



**CROFTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION
BOARD MEETING
Crofton Elementary School, Crofton
April 8, 2024 – 7:00 PM**

Present:

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

Staff: Martin H. Simon, Jim Harvey, Chief Jason Jett, Ofc. Kyle Gable, 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 last day of the Crofton Winter Farmers Market is Saturday April 20th from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Crofton Library. The spring and summer market begins on Saturday May 11th from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The market features local and regional foods, crafts, and artwork. See Croftonfarmersmarket.com for details.

Crofton Kiwanis will have its General meeting on Wednesday April 10th, at 7:00 PM, at the Crofton Library, with guest speaker County Executive Steuart Pittman.

On April 13th from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM, at the Crofton Country Club, the Mid-Atlantic chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, presents a Tree Climbing Championship. Kids of any age can try climbing. This event is free and open to the public. Donations are accepted. April 14th at 8:30 AM is the Master’s Championship finals. The Society of Arboriculture supports the care and benefits of trees.

On April 20, 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM, Behind the Book Lecture Series with Photographer and Author, Jay Fleming, at Historic Linthicum Walks, 2295 Davidsonville Road, Gambrills.

On April 27th, from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, The Greater Crofton Chamber of Commerce will host the Spring Festival on the Green at the north parking area of the Crofton Country Club. There will be food trucks, crafts, touch a truck, and other kid’s activities. The CCA will have a tent, and the Crofton PD will also be there.

Crofton Library Events, 1681 Riedel Road, Crofton, for a full list of events see www.aacpl.net/events
Highlighted events include:

- o April 26 and May 10, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, American Red Cross Blood Drive
- o Saturdays in April and May, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Plant Clinic: Ask a Master Gardiner
- o April 29, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM, Crofton Houseplant Club
- o April 30, 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM, Self Defense with Bellicose Martial Arts
- o May 7, 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM, Classic Rock Talk! David Bowie
- o May 21, 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM, Crofton Village Garden Club Flower Show, part of Crofton 60th Anniversary events. There will be over 200 horticulture, floral design, and educational exhibits.

The Crofton Chamber of Commerce will host a Shred Day on May 11th from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, at their offices located at 2126 Espey Court. You may shred up to four file boxes at no cost. Donations will be accepted.

The next CCA Board and General Membership meeting will be Monday, May 13th, at 7:30 PM, at the Media Center, Crofton Elementary School, 1405 Duke of Kent Drive, Crofton. The General Election will be held on the same evening with polls open from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM in the school lobby. Absentee voting will take place at Town Hall during regular business hours, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, on May 6th through 10th. On May 8th hours will extend to 7:00 PM.

Anna thanked the Elections Committee, especially the Chair Nancy Kervin and Vice Chair Jessica Hood, for securing candidates for the 2024 election. Current Board members are running for their same positions unopposed, except for the Treasurer position. Resident James Kitchin has declared his candidacy for Treasurer.

Anna introduced guest speaker, Erik Terry, DPW, Chief, AACo Traffic Engineering.

Martin, Chief Jett, and Cpl. Sims met with Mr. Terry about problem parking concerns in the community. There are large commercial vehicles, recreational vehicles, and boats parked in areas that create unsafe traffic situations that limit site lines. Vehicles are allowed to park on these public County roads, however, the County along with the Crofton Police Department can place time restrictions on some of the more problematic areas.

A summary of suggestions for the identified areas of concern along Crofton Parkway by Mr. Terry was sent to the Board. The areas identified were Duke of Kent to Dryden Way, Knightsbridge Turn, Urby Drive, Walleye Drive, and Crawford Boulevard. The Board and Chief Jett agree with all but one of the actions as proposed and would like Mr. Terry to begin working on the appropriate signage and community outreach as soon as possible. After discussion, Location 2 of the proposal, Crofton Parkway at Knightsbridge Turn, will not be supported. Traffic Engineering will first notify the residents in writing of the upcoming revised parking rules in the community. Jim added that the information will be announced in the E-Advocate. Mr. Terry added that signs will be posted ahead of time.

