

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

June 20, 2017

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

Following a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, seconded by Commissioner Purnell, 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; Kim Moses, Public Information Officer; and Stacey Norton, Human Resources Director. Topics discussed and actions taken included: laterally transferring Scott Brown from Plant Operator II (Collections) to Plant Operator II (Treatment) to replace Wallace Harris upon retirement, promoting Stephen Mitchell from Maintenance Worker III to Plant Operator Trainee, temporarily promoting Monroe Green and Norman Layfield from Maintenance Worker II's to Plant Operator Trainees to cover temporary vacancies within the Water & Wastewater Division of Public Works; posting to fill vacancies for a Maintenance Worker II for the Water & Wastewater Division and a Roads Worker II for the Roads Division of Public Works, a Parks Worker II for Recreation & Parks, an Office Assistant V for Economic Development, a part-time Document Imager II and a full-time Document Imager III for the Treasurer's Office, and an IT Database Administrator for Emergency Services; 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 reviewed and approved the open and closed session minutes of their June 6, 2017 meeting as presented.

The Commissioners and Human Resources Director Stacey Norton presented retirement commendations to the following recently retired employees for their dedicated service to Worcester County Government: Public Works Solid Waste Division Transfer Station Attendant Gloria Shockley (22 years), Public Works Maintenance Division Building Maintenance Mechanic III Eddie Wimbrow, Jr. (24 years), Public Works Water and Wastewater Plant Operator III Wally Harris (27 years), Emergency Services Communications Clerk II Angela

Ainsworth (24 years), Environmental Programs Health Specialist III Susan Hughes (27 years), and Department of Liquor Control Warehouse Operations Manager Charles Littleton (43 years).

Pursuant to the written request of Board of Education (BOE) Chief Financial Officer Vincent E. Tolbert and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Commission President Bunting to sign the BOE's Annual Budget Certification Statement, which certifies County funds of \$83,870,125 for BOE expenses, \$566,100 for school construction, and \$10,720,812 for Debt Service for BOE projects in the FY18 County Operating Budget.

Pursuant to the written request of Mr. Tolbert and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously approved the County Appropriation Transmittal Schedule for FY18 for the BOE totaling \$83,870,125.

Economic Development Deputy Director Kathryn Gordon advised the Commissioners that the Tri-County Council (TCC) for the Lower Eastern Shore agreed to commit \$10,000 to cover salaries for two students who will begin interning at NASA on June 5, as part of the 2017 STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) Internship Program through Economic Development; however, TCC funding will not be available until July 1, 2017, and the students' combined salaries by that point in time should total approximately \$4,000. Therefore, she requested authorization to fund the first portion of their salaries with funds available within the FY17 Economic Development budget.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously approved the request as presented.

Emergency Services Director Fred Webster presented the Commissioners with the final draft of the Worcester County Emergency Operations Plan, which was previously presented to the Commissioners on September 6, 2016 and since revised in cooperation with County Attorney Maureen Howarth to incorporate the changes proposed by the Commissioners and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency. Commissioner Church thanked Mr. Webster and Emergency Planner Tom Kane for their diligence in updating the County's Emergency Operations Plan. Commissioners Bertino and Bunting concurred.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution No. 17-11 adopting the Worcester County Emergency Operations Plan as updated.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution No. 17-12 adopting the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund Budget for July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018, as conceptually approved after their public hearing on June 6, 2017.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution No. 17-13 adopting the Sanitary Service Area Budgets, Assessments and Charges and Establishing Classifications for the Water and Wastewater Enterprise Fund for July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018, as conceptually approved after their public hearing on June 6, 2017.

