

**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING (Via ZOOM)
March 14, 2022 – 7:00 PM**

Present:

Board Members: Martin Simon, Anna O’Kelly, Brian Riley, Renee Speer, Daria DeLizio, Charles See, James Harvey, Robert Kendall, Hal Sheldon.

Staff: Larry Schweinsburg, Chief Earl Fox, Corporal Jason Jett, Officer John Sims, Tara Gottschalck.

Martin announced that this meeting is being recorded for the purpose of assisting the Secretary with the recording of the meeting minutes.

Larry Schweinsburg opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements by the President:

On March 23 from 7 PM to 9 PM, Anne Arundel County DPW will host a virtual meeting on the Conway Road Project. Participants may sign up on the County website.

On March 26, 11 AM to 2 PM, the CCA will host its Cherry Blossom Festival around Crofton Parkway. There will be live music, a face painter, food trucks and educational exhibits.

On April 9 at 12 PM, the CCA will host its annual Easter Egg Hunt at Crofton Elementary School. The rain date is scheduled for 4/16/22.

On April 30, at 10 AM to 4:00 PM, the Crofton Chamber of Commerce will host the Spring Festival on the Green at the Crofton Country Club.

On May 14 at 10 AM, the CCA will host its Armed Forces/First Responders Parade. The Parade begins at Crofton Woods Elementary School and ends at Crofton Elementary School.

On May 16 the CCA will have its General Membership Meeting and Board of Directors Elections from 5 PM to 9 PM at the First Baptist Church. Polling begins at 5 PM. The General Membership Meeting begins at 7:30 PM. This meeting will be held in person. Absentee balloting is available at Town Hall May 9 through 11.

Martin announced that a decision has not yet been made whether the next (April) Board meeting will be in person or by ZOOM.

On June 5 at 6:00 PM, the CCA Summer Concert Series will begin at the Crofton Country Club.

On June 11 at 8 AM, Crofton Kiwanis will host its 5/10 K Challenge around Crofton Parkway. Registration will begin at 6:30 AM at the Crofton Country Club.

Martin introduced Officer John Sims, the new officer hired by the Crofton Police Department. Officer Sims introduced himself as a two-tour military veteran, who went on to serve 30 years as a police officer. In his long career he has been trained in many aspects of law enforcement. Officer Sims stated that he is very happy to join the Crofton Police Department.

Approval of Minutes:

Martin announced that the Board meeting minutes of the January 18 CCA Board and General Membership Meeting need to be approved. A motion was made by Anna to approve the minutes. Daria seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Martin announced that the Board meeting minutes of February 14 need to be approved. A motion was made by Renee. Hal seconded the motion. The minutes were passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Covenant Review Committee - Anna-

Anna had nothing to report.

Planning & Zoning – Chuck –

Chuck reported that the Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals held hearings on March 1, 2, and 3 regarding the time extension requests on the Halle Landfill. The Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning recommended the two-year extension should be denied for the rubble landfill and sand & gravel operations. He reported that per Pat Huecker, they believed the testimony of the residents of Two Rivers had the most impact.

Chuck reported that there was a meeting held on March 8 by the GCC with the State Highway Administration and County representatives Steuart Pittman, Andrew Pruski, and Heather Bagnall, regarding changes to Route 3. Martin commented that he was in attendance. He reported that there was no new information regarding the planned projects, but it was good to see that level of attention in the community.

Jim Harvey reported further on this in his GCC report.

Greater Crofton Council - Jim-

Jim Harvey reported further on the SHA and Anne Arundel County meeting regarding the planned changes for Route 3. There were two main issues discussed. The first was the addition of a lane at St. Stephens Church Road and Route 175. This project was approved for a 30% plan, to be completed by next spring. In spring of next year the project will be open for public comment before moving forward with the rest of the plan. There is a State and County agreement to work together on this.

The second item is running a study to widen the road or add an additional lane on Conway Road and Route 3 to Two Rivers, and to Piney Orchard Parkway. Access to the Two Rivers community and the rubble landfill will be impacted.

