



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION  
BOARD MEETING  
First Baptist Church, Crofton  
December 11, 2023 – 7:00 PM**

**Present:**

**Board Members:** Anna O’Kelly, Marsha Perry, Renee Speer, 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 December 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> and January 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<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 Let’s Move/Crofton Fitness Week is scheduled for January 14<sup>th</sup> through January 21<sup>st</sup>. This is a free Crofton 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event open to 500 participants. Fitness Week provides opportunities to try out 15 different fitness companies during the week. The first 100 participants to sign up at Town Hall receive a swag bag. Individuals may also sign up online from the CCA website at [Croftoncommunity.org/let-s-move](http://Croftoncommunity.org/let-s-move) and receive fitness passports my mail. No swag bags will be mailed

On December 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the Anne Arundel Volunteer Fire Department Station 7 will host Donuts with Santa. They are located at 2380 Davidsonville Road, Gambrills. This is a free event.

On December 17, 2023, 4:30 PM to 8:30 PM, Historic Linthicum Walks hosts a Candlelight Walk. They are located at 2295 Davidsonville Road, Gambrills. Tickets are \$25.

On December 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM, the Crofton High School Orchestra performs at the school auditorium.

On December 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM, the Crofton High School Band performs at the school auditorium.

On December 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM, the Crofton Woods Elementary Chorus will perform at the school auditorium.

On December 21<sup>st</sup> the Crofton Woods Elementary School Strings and Band will perform. The Strings concert begins at 6:00 PM and the Band concert begins at 7:15 PM.

Anna announced the following free events at the Crofton Library, 1681 Riedel Road, Crofton:

- Saturday, December 16th at 10:30 AM, Cookies and Cocoa STEM Storytime – Families with young children enjoy stories, songs, and simple science activities all about cookies and cocoa.
- Saturday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 10:30 AM, Bilingual Storytime -Young children will enjoy stories, songs, rhymes, and activities while building ready to read skills in English and in Spanish.
- Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 10:30 AM , Chair Yoga for Adults - A modified Hatha yoga class which takes place either seated in a chair or standing while using a chair as support for balance.
- Tuesday, January 9th at 2:00 PM, One is the Loneliest Number - The Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities will discuss the importance of maintaining an active social life and how to utilize interventions when obstacles arise.
- Thursday, January 11th at 7:00 PM, Library Concert Series - Davonne D'Neil will be singing original songs, industry covers and mashups.

On December 25, 2023, Town Hall is closed for Christmas Day.

On January 6, 2024, from 10:00 AM until Noon at the Village Green parking lot, is the official launch of the 2024 Relay For Life season. The first lap of the year will be around the Crofton Parkway.

The Crofton Student Art Show is scheduled for January 17, 2024, through February 14, 2024, and will display all 101 entries from the Crofton 60th Anniversary Student Art Contest. The display will be open to the public in the lobby of the Crofton Library during regular library hours. The Show Opening is scheduled for Saturday, January 20th, between 2:00 and 4:00 PM to meet the artists. There is one winner from Crofton Elementary, Crofton Woods Elementary, Crofton Meadows Elementary, Nantucket Elementary, and the School of the Incarnation, as well as “Best of” art submissions for grades K-2 and 3-5 from each school. In addition, the 60th Anniversary will identify 15 honorary mentions at the opening. Come by to cheer the presentation of awards, certificates and ribbons and congratulate our local creative talent!

The next CCA General Membership and Board meeting is scheduled for Monday January 22<sup>nd</sup> , at 7:30 PM at the First Baptist Church, Crofton in the large room. The FY25 Budget will be presented.

## **Approval of Minutes –**

The minutes from the CCA Board meeting held on November 11, 2023, require approval. There were no additional comments or revisions needed for these previously distributed minutes. The minutes were filed.

## **Guest Speaker – Bernard Nolan**

Anna introduced Bernie Nolan, a member of the Crofton Colony Homeowners Association, Inc., and the CCHOA Board of Directors. He is also a civil engineer.

