



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING**

**Library Media Center, Crofton Elementary School
November 18, 2024 – 7:00 PM**

Present:

Board Members: James Kitchin, Daria DeLizio, Charles See, Stephen Tull, Rob Kendall, and Hal Sheldon.

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

Town Manager Martin Simon opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements:

Martin announced that this meeting is being recorded to assist the Administrative Assistant with the transcription of the minutes.

The Crofton Winter Farmers' Market runs through April 26th on certain Saturdays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Crofton Library. The market features local and regional foods, crafts, and artwork. See Croftonfarmersmarket.com for details. The market will be open November 23rd, and December 7th.

The next CCA Board meeting is scheduled for December 9th at 7:00 PM, at the Library Media Center at Crofton Elementary School.

Town Hall is closed on November 28th and 29th for Thanksgiving.

On Wednesday December 4th, the CCA will host its annual Tree Lighting and Visit with Santa event at 6:00 PM at the Crofton Country Club. This event will be accepting donations for the Arundel Volunteer Fire Department. The St. Elizabeth Anne Seaton's Children's Choir will sing outside before the tree lighting, followed by Santa's arrival by Firetruck (or Police car). Everyone follows Santa inside for hot chocolate and cookies, live music with Pocket Change, and make and take crafts.

The Crofton Library will be closed for renovations from November 18th through December 30th.

Approval of Minutes –

The minutes from the CCA Board and Budget meeting on October 14, 2024, 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 the month of October has been busy with many events this month including the 60th Anniversary Croftoberfest, and the Kiwanis Halloween Parade and Party. Both were successful and well attended events.

The CCA was proud to be a part of the preparation and production of The Gold Star Memorial Dedication Ceremony which was held on Sunday November 10th. The memorial was unveiled and installed on the median of the front entrance on Crawford Blvd. The memorial is a tribute to Gold Star Families in the community who have lost loved ones while in service to our country. Martin thanked the Crofton Village Garden Club, the Crofton Greenery Garden Club, and all volunteers who assisted in this event.

Martin attended the Crofton Community Awards Banquet hosted by the Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce. The banquet honors those who have an impact on our community. Martin presented the Crofton Citizen of the Year Award to Ms. Evelyn Harris.

Martin met with an Eagle Scout from Troop 115 regarding an upcoming project for refurbishing park benches in the community.

Martin provided a report on the use of police overtime this month. 20 hours were used for special events for the Crofton Police Department's Trunk-Or-Treat, the Crofton Kiwanis Halloween Parade, and the Goldstar Memorial Dedication Ceremony. Five $\frac{3}{4}$ hours were used for traffic control for Halloween Parade events at both Elementary Schools, and additional hours for report writing by Cpl. Carrier on October 26th. Martin noted there are thirty-three $\frac{1}{2}$ overtime hours allowed per month. The department is well under this allotment. There will be a reduced monthly allotment beginning June next year of 23.8 monthly targeted hours per the Chief's recommendation.

Police Chief Report – *Chief Jason Jett*

Chief Jett reported the month of October was very busy with community relations events. On October 15th he met with Cub Scout Troop 115 at the United Methodist Church. He spoke about what the Crofton police department does. The scouts were able to tour the patrol car.

On October 17th the Crofton police were invited to the grand opening of Nico's Bagels in Waugh Chapel. They participated in a bagel preparation contest against the Arundel Volunteer Fire Department. The owner generously donated \$500.00 to the Crofton Police Department.

On October 19th, the Crofton police hosted its 2nd annual trunk-or-treat at the Crofton Village Green. There were 1500-2000 people in attendance, with over forty-five participants. He publicly thanked the numerous businesses, local leaders, churches, police departments who participated. The Chief suggests making this a permanent (budgeted) event moving forward.

On October 25th Cpl. Carrier attended the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Department trunk-or-treat event. He represented the Crofton Police Department with his fire-breathing dragon trunk, which was a hit.

On October 26th the police department escorted and blocked traffic for the annual Kiwanis Halloween Parade.

The Chief reported on monthly statistics. There were 424 calls for service, 69 traffic citations with 120 warnings, 4 repair orders, 5 parking citations and 2 DUI arrests. There were 180 patrol checks.

The Chief reported on crime in the area. There is a continuation of wheel and tire theft, which occur every other month. The thefts occur during the overnight hours, though the days of the week vary. To address this the department has begun a modified overnight shift where officers work from 8:00 PM to 4:00 AM.