A resident asked about the possibility of the implementation of a 72-hour parking restriction. Mr. Terry responded that the County police would have to agree with the proposal and create a program for enforcement. Chief Jett commented that the Crofton police would like to try this time restriction plan at all locations first. He believes that with additional police personnel this plan will be enforceable.

Approval of Minutes –

The minutes from the CCA Board meeting held on March 11, 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 he met recently with the regional manager of Bartlett Tree Experts, who is a resident. He offered free consultations within the community with any tree concerns. Interested residents may contact Town Hall.

Martin reported the Easter Egg Hunt and Cherry Blossom Festival Day was a success. He thanked Kathy and Jim for their coordination efforts, and the Board members who came out to assist, and the police officers who took care of safety at both events.

Martin provided an update on the upgrades at Hardy Field. On Wednesday the Crofton Athletic Council (CAC) will install a water line from Farlow Avenue to the ball field for irrigation. The CCA had previously turned over the water utility billing to the CAC. The park equipment upgrade is in progress. The design ideas were sent to Board members today. The grant for this project comes from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development through the Rebuilding Together Anne Arundel County organization. They prioritize safety and inclusiveness and will therefore be removing the pieces that no longer meet current safety standards. They will be replaced with equipment that includes accessible options. The access to the field will be improved by adding a forty-foot sloped sidewalk extension and a crushed stone pathway leading into the play area. The entire play area will have soft fall installed. This plan considers the suggestions of natural looking play equipment provided by Rob's Parks committee. The total plan exceeds the \$95,000 grant by \$15,000. We have this amount in the Park Rejuvenation Fund for park equipment that must be used in FY24. If it is not spent here, it would roll over to the Park Rejuvenation revolving funds for FY26. There is an option that would remove one of the pieces from the current plan, keeping the total closer to the \$95,000 grant. Martin would like the Board to consider the options and provide comments. He meets with the park planner on Wednesday.

Martin reported that the County in partnership with BG&E announced that they will be upgrading outdated street lighting. They will be converting the old lithium lights to LED. They are also upgrading the poles. Work will begin in the "S" section. Once received, the start date will be communicated to residents. This will not affect any of the flags along Crofton Parkway.

Martin provided a police overtime report. There were seven hours of special event overtime paid to Sgt. Sims for the Easter Egg Hunt and Cherry Blossom Festival.

Comptroller's Report – *James Harvey*

Jim provided a handout report to Board members. Last month the Board asked if the money from the sale of the outdated tasers should be accredited to the CCA or the tax district. Jim checked with the County budget office who suggested that if the purchase was originally made for the tax district, then any money we receive back would go back to the tax district. They forwarded the question to their legal department for clarification, which has not yet responded. Renee suggested that this process be added to our accounting manual that Jim is putting together. Jim will do so and will report back on the decision from the legal department.

Jim included the balance sheet in this month's report. The only things that are considered real property are the land and buildings. These are the only things that are considered assets. Police cars, furniture, etc., are not considered real property, rather they are "durable" assets. There is a new handgun purchase upcoming where the outdated guns will be sold back. Their resale value will be used in the CSCBD's books to offset a portion of the purchase of the new guns. Renee mentioned the Body Camera purchases, since they were not bought with tax district funds. Although they were obtained by a state grant, they may have turn-in value in the future and are considered durable items. Jim will seek clarity on this from the County and these topics will be added to the accounting policy manual he is drafting.

Jim reported there was an inventory completed about ten years ago for insurance. It included furniture, computers, and police equipment. We should revise this regularly.

The report also includes receivables for the CCA 60th Anniversary, which shows what has been paid versus what has been billed. There is \$17,000 of 60th Anniversary income. There is additional money that has been invoiced that includes \$50 receivable from LA Fitness that we don't expect to collect. We will need to collect the receivable income to offset the expense of the 60th programs. The Kidz Festival and Summerfest concerts are the largest of the expenses and they are covered. Any additional income will lower the ticket price of the Homecoming event ticket and the Octoberfest event. Jim recommends the Board keep \$2,000 in reserves to be used as seed money for the 70th Anniversary, as the seed money left from the 50th proved to be necessary to get the 60th program up and running.

Based on discussions last month some expenses were reclassified for police equipment, laptops purchase expenses were moved to police IT. There are a few things the police need that will be discussed later. These should be purchased before the end of this fiscal year.