Mr. Nolan spoke about the ongoing issue his community has faced the last five years fighting failed stormwater management from the neighboring community The Ridings at North Branch on Underwood Road in Crofton, developed by Toll Brothers. The excessive storm water has devastated the Crofton Golf stream bed and banks, destroyed trees, deposited sediment downstream, clogged flow channels, and flooded properties in the community and the basements of the neighboring community Crofton Crest.

Toll's stormwater management plan for The Ridings increased the original drainage area to Crofton Colony more more than doubled the pre-development flow at the Fallbrook Lane outfall. This outfall is located on the west side of Underwood Road, just south of Fallbrook Lane and receives the stormwater primarily from a pipe under the road that is connected to the Ridings stormwater overflow structure on the east side of Underwood Road.

Toll's engineering contractor, DFI, Inc. submitted their Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) to the County in June 2017, and the plan was approved by the County in May 2018. The plan included bioswales and drainage ditches over undrainable soils providing inadequate stormwater management. The plan was approved even though it did not follow state and county stormwater regulations, and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Best Management Practices (BMP). The overflow contributes to the Crofton Golf Stream.

In February of 2023, Toll agreed that the Ridings SWMP had failed, and proposed a stormwater retrofit design in July 2023. This plan was reviewed by an outside stormwater engineering consultant and was deemed inadequate. It did not follow the MDE BMPs which would have resulted in much more stormwater storage volume.

Their Erosion Task Force repeatedly advised the County that the retrofit was in adequate. They repeatedly asked County Executive Steuart Pittman for a meeting prior to the approval of the retrofit. He refused to meet with them.

The County approved Toll's retrofit design on September 27, 2023. The County agreed to ask Toll to hold off construction of the retrofit if they received a joint letter from The Ridings and Crofton Colony, however, The Ridings voted to accept the retrofit. Crofton Colony filed an appeal of the Stormwater retrofit to the County Board of Appeals, and a hearing is scheduled for January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, 5:00 to 8:00 PM, at Arundel Center. Crofton Colony hopes that this will convince the County that the current design is not adequate. They are also considering filing a complaint with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Crofton Colony asked the CCA for their support in fighting poor stormwater management practices. While regulations and BMPs are in place, County authorities are not requiring developers to follow them.

Jim asked if they have spoken to representatives of the County Bureau of Watershed Protection and Restoration Program. They are redoing the creek between Crofton Parkway and 424 as part of the Crofton Golf Stream Restoration project. It is a multimillion dollar approved project that may be in jeopardy due to the additional stormwater runoff from the Ridings community. Martin mentioned that while the stream does connect to the Crofton golf course, the Crofton Country Club is not part of the restoration because the County could not come to an agreement with the Country Club owner. Bernie will contact them. Chuck suggested publicity through news. Bernie mentioned that he has been in contact with the Capital who ran an article about it in 2020, however there is no current interest.

Bernie mentioned that they have been in contact with Shannon Ledbetter, who toured the area and has been supportive. They have also contacted MDE.

Marsha added that this is a problem in many other communities in our County and even throughout the state. Watershed concerns increase as local officials allow developers to not adhere to the code. We must hold the County Executive accountable, specifically the department of Planning and Zoning. She added that Stuart Pittman, James Kitchin, and Courtney Buiniskis have all toured the area, and are familiar with the concerns of the Crofton Colony.

Pat Huecker commented she strongly suggests that Crofton Colony have legal representation, and to make certain they know what is appealable versus what is not. Marsha will recommend that.

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

Martin updated the calendar adding that Light Up Crofton has been rescheduled to this Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup> due to weather. A Listserv announcement was sent out today.

He reported the CCA will have a tent at the Crofton Farmers Winter Market this Saturday at 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, as a final push of the front-end fundraising for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events. There will be books, ornaments, tote bags, and greeting cards for sale.

Martin reported the color print edition of the December Advocate newsletter is at the printer and is scheduled for delivery by Christmas. This edition contains a copy of the tax district and the CCA FY25 budgets.

Martin referred to the response from the County we received as a response to Anna's letter expressing support for the extension of the sidewalk from Staples Corner to Bell Branch Park. It is an encouraging response that urges the CCA "to engage in the budget process and public comment opportunities to elevate the project." Town Hall will keep tabs on this.

