

## Minutes of the County Commissioners of Worcester County, Maryland

March 7, 2017

Madison J. Bunting, Jr., President  
Diana Purnell, Vice President  
Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.  
James C. Church  
Theodore J. Elder  
Joseph M. Mitrecic  
Merrill W. Lockfaw, Jr.

Following a motion by Commissioner Lockfaw, seconded by Commissioner Bertino, with Commissioner Elder temporarily absent, the Commissioners unanimously voted to meet in closed session at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room to discuss legal and personnel matters permitted under the provisions of Section 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and to perform administrative functions. Also present at the closed session were Harold L. Higgins, Chief Administrative Officer; Kelly Shannahan, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer; Maureen Howarth, County Attorney; Ed Baker, Interim County Attorney; Kim Moses, Public Information Officer; and Stacey Norton, Human Resources Director. Topics discussed and actions taken included: promoting Karen Hammer from Scale Operator within the Solid Waste Division of Public Works to Office Assistant III within County Administration and William Furman from part-time Parks Worker I to full-time Parks Worker II within Recreation and Parks; hiring Melissa Jenkins, Michael Satterfield, and Kayla Hinman as Communications Clerk Trainees in Emergency Services; posting to fill a vacancy for a Correctional Officer Trainee and an Immigration Detainee Records Specialist at the Jail, and a Natural Resources Inspector for Environmental Programs; acknowledging the hiring of George "Bo" Spicer and Shae Waters as part-time Sheriff's Deputies within the Civil Division of the Sheriff's Office; receiving legal advice from counsel; and performing administrative functions.

After the closed session, the Commissioners reconvened in open session. Commissioner Bunting called the meeting to order and announced the topics discussed during the morning closed session.

The Commissioners extended birthday wishes to Commissioner Purnell, congratulated Chief Administrative Officer Harold Higgins on the birth of his seventh grandchild, and welcomed Attorney Ed Baker who will be providing legal counsel to them when County Attorney Maureen Howarth is out on maternity leave.

The Commissioners reviewed and approved the minutes of their February 21, 2017 open and closed session meetings as presented.

The Commissioners presented a proclamation recognizing March as Women's History

Month to Commission for Women Chair Eloise Henry-Gordy in recognition of the contributions of women locally and nationwide to the economic, cultural and social well-being of Worcester County.

The Commissioners met with Fire Marshal Jeff McMahon to discuss a request from John Russe, Intelligence Research Specialist for the Department of Justice (DOJ) for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to conduct an outdoor explosive demonstration at the Langmaid Road Borrow Pit in Newark during a law enforcement executive development seminar in Ocean City on April 3, 2017. In response to questions by Commissioners Bertino and Church, Mr. McMahon advised that the demonstration will consist of 1 ½-pound explosives, so the projected noise level will be low, and the FBI will notify residents in the area, including those on South Point. Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners approved the request.

Pursuant to the request of Housing Program Administrator Jo Ellen Bynum and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Commission President Bunting to sign the Maryland Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Amendment to Grant Agreement between the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the County Commissioners of Worcester County to extend the deadline to expend the County's current Housing Rehabilitation Program Grant from March 31, 2017 to May 31, 2017. Ms. Bynum explained that the extended deadline will allow her time to identify a new contractor and complete the final project, which is in the construction phase, as the current contractor, Benchmark Contracting Services, LLC of Bel Air, Maryland, elected to leave the job after failing to complete the job in a timely manner and meet the workmanship standards required. Ms. Bynum stated that funding of \$5,100 was withheld from Benchmark Contracting and another \$4,000 is available within the project contingency fund, leaving roughly \$9,100 available to complete this work.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Ms. Bynum confirmed that the County will not consider future bids from Benchmark Contracting Services. Upon a motion by Commissioner Elder, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Ms. Bynum to solicit proposals from two contractors who have successfully completed similar projects for the County to complete the unfinished project.