The Commissioners conducted a public hearing on Rezoning Case No. 407, for an application submitted by Attorney Hugh Cropper, on behalf of Douglas and Tammara Clark, for an amendment to the Official Zoning Maps to rezone approximately 12.87 acres of land located on the easterly side of U.S. Rt. 113 and northerly terminus of Handy Lane, north of MD Rt. 610, and more specifically identified on Tax Map 9 as Parcels 301 and 370 in the Fifth Tax District of Worcester County, Maryland, from A-1 Agricultural District to A-2 Agricultural District. Staff members present at the hearing were Development Review and Permitting Director Ed Tudor and Deputy Director Phyllis Wimbrow. County Attorney Maureen Howarth informed the public of the procedures in rezoning cases. She then swore in those individuals who planned to give testimony during the hearing. Mr. Tudor reviewed the application. Ms. Wimbrow entered the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact into the record and stated that, according to the application for rezoning, the applicants' claim as the basis for their rezoning request was that there was a mistake in the existing zoning and that he does not assert that there has been a change in the character of the neighborhood. She stated that the petitioned area has been zoned A-1, since the mid 1960s, and that classification was retained in the 1992 and 2009 comprehensive rezonings. Ms. Wimbrow stated that all adjoining properties are zoned A-1, as are most properties to the east, west, and north, while the intersection corners at U.S. Rt. 113 with MD Rt. 610 and Hammond Road are zoned C-2 General Commercial District, with the exception of the northeasterly corner, which is zoned A-1, and an area to the south of the petitioned area abutting the railroad tracks and Old Stage Road, which is zoned I-1 Light Industrial District. Ms. Wimbrow advised that the Planning Commission found that there is a mistake in the existing zoning of the petitioned area and that Parcel 301 should have been given an A-2 designation during the 2009 comprehensive rezoning in light of the existing contractor's shop/storage facility on the site and the vested site plan approval for additional units because those uses were made non-conforming by their removal from the A-1 regulations and placement in the newly created A-2 instead. The Planning Commission further found that because of its highly-disturbed state and location, Parcel 370 cannot be productively put to agricultural use and should be placed in the same zoning classification as Parcel 301. Based on this review, the Planning Commission concluded that a change in zoning would be more desirable in terms of the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan and gave a favorable recommendation to Rezoning Case No. 407, seeking a rezoning of the petitioned area from A-1 Agricultural District to A-2 Agricultural District.

Commissioner Bunting opened the floor to receive public comment.

Mr. Cropper, attorney for the applicant, concurred with the Planning Commission and staff's assessment, advised that the basis for the proposed change in zoning from A-1 to A-2 is that there is a mistake in the existing zoning of the petitioned area, and stated that in 2007 the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved a special exception to locate contractors' shops on the more northerly of the two properties; however, while the site's existing zoning was retained during the 2009 comprehensive rezoning, the special exception permitting these types of structures in the A-1 zoning was eliminated, thus rendering the structures as non-conforming uses. Additionally, he maintained that the more southerly of the two properties within the petitioned area is a highly-disturbed, triangular site adjacent to the railroad, State Highway Administration (SHA) property, and Handy Lane, which cannot be used for farming or other similar uses. Therefore, he asked the Commissioners to support the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact and recommendation for rezoning. He stated that the A-2 zoning would make

the existing boat storage on the property a conforming use.

In response to questions by Mr. Cropper, Land Planner and Landscape Architect Bob Hand stated that in his professional opinion the current A-1 zoning is a mistake, as this small, disturbed, landlocked property is not suitable for farming; whereas, it would be suitable for uses allowed by special exception within the A-2 Agricultural zoning district. He further agreed with the Planning Commission's findings and recommendation in this case.

There being no further public comment, Commissioner Bunting closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously adopted the Planning Commission's Findings of Fact and approved the rezoning based on a mistake in the existing zoning since the last comprehensive rezoning on November 3, 2009.

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director John Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Mr. Tustin to apply for a Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Boating Services Waterway Improvement Fund Grant of \$4,500 to cover the cost of portable toilet services at the County boat ramps for FY18.

The Commissioners met with Mr. Tustin to discuss the details of the \$120,000 grant that was awarded to the Circuit Court for the design and construction of a secured parking facility for Circuit Court Judges in an existing parking area on Franklin Street in the area of the emergency generator, and to review a proposal in the amount of \$21,460 from Davis, Bowen and Friedel (DBF) for the survey, design, and local approval of the facility. Mr. Tustin advised that the County has one year to complete the project, with a possible one-year extension if required, and he suggested that DBF is best suited to complete the work within this time frame, since the company previously served as the town engineer for the Town of Snow Hill and has already established the relationships necessary to work with the town and its Historic Commission to design a facility that meets both their zoning and historical requirements. Upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously accepted the proposal from DBF for the design of the secured parking facility.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bunting, Mr. Tustin advised that the grant should cover all project design and construction costs.