Eagle Scout Jacob O'Sullivan's fundraiser for the benches at Hardy Field yielded an additional \$143.66. Martin suggests that it be returned to the Troop 115. The Board members agreed it will be donated back to the Scout Troop.

Martin presented the police overtime report for the month. There was no regular overtime this month. 1.5 hours of special overtime was used by Sgt. Jett during the CCA Tree Lighting Event.

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

Jim reported we have received our first property tax installment payment from the County on December 8<sup>th</sup> for \$800,108.90.

Jim reported that \$10,755.00 has been earned in interest on accounts so far, this fiscal year.

The CCA account has been very active due to the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary fundraising, and the Let's Move participation fees. There is \$1,523.61, and \$171.00 undeposited cash, will be used as the kitty at farmers market this weekend, and deposited thereafter.

Jim reported the annual audit of the workman's compensation insurance has been completed. We will not know the results for a few months. Last year we received a refund.

Jim reported the Town Manager has approved the plan submitted by Sgt. Jett for the dispensation of bonuses for the officers, which will be added to the next payroll.

Jim reported that Officers Redding and Gable have completed their ninety days probationary period and are now receiving their SEP IRA contributions.

Jim reported there is potential financial support for the police department from the state in the form of a State Aid for Police Protection Fund (SAPP) grant. Officer Gable oversees this. If the department qualifies, it will secure funding for radar and lidar. This may require a matching component. The donation of \$5,000 from Melanie Smith was earmarked for Bodycams. She has submitted a letter stating that these funds may be used for uniforms or other police equipment, allowing her donation to be used as an additional component if needed.

Jim reported the December E-Advocate went out on Friday.

Jim reported that this Thursday at 6:30 PM is the final regular meeting of the Crofton 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. After that there may be other meetings specific to an event. There are currently 25 people signed up for Let's Move! Crofton Fitness Week. Jim passed around the swag bag examples which will be given to the first 100 people who sign up for Crofton Fitness Week passports.

Jim reported that on January 3, 2024, the Crofton 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee will meet with the Crofton Country Club regarding the golf outing scheduled for May. This will be the largest fundraiser for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary program. The 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events for January include the Student Art Show on January 20<sup>th</sup> at the Crofton Library. Awards and certificates will be presented to the winners. Jim encourages Board members to attend. A Taste of Crofton, organized by the Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce, is scheduled for February 22<sup>nd</sup> and is slated as a 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event.

The Crofton History project is also underway. There was a filming of interviews completed on November 13<sup>th</sup> for the documentary. We've compiled 85 Living in the Triangle articles that Marsha

Perry is reviewing for potential incorporation into the program and volunteer interviewers are engaged with interviewees.

Jim reported that the Crofton Holiday Tree Lighting Event was well attended. The Easter Egg Hunt has been scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup> with a rain date of March 30<sup>th</sup>. The Cherry Blossom Festival is scheduled for March 30<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of April 6<sup>th</sup>.

Renee asked about the CCA filing a 990 Form for tax payment on the advertising income since it is considered unrelated business income. Jim did not believe this was applicable because the amount is under \$50,000. Renee does not believe that is the case. Jim will investigate this and follow up. Renee also mentioned that advertising for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary would not be related since it is a once in every ten-year event. She suggested that we seek a CPA who specializes in N990 preparation and filing for advice and potentially to prepare and file an N990 for the CCA.

Renee asked for the timeline for publishing the policy and procedures manual to the website. Jim responded that he plans to have a document repository area for all documents, including the manual. Renee would like it done immediately, and that it should be added as edits are being made. She explained that she requires a printed copy, and that it is necessary for the community to have access to it for use in Board accountability.

Jim added that he has scheduled staff training in ADA Compliance, Diversity, and Harassment by EZ Llama. Staff training is scheduled to be completed by the end of January. The police department said that they have equivalent training and will provide Jim with documentation. There are ethics and other training programs that the company, Easy Llama, offers that may be useful for staff. Renee pointed out that ethics training should be specific to the needs of nonprofit organizations.

