

Minutes of the County Commissioners of Worcester County, Maryland

April 1, 2025

Budget Work Session

Theodore J. Elder, president
Eric J. Fiori, vice president
Caryn G. Abbott
Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.
Madison J. Bunting, Jr.
Joseph M. Mitrecic
Diana Purnell

The commissioners met at 1:00 p.m. with Budget Officer Kim Reynolds to conduct a work session to review the Worcester County Departmental Operating Budget Requests for FY26, as presented to the commissioners during their March 19, 2024 meeting. The requested FY26 Operating Budget currently reflects estimated revenues of \$284,579,909 and requested expenditures of \$286,835,734, leaving a shortfall of \$2,260,825, which must be reconciled either with reductions in expenditures, additional revenues, or a combination of the two.

Circuit Court Judge Brian D. Shockley reviewed the proposed FY26 Circuit Court Budget of \$2,313,737, representing an increase of \$44,258 or 2%.

Health Officer Becky Jones reviewed the proposed FY26 Health Department Budget of \$12,581,419, representing an increase of \$865,112 or 7.4%. This budget variance is due to the State mandate on core funding and doubles the increase from FY26.

Pursuant to the request of Ms. Jones and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously agreed to send a letter to the State secretary of health requesting that the local share of the Core Funding match be adjusted.

In response to request from Commissioner Abbott, Ms. Jones agreed to provide information regarding the number of Health Department social workers and CRT staff working daily with the public schools.

Commission on Aging (COA) Director John Dorrough reviewed the proposed FY26 COA Budget of \$2,067,837, representing an increase of \$291,532 or 16.4%.

Board of Elections Deputy Director Theresa Riggins reviewed the proposed FY26 Board of Elections Budget of \$1,607,132, representing an increase of \$108,152 or 7.2%.

In response to concerns raised by Commissioner Elder, Ms. Riggins agreed to look at polling places for District 4 to address concerns that some residents must travel too far to vote.

Tourism and Economic Development Director Melanie Pursel reviewed the proposed FY26 Economic Development Budget of \$633,606, representing an increase of \$41,156 or 6.9%; and the proposed FY26 Tourism Budget of \$1,723,039, representing an increase of \$79,977 or 4.9%.

Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell reviewed the proposed FY26 Environmental Programs Budget of \$2,933,319, representing an increase of \$153,922 or 5.5%.

Commissioner Abbott left the meeting.

Public Works Director Dallas Baker reviewed the proposed FY26 Public Works Administration/Fleet Maintenance Budget of \$1,496,863, for an increase of \$186,841 or 14.3%; FY26 Roads Division Budget of \$7,557,795, representing an increase of \$1,721,600 or 29.5%; Maintenance Division Budget of \$3,051,085, representing an increase of \$635,631 or 26.3%; Mosquito Control budget of \$296,482, representing an increase of \$68,901 or 30.3%; Homeowner Convenience Centers Budget of \$968,561, representing a decrease of (\$14,502) or – 1.5%; Recycling Budget of \$1,250,950, for an increase of \$25,418 or 2.1%;

Enterprise Fund Controller Quinn Dittrich reviewed the proposed FY26 Solid Waste Budget of \$5,383,068, representing an increase of \$5,960 or 0.1%; and FY26 Water and Wastewater Budget of \$21,652,522, representing an increase of \$3,489,836 or 19.2% (based on Option 3).

Commissioner Bertino left the meeting at 3:08 p.m.

The commissioners adjourned their meeting to meet again on May 6, 2025.