The Commissioners met with Mr. Tustin to review and discuss a written request from Ocean Reef Board of Directors Vice President Carol Ann Beres requesting the center island entrance in the Ocean Reef subdivision in West Ocean City be repaired and reconfigured, making it smaller and locating it further back from the entrance to provide easier access for large vehicles. Mr. Tustin stated that the request was predicated on damage to the existing concrete curb that appears to have resulted from a truck running up onto the curbing and into the mulch bed. While Mr. Tustin did not support the request to reconfigure the entrance, he recommended that each subdivision with concrete curbing be evaluated by his staff to determine the extent of curb repairs and replacements that may be needed countywide, so County staff could develop an estimated budget for this work to be performed in FY19 subject to funding approval in next year's budget.

In response to a question by Commissioner Lockfaw, Mr. Tustin stated that there is adequate space and turning radius for fire trucks and other large vehicles to maneuver safely around the entrances, and the damage in this case likely occurred from carelessness.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Lockfaw, the Commissioners unanimously authorized County staff to evaluate the condition of the concrete curbing in all subdivisions Countywide to determine the extent of repairs that may be needed and to develop an estimated budget for this work.

Pursuant to the request of County Engineer Bill Bradshaw and upon a motion by Commissioner Church, the Commissioners unanimously accepted the contract from Gipe Associates, Inc. of Easton, Maryland for design and contract administration to improve select mechanical and electrical systems within the County Jail at a cost of \$283,000 plus expenses. Mr. Bradshaw stated that repairs to critical systems, which are failing due to age and condition, are needed for winter heating. He noted that, as a result of these failures, staff reviewed all of the critical equipment that is vulnerable and would negatively impact Jail operations upon failure, developed a priority list of needed repairs, and solicited a proposal from Gipe, which formerly provided a conceptual study of Jail mechanical and electrical system improvements, to begin detailed engineering to address these priority items. These systems include: the electrical service switchgear, kitchen ventilation/cooling/heating, generator emergency power, failed air handler units, corridor ventilation/cooling/heating, hot water capacity and redundancy, cooling/heating in small service rooms, including the chapel, barber shop, and IT closet, as well as ancillary components associated with the heating systems. He concluded that the priority list does not include the housing unit facilities.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Jail Warden Donna Bounds advised that she does not foresee the need to hire additional staff during construction, but she may need help with meal preparation, for which she hopes to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with either the Board of Education or Eastern Correctional Institution (ECI) to assist with preparing meals for the inmates while the kitchen area is being repaired.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell in response to a request from Hugh Cropper, IV, attorney for Sun Properties, LLC, and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution No. 17-14, withdrawing the Water and Sewerage Plan Amendment to expand the Fort Whaley Campground wastewater treatment system. Mr. Mitchell advised that Resolution No. 16-29, adopted by the County Commissioners on December 20, 2016, approved the addition of 63 campsites to the existing 210-lot campground.

Commissioner Bunting recognized Mr. Cropper.

Mr. Cropper advised that there have been some unanticipated operational difficulties with the original system, and after these issues are addressed he will submit a new Water and Sewerage Plan Amendment application. He thanked the Commissioners and County staff for their assistance with this matter.

The Commissioners met with Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Kelly Shannahan to discuss the recommendation of the Department of Liquor Control Management Committee to