Renee provided an example of her discomfort in using CCA or CSCBD funds for donations made to a charity or the purchase of flowers when a resident dies. Marsha disagreed. Stephen stated that this should be part of the ethics code of conduct.

Renee brought the Board's attention to the documented Budget Procedures as outlined from May 17, 1996, which mentions the pre-budget meeting in August during which BOD members and committees would present their budget requests to the BOD and Town Manager. This procedure was not followed last year, since there was no Board meeting held in August. No one else recalls seeing this document. Renee suggested that this document be updated accordingly. Martin commented that in the past, Larry would hold individual meetings with Board committee chairs for each budget input. Susan would then enter it into the draft budget for review by the Board.

Jim commented that while there was no Board meeting in August, he met with individual committee chairs and presented their requests as a draft budget with comprehensive notes to all Board members. He will review the old procedures and prepare a draft revision accordingly with Board member approval before making them official.

Anna commented further that there was a Finance Committee meeting held in June before the budget presentation.

Renee suggested inserting into the process the committee discussions at a Board meeting before the budget is drafted so that everyone can have input regarding additions and modification requests. This process should be documented, then followed.

Daria suggested sending out meeting notes to the Board summarizing each committee meeting, then going through the suggestions at the next meeting, rather than collecting them into one set of notes that are disturbed with the first draft of the budget. Martin suggested having this meeting at the July Board meeting.

Martin commented that both he and Jim continue to add additional layers of transparency to the budget process. Stephen suggested a date by which committee chairs wish list will be circulated to the Board and the opportunity for discussion.

Jim suggests having committee meetings completed and notes of those meeting distributed to the Board by a date that allows him enough time to create the draft budget.

Renee asked Jim about the generation of reports of “approvals only” from staff timecards in Buddy Punch. Jim stated there was not a way to generate a report with only approvals, and that he would have to generate an employee detail report for a particular time period and these reports include all timesheet information, including approvals and notes. He also suggested that if we move to another time management system we would want to run an “all history” Employee Detail report for our records. Renee would like the Employee Detail reports printed out as hard copy each month and stored with the payroll records.

Marsha asked if there were items Renee wanted included in the budget that were denied. Renee stated Bill.com was software she suggested to counter check fraud. It was not brought to the Board for discussion and was told it was too expensive. She will continue to suggest additional internal controls to prevent fraud, since we have already experienced payroll fraud. Jim reported that the cost for Billpay.com would be approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000 per year. He found that this company was privatizing the standard ABA systems resulting in the creation of less secure targets for hackers. Renee would like to have a forum to present topics like this for budget discussions, and to receive feedback.

Jim shared research on Renee’s request that would allow any Board member to enter the pay system and generate any reports they choose. He found some issues. Many of the on-line services do not facilitate the import of historical data, (e.g., QuickBooks files) and they do not guarantee that all data will transfer over, and you have to use other services to ensure this. In searching for an economical solution, he found that we could purchase QuickBooks Enterprise and host the software online, but the charge was \$60.00 per user. Cheaper than a Geek can host Enterprise for \$50.00 per month with no per-user charges. The entire move would cost about \$2,000, including the cost of Enterprise, whereas moving to Xero or QuickBooks online would cost about \$15,000 per set of books (CCD and CCA), just for file conversion, going back to 2014 through a third-party conversion company. Having the Enterprise edition of QuickBooks hosted online would allow us to allow all BOD members to generate their own reports as needed and review accounts, but not make any transactions.

Renee asked for a monthly financial statement. Chuck suggested using Positive Pay, the electronic payment system which some banks use internally. It provides approvals on a check-by-check basis. Jim

will check with the bank to see if they provide this service. Stephen asked why we are writing paper checks. Jim stated that some are paid electronically, but most bills are invoiced and are then paid by check. He will investigate using more electronic payments for recurring bills. Renee would like an approval process for the electronic payments, since they currently exist for handwritten checks only. Bill.com provides this, and an approval process to add vendors for an additional layer of fraud protection. Martin feels that there are occasions that would still require checks, especially for small vendors who participate in our events. Jim added he will move payments electronically whenever possible.