Pursuant to the request of Human Resources Director Stacey Norton and Volunteer Services Manager Kelly Brinkley and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously approved the use of a revised Volunteer Connection Logo to better represent Volunteer Connection, which was previously known as Worcester County Volunteer Services. In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Ms. Brinkley advised that she will exhaust the very minimal remaining supply of brochures with the original logo before ordering new brochures that include the new logo.

The Commissioners met with Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell to review the Forest Stewardship Plan for the Ilia Fehrer Nature Preserve. Mr. Mitchell advised that this document was made available to neighboring property owners for comment via mailing and by

posting the plan in its entirety on the County website, after which time Environmental Programs Deputy Director David Bradford explained the purpose behind the plan and the intended purpose of the property, which satisfied all who commented on the plan. In response to a question by Commissioner Bunting, Mr. Mitchell confirmed that once the plan is adopted staff would be able to apply for grants for renovation, restoration, and education projects at this nature park; however, these projects would require no County funding.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously accepted the Iliia Fehrer Nature Preserve Forest Stewardship Plan as presented.

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director John Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Independent Contractor's Agreement between the County Commissioners and CMF Bayside, LLC (Contractor), with the Contractor to complete the culvert replacement and paving project on Delaware Road between Rollie Road West and the Delaware State Line at no cost to the County, with the work to be completed no later than April 3, 2017. Mr. Tustin explained that this project is being undertaken by CMF Bayside, LLC to repair damage resulting from heavy traffic by the Contractor during construction of the Bayside Americana Project in Delaware and expressed appreciation for their willingness to make these repairs. Mr. Tustin advised that County staff requested an in-stream waiver from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) from March 15-April 3, 2017 to facilitate the installation of the new culverts for the sake of public safety.

The Commissioners met with representatives from the towns of Pocomoke City, Snow Hill, Berlin, and Ocean City, as well as the Ocean Pines Association (OPA) regarding their Fiscal Year 2018 grant requests from the County.

The Commissioners met with Pocomoke City Mayor Bruce Morrison, Council members George Tasker and Esther Troast, and City Manager Ernie Crofoot. Mayor Morrison thanked the Commissioners for their ongoing support of Pocomoke City and the nonprofit organizations serving their residents, and particularly Commissioner Lockfaw for touring the vacant Armory, which town residents have requested the town renovate and revitalize for use as a youth facility for at-risk youth and the greater community, noting 85% of the target youth live within walking distance of the building. He advised that the YMCA programs are too expensive for many Pocomoke families to afford, and bussing children to the facility is not a feasible option. He stated that youth programs were once offered at the middle school, and they are sorely needed now. He then advised that town officials are requesting that the County maintain funding to Pocomoke City in all categories for FY18. These include continuing categorical funding, and special projects and services that have regional benefit and interest. He asked for continued categorical funding and pass-through grants as follows: \$450,000 for an unrestricted grant and economic development; \$478,075 in support for the city's ambulance services based on the County formula; \$55,000 to replace police vehicles' onboard radios and dispatch monitors needed due to the implementation of the County's new emergency frequency; Liquor License Fees; fire department funding; marketing/promotional assistance of \$4,500; shared revenues for income and room tax; and state pass-through aid for a grand total of \$1,702,663.

In response to a question by Commissioner Purnell, Mayor Morrison stated that town officials' next steps will be to develop a strategic plan to rehabilitate the Armory. In response to a

question by Commissioner Bunting, Mayor Morrison stated that the town is seeking the County's support for grant funding to revitalize the Armory, advising that the town was previously denied two grants to demolish the building. Commissioner Church pointed out that the Armory is a historically significant structure and questioned whether it could be demolished. In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Mr. Crofoot confirmed that the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) supports the preservation of buildings like the Armory, and he advised that it would cost roughly \$1.5 million just to repair the structure, to include removing asbestos and lead paint, while no estimates are as yet available regarding the cost to repurpose the space.