continue County operations of the Shore Spirits Retail Liquor Store (RLS) in Pocomoke until Kalpesh Patel, who was awarded the bid to purchase the real estate and inventory at that store by the Commissioners on April 4, 2017, receives his license and is able to settle on the property. Mr. Shannahan stated that, since the bid was awarded, Mr. Patel has signed the contracts to purchase the real estate, including the furniture, fixtures and improvements for a total price of \$950,000 and to purchase all of the inventory in the store at the cost paid by the County (estimated in the contract at \$194,812), plus a mark-up of 15% for a purchase price of \$224,033.80, but that final settlement is contingent upon the Board of License Commissioners issuing him a Class "A" Beer/Wine/Liquor license to operate a private RLS at this location. He further explained that while Mr. Patel applied for his license in a timely fashion, and the Board of License Commissioners conducted a hearing to consider issuing the license on May 17, the board postponed their decision until they meet again on June 21 to allow sufficient time to review evidence presented at the hearing by Attorney Hugh Cropper, who opposed the license on behalf of his clients. Mr. Shannahan concluded that it is unlikely that the County will be able to settle on the Asset Purchase Agreement for the inventory and the Agreement of Sale for the real estate by June 30, as originally planned, based on the delay in issuing the license.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to continue County operations of the Shore Spirits RLS in Pocomoke until Kalpesh Patel has secured the Class "A" Beer/Wine/Liquor license and is able to settle on the property in accordance with the agreements.

Pursuant to the request of Recreation and Parks Director Paige Hurley and the recommendation of the Worcester County Recreation Advisory Board and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously approved the FY18 Worcester County Program Open Space (POS) Annual Program, which includes \$5,974,150 in proposed project requests from the municipalities and the County for FY18 and beyond. Mr. Hurley stated that POS grants are awarded by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for acquisition and development of land to be used for outdoor recreation, for recreation development improvements throughout the County, and for the support of major capital rehabilitation projects on County-owned land that provides recreation and open space opportunities for the public.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Hurley and the recommendation of the Worcester County Recreation Advisory Board and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to allocate FY18 POS funding of \$487,928 as follows: \$407,928 to Worcester County, and dividing the remaining balance of \$80,000 equally in \$20,000 increments between the four municipalities, Berlin, Ocean City, Pocomoke, and Snow Hill. Mr. Hurley stated that this year's award represents a 71% increase over FY17 funding of \$284,405.

The Commissioners met in legislative session.

The Commissioners conducted a hearing to receive public comment on Bill 17-4 (Electrical Standards - Revocation or Suspension of License), which was introduced by Commissioners Bertino, Bunting, Church, Elder, Lockfaw, Mitrecic, and Purnell on April 25, 2017. Development Review and Permitting Director Ed Tudor reviewed the bill, which

renumbers Subparagraph BR 2-215(a)(4) as BR 2-215(a)(5) and enacts a new Subparagraph BR 2-215(a)(4) of the Building Regulations Article of the Code of Public Local Laws of Worcester County, Maryland to expand the standards to include a provision whereby the Board of Electrical Examiners could revoke or suspend a license upon the conviction of a licensee of a felony, or for a misdemeanor that is directly related to the fitness and qualification of the applicant or licensee to provide electrical service in accordance with State laws.

Commissioner Bunting opened the floor to receive public comment.

There being no public comment, Commissioner Bunting closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Elder pointed out that there should be a comma between the words “felony” and “or a misdemeanor, as its absence alters the intended meaning of the legislation. County Attorney Maureen Howarth concurred and recommended amending Bill 17-4 to include a semicolon, rather than a comma, to mirror the State law. The Commissioners also concurred and directed staff to amend Bill 17-4 as recommended by legal counsel.

The Commissioners conducted a public hearing on Bill 17-5 (Electrical Standards - Licensing Requirements for Homeowners), which was introduced by Commissioners Mitrecic and Bunting on April 25, 2017. Mr. Tudor reviewed the bill, which would amend the Building Regulations Article of the Code of Public Local Laws of Worcester County, Maryland to clarify the exception to electrical licensing requirements that allows a person who is the owner and occupant of a single-family dwelling to perform electrical work on a private home. Specifically, Bill 17-5 repeals and reenacts the following sections of the Electrical Standards Subtitle: Section BR 2-207(f)(2) to clarify that the licensing provisions of the Electrical Standards do not apply to any person doing minor electrical work, as defined in the Electrical Standards Subtitle, on a single-family dwelling which they own and occupy and for which they personally purchase all materials and perform all minor electrical work; and Section BR 2-219(a) to clarify that a permit and subsequent inspection is required for any electrical work in compliance with the provisions of Section BR 2-207, entitled Licensing requirements; exceptions. Mr. Tudor stated that the purpose for this bill arose from concerns by the Board of Electrical Examiners that often the work done under these permits is not being completed by the homeowner, but by unlicensed contractors. He advised that the proposed bill clarifies that only defined minor electrical work by a homeowner is exempt from permitting, while all other work must be performed by a licensed electrician.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Mr. Tudor stated that this bill would not prohibit a homeowner from completing minor electrical repairs and installations on existing structures, such as running electricity to an existing shed or installing landscape lighting; however, it would preclude a homeowner from wiring a new addition.