Jim passed around two books recommended by the Treasurer: Standards for Excellence - An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector and The Board Excellence Governance Handbook from the state of Maryland. He recommends we purchase copies for each Board member using general funds.

Information from these publications can be considered as we continue to update our Policies and Procedures manual. Jim recommends using these to update Board position descriptions, and committee charters. It was decided to purchase copies of The Board Excellence Governance Handbook for members of the BOD.

Jim has volunteered to develop a formal document retention and removal policy. He will investigate recommendations by the State and the Society for Human Resources Association for personnel record retention. He suggested we implement a Formal Board training and development program for new Board members. In addition to the usual "Board Book," possibly assigning a seasoned Board member as a mentor for a few months to assist them in how the Board operates.

Jim announced the April E-Advocate is in layout. It is at twenty-five pages, our largest issue to date. The March edition had over 1,500 reads, most likely due to the Easter Egg Hunt and Cherry Blossom Festival events. Website traffic also significantly increased. Jim estimated at least 2,000 people attended the events. Jim commented that Easter is moving to the end of April next year, and the Cherry Blossom Festival will be moved up a week so there will be no chance for them to occur on the same day.

Jim announced there are 23 Crofton Salutes our Heroes banners ready to be ordered and will go up by May 1st.

The first announcements of Kidz Fest and Summerfest are included in the E-Advocate. There is a Teen Skate night scheduled for September 15th, using grant money that has been on hold for over ten years. The transfer form was signed by Anna tonight enabling for the use of the Teen Grant money for the program.

Committee Reports

Planning & Zoning – Marsha Perry

Marsha encouraged people to attend the Crofton Kiwanis meeting on Wednesday evening at the Crofton Library, featuring Steuart Pittman, to remind the County Executive of his commitment to preserve land. Marsha asked Pat Heucker to present her report on the recent zoning concerns brought to the County Council.

Pat spoke about the comprehensive zoning history by the County Council with regards to the properties on Route 424 and 450 on the southeast corner, at the High's location. This property was originally zoned R1. At a County Council meeting with no notice, Councilman Jerry Walker introduced an amendment changing the zoning from R1 to C4. It passed, without notice made to the public. In 2018, a charter amendment was introduced stating if a landowner did not participate in the process, they must post signs on the property ten days before it could be voted on in the County Council. Six years later, the County, having no regulation on this, accepted the charter as county code. To date, there are five days required for rezoning notification signs on the property. GAN lobbied to extend the period to ten days. Councilwoman Shannon Leadbetter was able to extend it to 14 days. Currently developers complain they cannot get signs up for 14 days. They have requested to change the code amendment to seven days. This is not long enough to contact neighbors, civic associations, and county council members and consider and reply to the proposed zoning changes.

Pat is asking the CCA to send a letter to Councilpersons Shannon Leadbetter and Julie Hummer expressing their disagreement with the seven-day option, because it does not provide enough time for public consideration. She also asked that individual residents also reach out directly to their representatives. Bill 26-24 is being voted on next Monday. Martin will send out a Listserv announcement.

Pat reported on an upcoming bill regarding zoning changes to R1, R2, and R5 properties that would allow the building of townhouses. This is because the County is very interested in providing workforce housing in our county and will allow the up zoning if developers offer 10% as workforce housing. Currently in the Fort Meade/Odenton area, mixed use zoning has been revised to R15, and some to R44. Increasing density to R44 would require that everything on the ground must also be increased, such as open spaces, recreation areas, parking, etc. This may be a concern in our area. Underwood Road located behind Staples Corner is currently zoned as R1. If this bill passes, it could change the zoning to R5, allowing townhouses to be built in that area if 10% of the units are assigned as affordable housing.

Pat reported on the recent zoning changes in Laurel Park and the Racetrack. The owners of the Racetrack property requested that their zoning be changed to all C4, including the thirty-four acres of open space. Julie Hummer introduced it, and it passed. Thirty-four acres of environmental land was changed to industrial zoning without any notification that this was happening. This is another example of why the additional time is needed for public notice.