The Chief reported on a burglary attempt on November 15th at 11:00 AM, at a residence on Old Willow Way. He mentioned that every year there are burglaries in the areas of Old Willow Way, Good Hope Drive, and Wickham Way. The resident was home and reported an attempted break-in. Officer Utzig responded and observed an occupied vehicle with a man entering the passenger side, parked at the entrance to Misty Meadow Ct. near Defense Highway. Ofc. Utzig followed and conducted a traffic stop of the vehicle on Defense Highway near Good Hope Drive. When attempting to identify and question the two black males in the vehicle, it sped away to Route 3 North. With the assistance of county police, the vehicle was found in the parking lot of Gold's Gym. A suspect was apprehended on foot walking near Checkers. After witness identification and video surveillance footage from the shopping center, the suspect was placed under arrest and transported to central booking for processing. He was charged with first, third, and fourth degree theft and destruction of property. The county police have identified the other suspect who is expected to be charged.

The Chief reported on the parking concerns in the community. He has received numerous complaints regarding the parking of trailers and recreation vehicles that have been relocated from Duke of Kent Drive and Crofton Parkway to Carlyle Drive and Crofton Parkway. He and the Town Manager have met with Eric Terry from DPW to revise the parking regulation plan. New signage in production will be a compromise in parking between the two areas.

On November 14th Cpl. Kyle Gable was awarded Crofton's Officer of the Year for 2024. The Chief highlighted some of his accomplishments during the year including 900 traffic stops, 1,400 citations, and 13 DUI arrests. He made an additional 33 arrests for various crimes in and around the community, and he has contributed to statistic reporting and website building. The Chief and Board members congratulated Cpl. Gable.

Committee Reports

Education Committee – Hal Sheldon

Hal reported on local school events:

Anne Arundel County Schools are closed for students from November 23rd to the 27th. The 23rd through the 25th are open for parent/teacher conferences. The 26th and 27th schools are closed for Thanksgiving. There is early dismissal on December 10th.

Crofton Elementary School:

Saturday 12/7 is Winterfest from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

Saturday 12/13 is Winter Skate Party at Skate Zone from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM.

December 12th is Unity Day. Students wear Orange.

November is Native American Heritage Month. Blue shirts will be worn by staff every Friday this month.

Crofton Woods Elementary School:

December 2nd Parent/Teacher conferences.

December 7th is Picture Day.

December 12th Chorus Winter Concert at 6:30 PM.

Crofton High School:

The Crofton Girl's Field Hockey Team won the State championship against Broadneck High School 2-0. This is their third consecutive win.

Maintenance and Operations – *Rob Kendall*

Rob reported the swing was repaired at Swann Park. Martin commented that the shore trimming at Lake Louise will take place soon. Marty Mows will be taking care of the planting bed at Swinburne and Crofton Parkway, and the brickwork that will happen this spring. The Tyrone Drive project has grass growing in. A resident is assisting with irrigation there. Stephen mentioned large groups of kids at Beaver Creek. Martin explained they are mostly middle school kids who are assisting the county with the replanting of trees for the restoration project. Martin added that we plan to improve upon the communication of Phase II of this project which is slated to begin this time next year. This includes the areas at the other end of the creek at the First Baptist Church and behind the townhomes of the "W" section. They will make sure the DPW hosts detailed presentations for the community.

Covenant Review Committee – *Stephen Tull*

Stephen reported there were no covenant submissions this month.

Greater Crofton Council Liaison – *Chuck See*

Chuck reported the November 12th GCC meeting on the Route 3 presentation by SHA was postponed. A new date has not been decided yet.

Recreation Committee – *Daria DeLizio*

Daria had nothing to report. Martin mentioned the Croftoberfest Santa will make an appearance at the Holiday Tree Lighting event, then it will be lit up and placed in front of Town Hall for the remainder of the season.

Planning & Zoning – *Marsha Perry*

Marsha was not present and did not provide a report.

Public Safety Committee – *Brian Riley*

Brian was not present and did not provide a report.

Comptroller's Report – *James Harvey*

Jim handed out his report to board members. He noted that everything is on course for the year. The tax district balance sheet is updated through today. We are using reserves of \$412,355.84 until we receive our check from the county in December. There is a negative income for the CCA due to the fundraising for the 60th anniversary last fiscal year.

We have received a check for \$1,053.12 from Selective Insurance for a collision claim for repairs to one of the police cruisers.

While completing the AA County Budget Request Form, we found a calculation error in the sum of revenue on the revenue page of the FY26 budget in the amount of \$70,000. The contingency reserve fund was not included in the sum of total income. After correction, the tax rate was lowered from 0.107% to 0.1023%. The CCA budget audit was also completed and accepted.

The police department used CCA Police Equipment reserve funds for replacement gun sights for the new guns. The laser sights were not lined up properly with the guns' iron sights, so they need to be refitted with new iron sites that work with the laser sights.