Melanie Smith commented further that it was great to see SHA participation and the new County highway person in charge who is getting up to speed on these issues. There is frustration because of the focus on getting traffic through, rather than the need for pedestrian and bike access across Route 3. There is no way to cross Route 3 safely. Martin stated that there was nothing in the current plan to address pedestrian and biking access concerns. The proposal of a pedestrian bridge over Route 3 was once again denied. The developers of those shopping centers had promised shuttle service and pedestrian access. These actions never materialized and they were never held accountable.

Recreation Committee – Daria-

Daria reported that the Easter Egg Hunt will be held on April 9 at the Crofton Elementary School grounds. The rain date is for April 16. The Girl Scouts are assisting with the egg stuffing. The Committee is looking for volunteers to assist the day of the event for hiding eggs, and helping out at the prize and contest tables.

The Armed Forces/First Responders Parade is scheduled for May 14. The Committee is looking for volunteers at this event. Daria urges anyone interested to contact Town Hall. Anna suggested including a Sign-Up Genius with the Listserv announcement. Tara can help with this.

Maintenance and Operations – Rob -

Rob reported that the Front Entrance Plan is underway. The Landscape Company has begun clearing the area for the new plantings. Installations will begin as weather allows. Rob thanked everyone who participated and supported this project.

Rob is hoping to hear back on the State bond initiative request by next week. If approved, the Committee can then move forward with plans to upgrade our park equipment.

Jim Harvey asked about the proposal to turn the front property into a park, and did the CCA get permission for access from the Village Green. Martin responded that we have not moved forward with this yet, since we are waiting to hear back from the County regarding the tax exemption first. He expects to have a draft of the agreement of the tax situation shortly.

Melanie Smith asked if the landscape plan is posted to the website. Rob said it is not. Martin asked if Rob had any objection to posting the plan to the website. Rob said no. Tara will take care of this.

Anna asked if we are power washing the walls before the plantings go in. Rob said it had not yet been decided, but he feels it is a good idea. He asked if Larry could look into this. Martin agreed that the letters need to be washed. Rob mentioned that may require re-painting, which would incur additional costs. Larry commented that he had already looked into ways to finance the additional costs related to the main contract. He suggested that power washing and painting may need to be done in the next fiscal year. Martin asked Larry to obtain estimates.

Finance Committee - Renee-

Renee reported that she is still assisting Town Hall with accounting duties while the search for a replacement Comptroller continues. She is also assisting with the interviewing process.

Martin thanked Renee for all her efforts assisting Town Hall operations. Martin asked if anyone knows of someone who may be interested in the community to contact Town Hall.

Public Safety Committee - Brian-

Brian reported that the Committee is watching the implementation of Bill 16-22, the establishment of the Police Accountability Board. There was a public hearing on March 7 where an additional 40 amendments were filed. The next meeting is scheduled for March 21. He added that a Listserv announcement was sent out to the community for interested residents on how to apply to participate on this Board.

Education Committee – Hal-

Hal had nothing new to report.

Police Chief Report - Chief Fox –

Earl reported that he has been working with Axon on equipment orders for the body cameras. They are currently on backorder. Earl spoke with the States Attorney's Office regarding the training. The Department will have training with them first, before they begin training with Axon.

Earl reported that he has been assisting the new officer, John Sims, who was sworn in today. Earl stated that Officer Sims is a great addition to the Department.

Daria commented about the traffic concerns with Dana Court and the Crofton Elementary School. The traffic in the afternoon does not allow access between Dana Court and Duke of Kent Drive. She asked if it is possible if to have an officer direct traffic there. The Chief responded that he agrees there is a problem at that location; however, there is no way to direct the traffic to clear that portion of the road. When the school was built developers could not foresee the volume of students and the amount of vehicle traffic there now. He understands that the residents on Dana do not have access to Duke of Kent during that time of day. It is usually for about 15 minutes. They have tried additional manual traffic control there but it causes more confusion and does not solve the problem. The Chief talked about the same concerns at Crofton Woods Elementary. There are similar complaints at that location. He and Senator Reilly are working with Traffic Engineering to have plastic cones put up so that people could not go left in one specific area. This is not a permanent solution. Martin asked if police presence was beneficial. The Chief said yes, for safety, it reduces people cutting through and it reminds vehicles to slow down.

