

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

July 1, 2025

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

Following a motion by Commissioner Fiori, 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 (GP) Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and to perform administrative functions permitted under the provisions of Section GP 3-104. Also present at the closed session were Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Candace Savage, County Attorney Roscoe Leslie, Public Information Officer Kim Moses, Warden Tim Mulligan, and Human Resources Director Stacey Norton and Deputy Director Pat Walls. Topics discussed and actions taken included the following: a personnel update; hiring Phillip "Alex" Franklin, III as a maintenance worker II within the Water and Wastewater Division; promoting Recreation Program Manager II Kyle Jarmon to special events and marketing manager within Recreation and Parks, and promoting Senior Corporal Walter Donoway and Corporal Yasmine Jenkins to sergeants within the County Jail; discussing the acquisition of real property for a public purpose; receiving legal advice from counsel; and performing administrative functions, including discussing potential board appointments.

Following a motion by Commissioner Abbott, seconded by Commissioner Fiori, the commissioners unanimously voted to adjourn their closed session at 10:06 a.m.

After the closed session, the commissioners reconvened in open session. Commissioner Elder called the meeting to order, and following a morning prayer by Dr. Roxie Dennis of Ambassadors for Christ International Ministries of Berlin and pledge of allegiance, announced the topics discussed during the morning closed session.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners voted 5-2, with Commissioners Abbott and Fiori voting in opposition, to approve the closed session minutes of their work session on May 13, 2025 as amended. Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously approved the open and closed session minutes of their regularly scheduled meeting on June 17 as presented.

The commissioners presented a proclamation to Recreation and Parks Director Kelly

Rados and staff members recognizing July as Park and Recreation Month.

The commissioners received comments from the public.

John Adkins of Ocean City thanked the commissioners for allowing public comments, but suggested they take place at the end of the meeting, not at the beginning.

Snow Hill Councilman Edward Lee also thanked the commissioners for allowing public comments, as communications are effective when they are eyeball to eyeball.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously approved by consent agenda item numbers 2-8 as follows: applications for an FY26 Sex Offender Compliance and Enforcement in Maryland (SOCM) Grant of \$8,110 and an FY26 Police Accountability, Community, and Transparency (PACT) Grant of \$300,000 for use within the Sheriff's Office; an ARPA Grant Extension until March 31, 2026; accepting a Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore Women's Grant of \$3,000 for use within Tourism and Economic Development; accepting a Greenspace Equity Program Grant of \$100,000 for use within Recreation and Parks; accepting a Maryland SolarAPP+ Grant of \$7,000 for use within Development Review and Permitting; and purchasing two Toro field groomers for \$63,067.09 from Turf Equipment and Supply Company for use within Recreation and Parks.

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director Dallas Baker in response to concerns raised by citizens and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously agreed to reduce the speed limit on Hotel Road from 50 mph to 40 mph and post the new speed limit on this currently unposted road. Advisory speed signs of 25 mph have been installed in the vicinity of several sharp turns on this road.

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director Dallas Baker in response to concerns raised by citizens and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously agreed to reduce the speed limit on Tindley Road from 50 mph to 40 mph and post the new speed limit on this currently unposted road. The commissioners further agreed to post a speed limit of 25 mph on Acorn Road, a dead-end road that is also currently unposted.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Baker and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously agreed to schedule Citizens Scrap Tire Drop Off Day for Saturday, October 4, 2025, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Central Landfill in Newark. This event is for County residents only and is not open to area businesses.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Baker and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously authorized a payment totaling \$3,054 to the Maryland Department of the Environment to settle four violation fines for sanitary sewer overflows that occurred between January and August 2024. In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Mr. Baker confirmed that the fees would be paid with funds from the sanitary districts where the overflows occurred.

The commissioners conducted a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed funding for the Lewis Road sewer project. Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell

reviewed the \$4,498,000 project to provide a total of 60 equivalent dwelling units of sewer service to Lewis Road utilizing USDA grant funds totaling \$3.8 million to cover 86.3% of project costs and USDA loan funds of \$618,000 at 2.5% interest to cover the remaining costs. The loan repayments are proposed to be split between the 60 equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) on Lewis Road at a cost of approximately \$105 per EDU per quarter for 40 years. He then reviewed the FY26 proposed rates for Lewis Road customers.

Commissioner Elder opened the floor to receive public comments.

Gabe Purnell of Mary Road discussed the history leading up to this project, thanked Commissioner Purnell for championing this project, and urged the commissioners to support the extension of sewer to Lewis Road as requested.

Larry Duffy of White Tail Lane also reviewed the history of efforts to provide water and sewer to Lewis Road, urged the commissioners to support the proposed sewer project, and asked the commissioners to do what they can to lower the sewer cost of roughly \$400 per quarter, which would place a hardship on the many elderly residents who live on fixed incomes.

There being no further public comment, Commissioner Elder closed the floor.

In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young confirmed that 100 percent of project costs will be covered by federal sources.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the commissioners unanimously accepted the proposed federal funding and agreed to move forward with the Lewis Road sewer project.

Pursuant to the request of Procurement Officer Nick Rice and Mr. Baker and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the commissioners unanimously awarded the lowest responsive and responsible bid for the Lewis Road gravity sewer system and pump system to Teal Construction Inc., for \$3,860,000.

Pursuant to the request of Human Resources Director Stacey Norton and Mr. Baker and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously agreed to convert one vehicle and equipment mechanic position to an inventory shop foreman position to establish a point person who will be responsible for performing repair work and preventative maintenance as well as leading the other vehicle and equipment mechanic. In response to a question by Commissioner Fiori, Mr. Baker stated that the workshop only has two bays, so staff will not seek to add a third mechanic in this division.

Pursuant to the request of Library Director Jennifer Ranck and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously accepted the proposal from Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc. to provide additional architectural and engineering services for the Snow Hill Library renovation project for a total existing amount and additional service increase totaling \$274,000.

The commissioners answered questions from the press, after which they adjourned to meet again on July 15, 2025.