The Commissioners met with Snow Hill Mayor Charles Dorman and Council member Michael Pruitt. Mayor Dorman thanked the Commissioners for their past support, and he asked them to consider including Snow Hill and Pocomoke in the distribution of Local Impact Grant (LIG) funds from the Casino at Ocean Downs. He stated that the annual Snow Hill budget has grown, and the town is in dire need of funding to complete infrastructure improvements, as part of ongoing revitalization efforts and continue to attract new businesses and visitors. He advised that seven new businesses have opened in town since 2015, and another two are slated to open this year, resulting in less vacant properties and more visitors to the area. Mayor Dorman also noted that the town has a number of special events scheduled for the upcoming year, with several high-profile celebrities slotted to attend, noting that "War Room" movie actress Karen Abercrombie attended a recent town prayer meeting and will be returning this summer as well, along with potentially another high-profile celebrity. He thanked the County for increasing the payment in lieu of taxes to \$150,000 and approving a grant of \$450,000 last year, and asked the Commissioners to maintain this funding. Together with ambulance and fire department funding and other shared revenues and State aid pass throughs, the grand total request is \$1,593,345.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Mayor Dorman requested the Commissioners reallocate LIG funding and distribute 1% of the proceeds each to Snow Hill and Pocomoke for economic development initiatives. Commissioner Elder supported the request, noting that the brunt of County and State government buildings are within the corporate limits of Snow Hill, and these facilities are exempt from paying the taxes the town needs to fund infrastructure projects and vital services.

The Commissioners met with Berlin Mayor Wm. Gee Williams, III and Town Administrator Laura Allen. Mayor Williams thanked the Commissioners for their prior support and asked the County to award the town an unrestricted grant in the amount of \$450,000 for FY18, noting that the bulk of the funding will be used to continue upgrading and adding to the town's infrastructure, such as the sidewalk project, and to complete construction of the new Berlin Police Department by the end of this calendar year to replace what is one of the oldest and most inadequate police facilities in the entire State. He advised that the new building will be state-of-the-art, be able to provide space for multiple law enforcement agencies during emergencies and allow the town to better meet the public safety needs of the community, especially with the measurable increase in the number of visitors during the past four years. Together with ambulance and fire department funding and other shared revenues and State aid pass throughs, the grand total request for Berlin is \$2,041,020.

The Commissioners met with Ocean Pines Association (OPA) Acting General Manager Brett C. Hill and Police Chief David Massey. to discuss their FY18 grant requests from the County. Mr. Hill advised that Ocean Pines is home to 11,700 year-round residents or 23% of the

County's residents. He reviewed the services and amenities the OPA provides to the community and all Worcester County residents, including recreation and parks and public safety, and he asked the Commissioners to provide funding for four distinct needs as follows: a minimum public safety grant of \$550,000 for police services; passthrough of Highway User Revenues for the restoration of roads and bridges; a grant of \$17,500 for tourism to partially offset the cost of 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks and the OPA's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration; and \$20,000 for Recreation and Parks programs. Chief Massey expressed concern regarding the opioid crisis in Worcester County and in Ocean Pines, and he explained that calls for services have increased significantly this past year as a result of these issues, which are especially problematic in residential communities, like Ocean Pines. In total, including fire and ambulance funding, the OPA requests \$1,369,514 in funding from the County in FY18.

In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Mr. Hill stated that the OPA charges two-tier rates for recreational fee programs, a lower rate for Ocean Pines residents and a slightly higher rate for non-residents. He further advised that the OPA offers many free amenities and activities, including concerts in the park, tennis facilities, fireworks display, marinas, boat ramps, basketball courts, soccer fields, playgrounds, walking trails, and more. In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Mr. Hill confirmed that all activities at the Worcester County Veterans Memorial in Ocean Pines are free to the public, and he noted that the only fee-based programs are individualized programs through Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks.