Daria asked about the new garden at the Front Entrance, and referred to her previous suggestion to having better lighting at the site. She noticed that the section of the curb was once painted yellow, and would like it to be repainted. Larry commented further in his Town Manager's Report.

Town Manager's Report - Larry-

Larry responded that he will talk with Traffic Engineering about putting reflectors on the curb too. The lighting is currently being worked on. Larry also mentioned that he was at the site with the electrician to install a 120V outlet to operate the transformers for the low-voltage lighting. The power switch at the top of the hill was not operational. According to the

electrician, BGE has turned off the power and the meter to that area. Larry will contact BGE to resolve this issue. Then a lighting plan can move forward.

Larry reported that the tree debris clean-up by the County is moving forward. The fallen trees and debris from the last few storms are being taken care of by a County contractor. He is unsure why there is still a pile remaining at the top of Crawford Boulevard and Crofton Parkway. He will look into this.

Larry sent a report to the County regarding the potholes in the community. The County has already begun filling these with the temporary cold patch, but they will need to be re-done later in the spring with the hot patch.

Larry reported that we are preparing for the May Advocate, which will contain the Board of Directors Election information. The election information has been posted to the website.

Charlie Robinson our part time Maintenance Foreman has resigned. Town Hall is searching for a replacement. He encouraged anyone interested to please contact Town Hall.

Martin introduced Dawn Gile, a candidate for State Senate in District 33. Martin noted that the Board of Directors is non-partisan, but does provide opportunities to introduce interested candidates to the Board and the residents.

Ms. Gile is an attorney and has spent the last 15 years representing businesses in litigation. She is an Army spouse, and her husband is on active duty and has been serving for 24 years. They have three children and reside in Severna Park. She has led organizations for military families, and offers pro bono services for Gold Star families. Given the events of the last few years she sees a need for good people in office who care. There is great concern over the heavy burdens on our teachers, health care workers, and first responders. There are additional concerns such as traffic, over-development, and economic inequalities. She supports open space and limited development. She is for actions that bring people together rather than dividing us. She feels it is critical to pay attention this year. She would be grateful and honored for any support. Her website is Dawngile.com. She is having a meet and greet next week with Andrew Pruski at the Crooked Crab in Odenton.

Martin thanked Dawn for her participation in the meeting. He also acknowledged the participation in tonight's meeting by additional candidates Cailey Locklair and Shawn Livingston (County Council) and thanked them for their attention to our community.

Jim Harvey spoke about the Cherry Blossom Festival scheduled for March 26 at 11 AM. There are 15 stations around the Parkway. The signs have been delivered to be put up on Monday. The port-a-potties are on order. The School of Rock may not participate. The CCA will have a tent and he asked if anyone could staff it. Rob mentioned that he could do it part of the time. He will talk to people about volunteering for park clean-ups. Hal will also help out. Jim would like a flyer made up that explains what the CCA is and what the Committees do. He also would like information included about how to volunteer and how to sign up for the Listserv.

Melanie asked if the Kiwanis Club is participating. Jim said yes, they have a booth by the Country Club, and are hosting the community yard sale. Tara will put out an announcement on Monday about the Festival.

Jim met Joanne Cook, the North Dakota Cherry Blossom Queen of 1976. She has agreed to hang around the CCA booth dressed in red with a crown. He asked if anyone had objection to this. No one did.

Citizen Questions or Comments:

Fran Harwood asked if the landscape map for the Front Entrance will be posted to the website soon. Tara responded that she will take care of it tomorrow.

Melanie Smith asked about the new police hire, Officer Sims. The Chief responded that he was a Sergeant with the Laurel City Police Department before working with the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Department.

Melanie asked about the status of an on-going issue with the trespasser living in a tent behind Patrice Circle. She commented that both she and Senator Reilly have confirmed that he is on CCA property. She has contacted both the Crofton Police and the Anne Arundel County Police, and nothing has been done. The individual is believed to be a former convict. The Chief responded he is waiting on correspondence from CCA legal counsel, and has no further comment at this time. Larry stated that he will get back in touch with Mr. Sussman regarding this issue. He does not believe that this property belongs to the CCA.

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

Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Receptionist (March 28, 2022)

LS/EF(tg)