A resident asked about the zoning change request of the three properties on Route 450 by Langways to C4. Anna attended the hearing and testified. The decision is under appeal. Anna stated we cannot attend the appeal with a stance. Legal representation would have to be present. Comments must be made during the hearing, not the appeal. Martin commented that appeals are scheduled in the evenings on May 7 and May 8, and interested persons are advised to contact the board of appeals, however the board of appeals may choose to close the meeting. Martin can reach out to them to clarify.

Public Safety Committee – *Brian Riley*

Brian had nothing to report.

Finance Committee – *Renee Speer*

Renee had nothing additional to add.

Recreation Committee – *Daria DeLizio*

Daria had nothing additional to report. She was very pleased with the turnouts for the Easter Egg Hunt and Cherry Blossom Festival.

Greater Crofton Council Liaison – *Chuck See*

Chuck reported the GCC last met on March 12, 7:00 PM. The Greater Crofton Council and the Riedel Road Traffic Committee hosted Councilwoman Julie Hummer and AACPD Captain Franklin of Western District to discuss traffic safety of Riedel Road and Johns Hopkins Road. Speed cameras will be up by the end of May on Nantucket Drive by Nantucket Elementary School. Signs will be posted beforehand.

The State will be posting speed cameras along Route 424 by Crofton High School and Crofton Middle School. The timing for this is unknown. It was reported that school bus cameras are averaging seven hundred tickets per week. There is a \$200 fine if you pass a stopped school bus. Ofc. Gable added that if police issue a ticket the fine is \$560.00 and 6 points on your driver's license. Chuck added that if there is a physical median, a driver on the opposite side of the road does not have to stop. If there is no physical division, a driver must stop. There are no further GCC meetings scheduled yet.

Covenant Review Committee – *Stephen Tull*

Stephen reported there were no submissions to the committee this month. There was an inquiry of a daycare business run out of a resident's home. Stephen reported that it is licensed, and that up to 12 children are allowed in a daycare run out of a home. The requirements include a license, a fire marshal inspection, and a zoning permit waiver.

Maintenance and Operations – *Rob Kendall*

Rob reported he will work with Martin on the equipment replacement plan for Hardy Field. Martin needs to meet with Rob for guidance regarding the use of the remaining funds for the year.

Education Committee – *Hal Sheldon*

Hal thanked Pat for helping him regarding education. He contacted Greg Stewart, planning manager with Anne Arundel County Schools, who is now retired. He was referred to Mark Lukas who provided the following capacity information on area schools:

Crofton High School is at 112% capacity.

Crofton Middle School is at 107% capacity.

Crofton Elementary School is at 101% capacity.

Crofton Woods Elementary School is at 96% capacity.

Police Chief Report – *Chief Jason Jett*

Chief Jett reported on March statistics. There were 369 calls for service. This is lower than last month since Ofc. Gable was absent during his Coast Guard Reserve training. There were 15 traffic stops, and 270 patrol checks.

The beginning of March focused mainly on a major investigation involving forty counts of identity theft, led by Ofc. Gable, which resulted in multiple warrants. A man from Howard County came to Gold's Gym to investigate the unauthorized use of his credit card for a gym membership. The person who stole the card created the gym account. Ofc. Gable was called to the scene. There was an additional stolen card and social security number from a retired police officer from out of town that was used to lease and pay rent on an apartment in Crofton Village. This is a felony charge. He is known to CPD for assault of his girlfriend last year in Arrive apartments. He was arrested and has since posted bond while the investigation continues.

The Chief reported there has been a slight increase in theft from autos. There has been footage of the suspect forwarded to the police. He appears to be a recurring offender that currently has multiple warrants for his arrest. He reminded residents to lock your vehicles, and do not leave valuables in your

cars. There have also been reports of wheel thefts in Arrive apartments. Most of these incidents occur between the hours of 1:00 AM and 4:00 AM. He would like to initiate overnight shifts with the prospect of being fully staffed by June 1st.