The Commissioners met with Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan, City Manager Doug Miller and Fire Chief Chris Larmore to discuss their FY18 grant requests from the County. Mayor Meehan stated that town officials were disappointed that the County Commissioners voted not to meet with them to discuss their request for a tax differential; however, he thanked them for the opportunity today to discuss the town's annual grant request, which includes a 4.75% increase or \$114,568 increase in the unrestricted grant, which has not been increased for four years. He explained that the increase reflected the average increases in property, recordation, and transfer taxes for FY16 and FY17. He reviewed other grant requests as well, including Tourism Marketing for \$300,000, Recreation for \$100,000, the Convention Bureau for \$50,000, and the Park and Ride for \$80,000; \$172,000 to cover half the cost for handheld radios for volunteer firefighters; \$100,000 to develop a master plan for the skate park and recreation area between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets to help partially make up for having received no portion of the County's funding from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Program Open Space (POS) since 2014; and \$100,000 to fund one-half of the design of the new fire station at 65<sup>th</sup> Street. In total, the Town of Ocean City requests \$22,312,288 in funding from the County in FY18.

Mayor Meehan discussed plans to replace the 65<sup>th</sup> Street fire station, noting that the facility at 75<sup>th</sup> Street is antiquated, and the lot is too small to build a facility that will allow the town to expand its very successful, live-in-program, which provides living quarters to volunteer firefighters who provide service to the Ocean City and West Ocean City areas. Mayor Meehan stated that the live-in-program is a great benefit, providing additional fire coverage to the town and surrounding areas and to the volunteers who are able to live in the fire house free of charge by staffing the fire house and providing a certain number of volunteer hours. Chief Larmore reviewed the live-in-program and the request for County grant funds to cover 50% of the cost to supply all volunteer firefighters with radios to improve interoperability. In closing, Mayor

Meehan advised that the issue of tax differential is still very important to Ocean City taxpayers, and the grants provided in lieu of a tax differential will be applied to the town's FY18 budget to provide relief for Ocean City taxpayers for services not provided by Worcester County in Ocean City.

Commission President Bunting thanked all of the town officials for taking time to meet with the Commissioners to review their FY18 grant requests.

The Commissioners met with Public Works Director John Tustin to review and discuss the Mosquito Control Program budget for the 2017 season, as outlined in a letter to the County from Brian Prendergast, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Mosquito Control Program Manager. Mr. Tustin stated that the proposed budget requires County funding of \$83,940 for the Mosquito Control Program in Worcester County, with State funding of \$82,260 and community funding of \$240,300 for a total budget of \$406,500. Mr. Tustin stated that staff has made no changes to last year's program. Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners approved the proposed budget for Worcester County Mosquito Control for Calendar Year 2017 between MDA and the County Commissioners. Mr. Tustin advised that, like last year, area residents who participate in the program would be required to pay the \$65 fee per residential household up front to cover a portion of the cost of spraying.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously declared the proposed list of County vehicles, equipment, and miscellaneous items to be surplus property and agreed to notify the public of their intent to dispose of the surplus property by auction on GovDeals.com. In response to a question by Commissioner Lockfaw, Mr. Tustin advised that the five dump trucks included on the list of County-owned vehicles declared to be surplus property have already been replaced. Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Kelly Shannahan stated that the list would be published, and the public would have an opportunity to object to any items on the list at the Commissioners' meeting on April 4, 2017 before these items are auctioned.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Preliminary Engineering Report for the Lewis Road sewage collection and disposal project. Mr. Tustin confirmed that the Commissioners have identified the extension of sewer service to the Lewis Road area to be a high priority project in their Strategic Plan, and the facilities will serve 48 properties.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously approved bid specifications for the lease/purchase of one landfill crawler tractor with bulldozer for the Solid Waste Division of Public Works, with funds available within the FY17 budget for this purchase, which is on a five-year buyback with a five-year, 12,500-hour warranty.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Lockfaw, the Commissioners unanimously approved bid specifications for the purchase of petroleum products