Commissioner Bunting opened the floor to receive public comment.

Board of Electrical Examiners member Michael Patchett stated that Bill 17-5 is necessary to close an existing loophole whereby homeowners are pulling their own permits and hiring unlicensed, uninsured contractors to wire their homes, which is unsafe. Commissioner Mitrecic concurred, stating that homeowners who hire unlicensed contractors have no right of recourse in the event that something goes wrong. Commissioner Elder disagreed, stating that the homeowner and not the government should have the right to make that decision.

Board of Electrical Examiners member Duane Duncan stated that this loophole occurs

most often when individuals are remodeling homes to sell, and the new buyer has no idea that there could be serious Code and safety violations with the wiring. He stated that he has been called to numerous homes to repair faulty wiring caused by unlicensed contractors. He urged the Commissioners to adopt Bill 17-5.

There being no further public comment, Commissioner Bunting closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners voted 6-1, with Commissioner Elder voting in opposition, to adopt Bill 17-5 (Electrical Standards - Licensing Requirements for Homeowners) as presented.

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Kelly Shannahan presented the Commissioners with a copy of Bill 17-4 as revised to add the semicolon as suggested by Commissioner Elder and confirmed by County Attorney Howarth. Upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously approved the proposed amendment to Bill 17-4.

Upon a subsequent motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners adopted Bill 17-4 (Electrical Standards - Revocation or Suspension of License) as amended.

The Commissioners conducted a public hearing on Bill 17-6 (Zoning - Supported Living Facilities in the C-2 General Commercial District), which was introduced by Commissioners Bertino, Bunting, Church, Elder, Lockfaw, Mitrecic, and Purnell on May 16, 2017. Commissioner Church recused himself and left the meeting due to a potential conflict of interest. Mr. Tudor reviewed the bill, which would amend the Zoning and Subdivision Control Article to add a definition of “supported living facility”, to revise the definition of “dwelling or dwelling unit” to exclude a “supported living facility unit”, to allow supported living facilities and associated uses as principal permitted uses in the C-2 General Commercial District, and to establish specific parking requirements for such uses. Mr. Tudor stated that the Planning Commission and DRP staff had expressed a number of concerns with the original text amendment; however, Attorney Hugh Cropper, IV, Esquire, who submitted the text amendment on behalf of Diakonia, Inc., worked with County staff to develop a mutually-agreeable version, which the Planning Commission then gave a unanimous favorable recommendation, and which is before the Commissioners today.

Commissioner Bunting opened the floor to receive public comment.

Mr. Cropper and Diakonia Board of Directors President Allie Church thanked County staff for all their hard work to develop Bill 17-6, which suits the needs of Diakonia. Ms. Church stated that Diakonia, which receives more than 200 calls a month from people who need housing assistance and has to turn numerous individuals away without service, has outgrown its existing facilities in West Ocean City, and the board has a plan to develop a mixed-use facility on a donated property located on MD Route 611 which is currently zoned C-2 General Commercial District with 50 housing units, a thrift store, and rooms for a veteran’s office and other support purposes. She noted that the new project will not go up tomorrow, but approving Bill 17-6 will be the first step toward meeting this new initiative. Ms. Church asked members of the audience from Diakonia who supported this request to stand, upon which ten people stood in support.

There being no further public comment, Commissioner Bunting closed the public hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Bill 17-6 (Zoning - Supported Living Facilities in the C-2 General Commercial District) as presented. Commissioner Church returned to the meeting.

