crimes by the police department that is made available to the community that is giving this impression. Sgt. Jett commented that previous practices of the department were to provide little to no information to the community. Sgt. Jett pledged upon taking the position as Acting Chief, that he would provide transparency and accountability. He believes that a better-informed community can prevent future crime and build trust and communication with the police department which serves them.

Sgt. Jett reported that police school crossing will end tomorrow with the closing of schools for the year. There is no information about the hiring of enough personnel to cover school crossing for the next school year. The County is offering an additional two dollar per hour raise for crossing guards. He remains hopeful that this will encourage new applicants but understands that it may become the responsibility of the Crofton Police Department again this fall.

Sgt. Jett reported that the end of school crossing duties can allow for evening shift coverage in the department. He will discuss his suggestions with the Town Manager. The schedule will change as the department continues its search for qualified personnel. Sgt. Jett will continue his active role in the department regardless of his additional administrative duties as Acting Chief. He believes the Chief role should be an active one and will lead by example.

Sgt. Jett reported on the status of department weapons that in the safe that were not in use for many years. With the assistance of the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Office, he and Cpl. Sims are now up to date in annual firearms qualifications, and in addition, are now MPTC qualified for shotguns, patrol rifles, and less than lethal bean bags. It is his goal that all Crofton Police Department officers' have full access to all tools available to perform their duties. Sgt. Jett is very grateful for his successful working relationship with the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Department.

Sgt. Jett reported on the success of the police assistance of the Crofton High School Seniors Parade, and the Kiwanis/Team Surlis 5/10 K during this busy month of June. They are looking forward to the Pride Parade scheduled for this Saturday at 10:00 AM. He thanked Anne Arundel County police for their assistance with traffic enforcement.

Sgt. Jett provided an update on police department recruitment. One candidate is due for his medical evaluation. Once complete, he can move on with the psychological and polygraph exams. This could mean that a new officer could fill one vacancy by early July. He commented on a second applicant who currently resides in Hawaii. This candidate will be moving to the community on July 18th. Sgt. Jett will be meeting with him on July 21st and is anticipating that he could fill this additional vacancy by early August.

Other Business

No additional business was presented for discussion.

Citizen Questions or Comments

There were no citizen questions or comments.

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

Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Administrative Assistant (July 5, 2023)

MS/JH/JJ(tg)