to be provided to County-owned buildings and generators for two years commencing with the date of award and ending April 30, 2019 and a possible extension to five years, with funds available within the FY17 budget and future budgets for this expense.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously awarded the low bid for the provision of pipe to be utilized by the Roads Division of Public Works to Lane Enterprises, Inc. of Bealeton, Virginia at a total cost of \$38,299.10.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Lockfaw, the Commissioners unanimously awarded the low bid for the purchase of one current model year truck tractor to Freightliner of Delmarva of Salisbury, Maryland at a total delivered price of \$125,764. Mr. Tustin advised that funds of \$145,000 are available within the FY17 budget for this purchase.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to amend the agreements for expansion of the Riddle Farm Sanitary Service Area (SSA) and accepted the proposal from Hunt Taylor with WGC, EDU, LLC, the contractor responsible for making improvements to the Riddle Farm Sanitary Service Area, at a total cost of \$237,000 to purchase two new membrane cassettes for the Riddle Farm Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Mr. Tustin stated that the two new membranes are made with better technology and will be used to supplement the four existing membranes to increase plant capacity to 280,000 gallons per day (GPD) of wastewater.

The Commissioners met with Chief Administrative Officer Harold Higgins to discuss the proposed repeal or modification of Resolution No. 14-8, which was adopted by the County Commissioners on March 18, 2004 to permit the financing of equity contributions for existing developed properties connecting to public water and sewer services in Worcester County's Sanitary Service Areas (SSAs). Mr. Higgins stated that the primary purpose of this policy was to encourage owners of developed properties to connect to public water and sewer to reduce the number of septic systems and wells in SSAs by allowing them to pay the equity contribution over a period of up to 15 years with interest. However, such financing in the Mystic Harbour and the Ocean Pines SSAs will negatively impact the repayment of recent major capital improvements in those service areas. He stated that, specifically, repayment of both the \$12.8 million upgrade and expansion of the Mystic Harbour Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and the \$600,000 expansion in Ocean Pines to serve the Pines Plaza Shopping Center both rely on the sale of equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) to new customers to satisfy the debt service and curtail increased rates for existing customers. Therefore, he recommended repealing Resolution No. 14-8, allowing the County to deny new requests for financing of Equity Contributions while continuing to honor all previously approved financing arrangements or freezing any future requests to finance equity contributions and direct staff to draft modifications to the Equity Contribution Financing Policy.

In response to a question by Commissioner Church, Mr. Higgins stated that, while preparing the FY18 budget for the various SSAs, staff recognized that revenues were down

significantly in several SSAs due to issues regarding collecting the charges for EDUs, necessitating SSA increases in some SSAs.

Commissioner Elder suggested amending rather than repealing the financing options by decreasing the repayment period to a maximum of five years with a 5% interest rate to alleviate the financial strain and still encourage residents and businesses to convert from septic to sewer service. In response, Mr. Higgins advised that the program currently required no down payment and was created to assist homeowners, not commercial entities, and only a very few residents took advantage of the financing. Commissioner Bertino stated that the County should not be in the business of loaning money, and he pointed out that the financing of equity contributions has heavily impacted the Ocean Pines SSA, benefitting the interests of the commercial district on the backs of the ratepayers. Commissioner Bunting stated that he was one of the Commissioners who voted to adopt Resolution No. 14-8 because offering financing seemed like a great option at the time. However, because the County has had so much difficulty collecting the revenues owed, particularly in the Mystic Harbour SSA where commercial entities have indicated a desire to purchase significant numbers of EDUs but have not made good on those agreements, the existing ratepayers will be required to shoulder the cost of plant expansion, with rates to increase by \$10-\$20 in most SSAs. For those reasons, Commissioner Bunting stated that he fully supports the recommendation of the Sewer Committee to repeal Resolution No. 14-8.