Chief Jett reported he continues to receive complaints of speeding in the community. The police department has conducted over 200 traffic stops since January of this year resulting in arrests, DUI's, and various other violations including speeding. They are investigating additional tools to enhance traffic enforcement such as a handheld Lidar unit, two in-car Lidar units, and in-car mounted LPR (License Plate Reader) units. These are \$13,900, and do not require software purchase since the department can use County software. The cost rises to \$50,000 - \$70,000 with software included. LPR's assist in scanning vehicles quickly to determine if they are stolen, have expired tags, etc. They can also track what vehicles are entering and exiting the community. The Chief will investigate if a grant program is available.

Chief Jett congratulated Ofc. Gable on his completion of a three-week boot camp program for the US Coast Guard Reserve.

Chief Jett thanked Kathy and Jim for their organization of the CCA Annual Easter Egg Hunt and Cherry Blossom Festival.

Chief Jett reported on the ruling by the Police Accountability Board regarding the complaint against Sgt. Sims related to a wellness check conducted at Arrive apartments. Sgt. Sims was found not guilty of any policy violation by the ACC (Administrative Charging Committee). There were three charges. Two were cleared, and one was unfounded.

Chief Jett reported on the status of Ofc. Redding. He has a medical evaluation on the 12th which will determine his return date.

Chief Jett reported that a current candidate for hire is in the testing phase. If all goes well, we are looking at a June 1st hire date. He is a former Anne Arundel County officer.

The Chief made a formal request to use police equipment reserve funds for the purchase of new handguns, vehicle upgrades and wiring issues, medical kits, gun cleaning kits, and tint meters. He requested using a portion of the reserve funds in combination with the current equipment budget to purchase new handguns and a handheld Lidar radar system.

He requested the use of the Body Camera reserve funds along with the current Vehicle Maintenance Expense to purchase two new radar units for the unmarked vehicles, and upgrade three vehicles with proper wiring, a new computer mount, new siren control boxes, and some additional lighting features.

Lastly, he requested using the remaining Police Supplies Budget to purchase new medical kits, gun cleaning kits, and tint meters.

Chief Jett explained that the County police are upgrading guns in the fall, and there is a training process for that.

Chief Jett handed out cost information for the Board to review. Jim verified equipment costs for the handguns, which are required, and the Lidar. The cost is \$6,700.00 for the six guns. Using the Police Equipment Fund plus the Police Equipment Reserve Fund will cover this with \$92.16 remaining.

Jim explained the Chief would like to change the reserve plan at the end of 2024 by taking \$25,000 and moving it to the revolving fund. The remaining \$6,000 will stay in the fund until end of FY24, then will be moved to equipment fund in June of FY25. \$6,200 will come out of the police car maintenance fund.

Renee suggested using police staff salary surplus money for this instead of using the reserve funds. It would reallocate the funds within the Public Safety budget. On CCA books it would appear as an overspend, though the overage of police salaries would be used here.

Chief Jett also requested an LPR (License Plate Reader), at a cost of \$13,900. Ofc. Gable spoke on the importance of the LPR with regards to officer safety. They can read parked vehicles, as well as passing vehicles. They can also track vehicles entering or exiting the community. All data is collected in fractions of a second and stored. It also allows for transparent communication between all agencies. They must be mounted to one car. The cost including software is at least \$50,000 to \$70,000. In our case the County will cover the software, the installation, and the training. This would be a substantial savings.

Jim commented that we will be not less than \$150,000 under budget on Public Safety for FY25. He stated that the funds must be spent by the end of June.

Stephen made a motion to transfer the CCA Police Equipment Fund to the tax district for public safety in the amount of \$42,169. Chuck seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

This was superseded by the following:

Renee made a motion for the allowable overspend of the FY24 Public Safety Budget equipment fund in the amount of \$25,750. Stephen seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Jim will note it was approved by the Board on April 8, 2024.

Citizen Questions or Comments –

Hal asked about the status of the Sly Horse Tavern. Anna responded that it is still vacant.

A resident asked the Chief about the recent shooting at FedEx in Priest Bridge Center. The Chief said it was an issue between two employees, and that there is a suspect. He does not have any further information currently.

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

Following the meeting, the Board of Directors agreed by email to authorize purchase a second LPR unit for the police department, increasing the above amount of overspending approved by the Board.

Meeting minutes completed by Tara Gottschalck, Administrative Assistant (May 6, 2024)

MS/JH/JJ(tg)