## **Committee Reports**

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

Stephen had nothing to report. Jim reported that the new letterhead that removes the tax district from Covenant Review Committee correspondence has arrived. Stephen will continue to have Town Hall send out committee letters.

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

Hal is still seeking volunteers to report on local school events.

Crofton High School has posted the winter sports schedule to the website.

Anne Arundel County Schools are closed December 25 through January 1, 2024.

There is a Winter Dance Concert scheduled for January 10, 2024, at 7:00 PM, in the high school auditorium.

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

Chuck reported the GCC has scheduled a meeting on January 9, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Village Commons Community Center at Waugh Chapel with guest speaker Anne Colt Leitess, Anne Arundel County State's Attorney. She will discuss the recent rash of thefts from autos in the area, and what is being done to prevent them. Jason will also attend this meeting.

On January 16, at 7:00 PM, at the Village Commons Community Center at Waugh Chapel, the GCC will host a meeting regarding the safety concerns of Riedel Road. Residents from the area have formed a group that has reached out to local County representatives and the State Highway Administration regarding the safety measures that need to be addressed on both Riedel Road and Johns Hopkins Road.

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

Rob spoke about the potential grant for replacement equipment at Hardy Field. He has reached out to residents who are close to the area and frequent that park regarding suggestions for what type of new equipment they would like to see at the park. The feedback was not to duplicate equipment in nearby parks, but to focus on climbing equipment with a nature-based theme. He has passed this information to Martin. Martin added that the Crofton Athletic Council has hired a tree company with a certified arborist to take care of some of the overhanging trees around the ball field. They will absorb the cost. He will ask them to handle the large tree that is at the end of the outfield. Rob asked about the status



of the steps. Martin said Terry (CAC) and Keith have made temporary improvements and the rebar that was sticking out has been removed.

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

Renee mentioned she would like to set up a Finance Committee meeting in January before the General Membership Meeting. She would like to review the financial statements through December, employee time sheet reports, and expenses by vendor. Jim suggested January 18<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at Town Hall. Renee will present a report of the results at the General Membership meeting.

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

Daria had nothing to report.

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

No Report.

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

Marsha had nothing additional to report.

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

Sgt. Jett spoke about the statistics for November. There were 937 calls for service, 633 patrol checks, and 32 traffic stops. During the month of November there were several incidents that required follow up investigations. These included the discharge of a firearm, sexual offense, felony theft, and the recovery of stolen property. All incidents resulted in the issuing of warrants or summons, and court appearances, which resulted in slightly lower monthly statistics.

Sgt. Jett reported that the Crofton Police Department has completed all MPTC requirements for this year. Sgt. Jett emphasized that in the past training was not usually completed on time resulting in an audit and in severe cases the possible removal of MPTC certification for our officers. He will make certain that all training is completed on time moving forward.

Sgt. Jett reported on technology upgrades for the department including a resolution to the receipt of court subpoenas. Crofton officers did not have access to the system which notifies them of court subpoenas. He coordinated with the County police IT department for resolution of this matter. Now all Crofton officers have access to the e-Subpoena program. There is no additional cost to the department for this access.

Sgt. Jett reported the department has received their new Bluetooth wireless microphones. These were on backorder and were part of last year's budget.

Sgt. Jett reported that the squad room has been remodeled with a new conference and training area with items donated at no cost to the police department.

Sgt. Jett announced that upcoming court appearances may affect the overtime budget. Officers will continue to flex time when possible.

Sgt. Jett attended the last Police Accountability Board quarterly meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup>. There were no complaints issued to any Crofton police officers.

Sgt. Jett announced that he and Cpl. Sims, and Ofc. Gable will participate in the 2024 Polar Bear Plunge, which benefits the Maryland Special Olympics. There is a donation page linked from the Crofton Police Department Facebook page.

Stephen asked if the drop in traffic citations was due to previous spikes in warnings and ticketing. Sgt Jett believes that this is the case since patrols are the same and have not decreased.

### **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 (January 10, 2024)*

MS/JH/JJ(tg)