

Minutes of the County Commissioners of Worcester County, Maryland

April 21, 2026

Theodore J. Elder, president
Madison J. Bunting, Jr., vice president
Caryn G. Abbott
Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.
Eric J. Fiori
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, and Human Resources Director Stacey Norton and Deputy Director Pat Walls, Warden Tim Mulligan and Assistant Wardens Shytina Drummond and Latoya Everett. Topics discussed and actions taken included the following: a personnel update, promoting Grounds Worker II Zamar Collins to grounds crew foreman; hiring Conner Patton as a project engineer, and other matters with Human Resources; receiving legal advice from counsel; and performing administrative functions, including discussing potential board appointments.

Following a motion by Commissioner Bertino, seconded by Commissioner Bunting, the commissioners unanimously voted to adjourn their closed session at 10:03 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 Pastor Roxie Dennis of Ambassadors for Christ in Berlin and pledge of allegiance, announced the topics discussed during the morning closed session.

The commissioners reviewed and approved the open and closed session minutes of their April 7, 2026 meeting as presented.

The commissioners presented the National Child Abuse Prevention Month proclamation to representatives from the Worcester County Child Advocacy Center, DSS, and Life Crisis.

The commissioners presented a commendation to Stephen Decatur High School senior Trey Rill, honoring him for his service as Worcester County's Page to the 2026 Maryland General Assembly.

Commissioner Elder opened the floor to receive public comments.

Laura and Dennis Parker, residents of Gum Point Road, urged the commissioners to proceed with the pilot speed hump program on Gum Point Road to address ongoing speeding and safety concerns in their neighborhood. Ms. Parker submitted a petition and emphasized that 90% of impacted neighbors signed in support of implementing traffic calming measures, with 27 signers specifically backing the pilot program. She stressed that safety must come first and argued the program should at least be tested, especially given that traffic from a nearby gated community cuts through their area while avoiding similar impacts themselves.

Mr. Parker described Gum Point Road as a racetrack, expressed frustration over what he characterized as a lack of responsiveness from local representatives, and emphasized that those in the gated community are not the ones who bear the burden of dangerous speeding.

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

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously approved by consent agenda item numbers 2-10 as follows: purchasing a new fire and security alarm system for Solid Waste from Absolute Security for \$26,855.95; purchasing a three-yard compactor for the Berlin Homeowners Convenience Center (HOCC) from Mid-Atlantic Waste Systems for \$59,380.90; awarding a two-year contract for refuse collection to Republic for \$30,053.16 annually; awarding a five-year contract for propane gas to Sharp Energy; awarding the contract to develop the Edgewater Acres pump station replacement to Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP for \$98,221, which includes a 5% contingency fund; combining the Worcester County Drug and Alcohol Council and the Worcester County Mental Health Advisory Committee; scheduling a public hearing for Rezoning Case 444, seeking to rezone approximately 0.78 acre of land identified on Tax Map 63 as Parcel 106 in Snow Hill from A-1 Agricultural District to C-2 General Commercial District; agreeing not to move forward with the public hearing on the proposed Gum Point Road Speed Hump Update, due to overwhelming public opposition to the project; and adopting the Worcester County Local Road Safety Plan (LRSP).

Pursuant to the request of Superintendent of Schools Dr. Annette Wallace and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the commissioners unanimously approved the Berlin Intermediate School Feasibility Study, which will be submitted to the Interagency on School Construction for final review and approval. Upon a subsequent motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners voted 6-1, with Commissioner Mitrecic voting in opposition, to reaffirm that County funding is contingent upon County Procurement Officer Ed Welch being involved in all future BIS project discussions.

Ocean City Development Corporation (OCDC) Executive Director Zachary Bankert and Board President Joe Wilson updated the commissioners about the OCDC's revitalization efforts.

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director Dallas Baker and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously approved the purchase of water and wastewater chemicals from various vendors for a total cost of \$1,414,994.02.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Welch and upon a motion by Commissioner Abbott, the commissioners unanimously awarded the bid to replace the HVAC system at the recreation center to Insite Build for \$1,870,995. Commissioner Abbott supported adding local business and

subcontractor preference to bid requirements. Mr. Young said that staff will provide draft policy language for the commissioners to consider at a future meeting.

Based on findings presented by Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Candace Savage and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the commissioners unanimously agreed to reduce the debt service fee within the Ocean Pines Sanitary Service Area (SSA) from \$36 to \$18 for most customers beginning in FY27.

The commissioners reviewed a memo from Ms. Savage advising that the FY25 actuarial Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) valuation showed a \$6.5 million liability reduction for County Government, resulting in a \$29 million net OPEB asset and 148.89% funding level, while the Board of Education's liability decreased by \$7.3 million to \$88 million, with funding at 41.15%. Based on staff's recommendation and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the commissioners unanimously agreed to shift the FY27 OPEB allocation from 20/80 to 10/90 to direct more support toward the Board of Education's remaining liability needs.

The commissioners answered questions from the press.

After their regular session, the commissioners adjourned to conduct a work session to review FY27 budget requests.

Following their work session, the commissioners adjourned to meet again on May 5, 2026.