The Commissioners met with Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell to review a proposed text amendment submitted by staff that would amend the Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance to incorporate updated regulations that were adopted by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on April 28, 2017 and became effective May 8, 2017. Mr. Mitchell stated that these changes are part of the commitment by Governor Larry Hogan's Administration to review problematic regulations and will provide greater flexibility to contractors, extended the plan approval period, and relax an inspection requirement.

Following some discussion, Commissioners Bertino, Bunting, Church, Elder, Lockfaw, Mitrecic, and Purnell introduced the aforementioned text amendment as Bill 17-7 (Natural Resources - Erosion and Sediment Control) and scheduled a public hearing on the bill for July 18, 2017.

Commissioner Bunting closed the legislative session.

The Commissioners recessed for five minutes.

The Commissioners met with Chief Administrative Officer Harold Higgins and Finance Officer Phil Thompson to discuss a proposal by Commissioner Mitrecic to eliminate the cost-share for medical insurance benefits for dependents of new County employees hired after a certain date upon their retirement. Mr. Higgins reviewed the current policy under which dependents of retirees who retire under the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System or Worcester County Pension Plan with a minimum of 15 years of County service (or 5 years of County service if hired before November 1, 2007), are eligible to continue participating in the County Medical Insurance Plan with CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield at the same cost-share as the retired County employee, which is 10% for retired County employees who were hired before July 1, 2015 or 20% for retired County employees who were hired on or after July 1, 2015. Mr. Higgins stated that under Commissioner Mitrecic's proposal, dependents of current County employees would still be permitted to participate in the County Medical Insurance Plan at the above-referenced cost-share rates upon the eligible employee's retirement. However, dependents of new County employees hired after a particular date would be required to pay 100% of the difference in the premium to continue that participation after the employee's retirement, while eligible employees could continue to participate under the County Medical Insurance Plan at the above-referenced cost-share rates for individual coverage. Mr. Higgins stated that, while the County would not recognize a cost-savings in benefit premiums for 15 years, when the first new hires become eligible to retire, there would be savings in the form of reduced annual contributions for the County's Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) obligation.

Commissioner Mitrecic stated that OPEB obligations are bankrupting jurisdictions throughout the United States, and he pointed out that Worcester County should follow in the steps of private employers who by and large do not offer medical insurance benefits to employees or their dependents upon retirement by implementing this new proposal effective for all new hires beginning July 1, 2017. In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Mr.

Thompson stated that the current Annual Required Contribution (ARC) for OPEB to be fully funded is \$2.7 million for County employees and \$16.1 million for Board of Education (BOE) employees. He stated that the County is well ahead of its peers in funding its OPEB obligation for County employees.

Commissioner Mitrecic made a motion to eliminate the cost-share for medical insurance benefits for dependents of new County employees hired after July 1, 2017 upon their retirement which would require such dependents to pay 100% of the difference in the premium to continue their participation in the County plan after the employee's retirement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bertino.

In response to a question by Commissioner Church, Mr. Thompson stated that roughly 2,200 County and BOE employees, 700 of which are retirees, participate in the County's medical insurance benefits program. Commissioner Church stated that he does not disagree with Commissioner Mitrecic's proposal; however, he would like to hear from the BOE about how such a change might impact their recruitment efforts for the upcoming school year before he is prepared to vote on the matter. Commissioner Purnell concurred, stating that while the Commissioners should perhaps consider eliminating benefits to dependents of new hires upon retirement from County employment, she would prefer to postpone such discussions to provide the BOE with the opportunity to weigh-in on the issue. Commissioner Lockfaw agreed and stated that he would be willing to delay further discussions to receive input from the BOE, but he preferred that the decision be made as soon as possible, perhaps in July 2017.

After much discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Elder, the Commissioners voted 5-2, with Commissioners Bunting and Mitrecic voting in opposition, to table further discussions on Commissioner Mitrecic's motion until rescheduled by the President. President Bunting subsequently agreed to schedule further discussion of this matter for their meeting of September 5, 2017 and to request that written comments be submitted by the BOE in advance of that meeting.

The Commissioners answered questions from the press, after which they adjourned to meet again on Wednesday, July 5, 2017, due to the Independence Day Holiday on Tuesday, July 4, 2017.