Earlier in the year he discussed that QuickBooks desktop is being phased out. We planned to switch to QuickBooks Enterprise, but we will stay with the Desktop product for now. Payroll will be moved from ADP Run to Buddy Punch in February of 2025.

We are selling the remainder of the 60th anniversary ornaments at half price to get rid of inventory. The November E-advocate had a 68% open rate. All advertisers have renewed for this edition, except for Window Genie.

The 60th Anniversary program has concluded. There was approximately \$46,000 taken in, with expenses at \$41,000, leaving a net of \$5,102.69. \$3,000.00 of this was put into reserve for the 70th anniversary program. Since the 60th anniversary program was started with \$3,800 left over from the 50th program, he recommends adding an additional \$2,000.00 to place in reserves for the 70th program, bringing the total to \$5,000.

James made a motion to add \$2,000.00 to the CCA reserve account for the 70th anniversary program. Stephen seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Jim reported that the Crofton Chili Cook-Off was the best attended ever. There were thirteen contestants, and the chili sold out in ninety minutes. There was \$740.00 raised for the Crofton Christian Caring Council's Food Pantry plus two bags of food.

The Cherry Blossom Festival is scheduled for March 22nd. There is room next year for additional participants, at least ten to twelve community organizations can be added. He will mention this in the first call for participants in the December E-Advocate.

Finance Committee – *James Kitchin*

James will schedule a meeting of the Finance Committee for early December.

Stephen made a motion to accept the tax rate of 0.1023% for the FY26 budget. James seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

James made a motion to approve the CCA FY26 Budget. Hal seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The FY26 budgets will be presented to the community at the General Membership Meeting on January 13th.

Citizen Questions or Comments –

A resident asked Chief Jett about the police department measures to reduce speeding on Crofton Parkway. He has observed that the speeding traffic has increased in the evenings from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. The Chief responded that he would reach out to Anne Arundel County Police for slowdown signs. These will be placed around the parkway, especially between the two elementary schools. There will be additional evening traffic enforcements. He believes this traffic is due to people cutting through the community from Route 3.

Cpl. Gable pointed out some issues with the criminal justice system. A recent example he gave is a vehicle travelling at twice the speed limit and passing another vehicle. The driver was charged with speeding and negligent driving. He received no points and a \$90.00 fine. He also mentioned speeding and phone use while driving is an \$80.00 fine. Cpl. Gable has had over 900 traffic stops and believes this is not a deterrent to speeding and reducing phone use. Cpl. Gable also mentioned cyclists are not following traffic signs, and frequently drive through the stop signs in the community. He will work with the Chief and use the social media platforms to remind cyclists to obey traffic rules.

Cpl. Gable asked Board members their opinion for making a traffic stop on Crofton Parkway. His guideline is for vehicles travelling 35-39 MPH, he issues a warning. He uses 40 MPH and over as the citation threshold. The Board agreed with his judgement on these guidelines.

James Kitchin commented that traffic studies have shown that vehicles will drive over the speed limit where they feel it is safe to do so, such as an unobstructed street versus a side street. The street would have to be impeded in some way to force drivers to slow down because they feel it's less safe. Jim asked about investigating a bike lane around Crofton Parkway. James responded that it would be difficult to do around the parkway due to limited space, especially where there are medians. He also explained the cost would be high.

A resident complained of a trailer parked in front of his neighbor's residence on a cul-de-sac since June. It is restricting traffic for trash pick-up, Amazon deliveries, county snowplows, fire

trucks, etc. He contacted the county to determine if this was a concern without result. He asked if this is a covenant issue. Stephen said no, but he will investigate it and get back to him. It may be a public safety issue. Martin commented there is no language in the covenants regarding traffic concerns. All the roads are owned by the county.

A resident asked about any county special exceptions for campers, motor homes, shrink wrapped boats, or a non-resident that parked a 42-foot motor home on the Crofton Parkway. These vehicles have multiplied since Covid. Most residents are against this. Martin explained that we must operate within the law. Chief Jett is in direct communication with the owners of these vehicles. The civic association has made them aware that their neighbors do not appreciate their vehicles in the community. The CCA is in constant communication with DPW regarding ways to make it less convenient for the owners of these vehicles to continue to park on the parkway. For thirty years Town Hall has been lobbying the county council to revise parking laws. The response has always been the same: There are five hundred thirty-three miles of coastline in Anne Arundel County with thousands of boat owners - it will never pass. Last year Town Hall tried again to lobby the County Council for revised legislation specific to the tax district. Our councilperson received no support from colleagues in this matter.

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

Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Administrative Assistant (December 10, 2024)

MS/JH/JJ(tg)