In response to a question by Commissioner Church, Enterprise Fund Controller Jessica Wilson advised that the Mystic Harbour WWTP was built with expanded sewer capacity to accommodate economic growth in the area, but that growth has not occurred as anticipated. She stated that the Mystic Harbour SSA needed to sell 30 EDUs per year beginning in FY11 to cover debt service, but only 88 EDUs have been sold since that time, which is 92 EDUs fewer than that which is needed to repay the debt and cover operating and maintenance costs. In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Ms. Wilson advised that EDUs have already been assigned to Lewis Road residents, so they are not required to pay an equity contribution.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners voted 6-0-1, with Commissioner Church abstaining, to adopt Resolution No. 17-6, repealing Resolution No. 14-8 regarding financing equity contributions for existing developed properties connecting to public water and sewer services in SSAs.

The Commissioners considered the recommendation of Commissioner Bunting, at the request of Bishopville residents, to request the State Highway Administration (SHA) reduce the speed limit on certain sections of Bishopville Road (MD Rt. 367) and post speed limit signs on this currently unposted State highway. Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Kelly Shannahan reviewed the details of the proposal, stating that the request stems from increased traffic and excessive rates of speed along this roadway. He stated that, as an un-posted highway, the speed limit by default is 50 miles per hour (mph), and President Bunting has suggested that portions of the road be posted with a 45 mph speed limit, transitioning to 35 mph speed limit before reaching the portion of Bishopville Road, which is currently posted with a speed limit of 30 MPH, before entering the Village of Bishopville.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to send a letter to SHA District 1 Engineer Jay Meredith requesting the SHA post Bishopville Road with a 45 mph speed limit, transitioning to 35 mph before reaching the portion which is currently

posted with a speed limit of 30 mph before entering Bishopville.

The Commissioners reviewed and discussed various board appointments.

Upon nominations by Commissioner Church, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to reappoint David Dypsky and Mary Martinez to the Water and Sewer Advisory Council for the Mystic Harbour Service Area and Andrew Delcorro to the Water and Sewer Advisory Council for the West Ocean City Service Area for four-year terms each expiring December 31, 2020.

Upon a nomination by the Town of Berlin and a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to appoint Jamey Latchum as the Town of Berlin's representative to the Solid Waste Advisory Committee for the remainder of a four-year term expiring December 31, 2017 to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Dave Wheaton.

Upon a nomination by Social Services and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to appoint Shannon Chapman as the Social Services representative to the Commission for Women for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2019 to fill the vacancy created by Mary Beth Quillen whose term expired.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Development Review and Permitting Deputy Director Phyllis Wimbrow and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners voted unanimously to schedule a public hearing on April 4, 2017 to consider an application submitted by Community Energy Solar, Inc. to approve a Step I Concept Plan for a utility scale solar energy system on property located on the northerly side of Ocean Gateway (U.S. Rt. 50) just west of the MD Rt. 90 off-ramp and the southerly side of Old Ocean City Road (MD Rt. 346) across from the intersection with Circle Road and more specifically identified on Tax Map 19 as Parcel 6. Ms. Wimbrow advised that the proposed Gateway Solar Project includes a proposed utility scale solar energy system, consisting of approximately 52,000 panels anticipated to produce a 15.6-megawatt (DC) output. She further stated that the application received a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

The Commissioners directed staff to limit the information they receive as backup materials in their meeting packets and include hard copies of only the information necessary for them to make informed decisions on the issues requiring action, with the additional information to be available online or on an as-requested basis.

The Commissioners answered questions from the press, after which they adjourned to meet in closed session.

Following a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, seconded by Commissioner Elder, the Commissioners unanimously voted to meet in closed session at 12:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room to discuss legal matters permitted under the provisions of Section 3-305(b)(7) and (8) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and to perform administrative functions. Also present at the closed session were Harold L. Higgins, Chief Administrative Officer; Kelly Shannahan, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer; Maureen Howarth, County Attorney; Ed Baker, Interim County Attorney; Kim Moses, Public Information Officer; and Stacey Norton, Human Resources Director. Topics discussed and

actions taken included consulting with counsel to obtain legal advice, performing administrative functions, and reviewing potential litigation.

Following their closed session meeting, the Commissioners adjourned to meet again on March 21, 2017.