

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

February 2, 2016

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

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: promoting Lauren Waddell from Document Imager II to Accounting Clerk I and agreeing to advertise to fill the vacant Document Imager II position within the Treasurer's Office; agreeing to advertise to fill the position of Plumbing and Gas Inspector II within Environmental Programs; acknowledging the hiring of James Richard Eisenhower as a part-time School Security Officer within the Sheriff's Office; modifying meeting procedures to move discussions regarding filling vacancies on County boards and commissions from closed session to open session; 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 minutes of their January 19, 2016 open and closed session meetings as presented.

The Commissioners presented a proclamation recognizing February as Black History Month to Bishop Isaac Jenkins and Miriam J. Cane of Save the Youth in Pocomoke City and invited the public to tour the Government Center where decorative panels highlight the contributions of African Americans who helped shape the Eastern Shore. Bishop Jenkins advised the Commissioners that since opening the program in 1980 more than 4,000 youth have participated in Save the Youth, and more than 300 individuals who had dropped out of high school have gone back to earn their diplomas with assistance from the Save the Youth program. Ms. Cane thanked the Commissioners for their annual grant to Save the Youth, which helps cover operating expenses. She advised that the program can accommodate 35 youth at a time,

and they are actively looking for a larger location to increase program enrollment to 50 participants. Commissioner Bunting thanked Bishop Jenkins and Ms. Cane for their efforts to help disadvantaged youth succeed.

The Commissioners met with Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell and Katherine Munson, Planner IV within Environmental Programs, to review two Rural Legacy Area (RLA) Expansion Grant Applications for the Dividing Creek RLA and the Coastal Bays RLA. Mr. Mitchell explained that, because the County has two RLAs, they are required to indicate which area is preferred for the funding applications. He further advised that in past years they have always alternated preference between the two areas, and this year's application process follows that same pattern, with the Coastal Bays RLA receiving priority.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Church, the Commissioners voted 6-1 with Commissioner Elder voting in opposition, to authorize Commission President Bunting to sign the Coastal Bays Rural Legacy Area (RLA) grant application for FY17, which includes a \$1 million grant request for the Coastal Bays RLA, and stating a preference for the Coastal Bays RLA. Somerset County will also apply jointly with Worcester County for a \$2.076 million grant request for the Dividing Creek RLA. Mr. Mitchell advised that any funds the County receives will be used to purchase voluntary conservation easements in these areas and to fund incidental and administrative costs.

Pursuant to the request of Recreation and Parks Director Paige Hurley and upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, the Commissioners unanimously approved bid specifications to repair the Newtown Park Pavilion.

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director John Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously approved bid specifications to replace the condenser coils in the HVAC rooftop units at the Health Department and the Worcester County Recreation Center in Snow Hill. In response to a question by Commissioner Elder, Mr. Tustin stated that bidders lists are updated on an ongoing basis to include any additional known qualified contractors.

Mr. Tustin advised that the newly renovated Cedar Hall Boat Ramp is once again open for use by recreational boaters. The boat ramp was closed for four months during which time the facility was enhanced to include an extended ramp, floating finger piers, and wheel stops on the ramp.

Atlantic General Hospital (AGH) President and Chief Executive Officer Michael Franklin met with the Commissioners to discuss the 2016 AGH Annual Report and AGH's Strategic Initiatives for Worcester County. Mr. Franklin presented a PowerPoint, which covered AGH's mission, 2020 Strategic Vision; 2016-2020 Strategic Plan; Health and Health Care in Maryland - the Driving Forces for Change; Reducing Potentially Avoidable Hospital Utilization (PAUs) Improves Care; Medicare Waiver & AGH Goals - "Triple Aim" (improving the health of the population, enhancing patient experience and outcomes, and reducing the population's healthcare costs) and the five Rights (care, people, place, partners, and hospital); Living Our Principles and

Our Goals; Accountable Care Organization - Delmarva Health Network; AGH Telehealth Project; Telemedicine at Berlin Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (BNRC); Telemedicine Results/Outcomes - Goal of 13% Reduction in BNRC Patients Admitted to AGH, with Actual Reduction of 17%, and a Goal of 53% Re-Admissions to the Acute Care Hospital, with Actual Re-Admissions of only 15%; Access to Primary and Specialty Care through provision of additional providers in Ocean View, Ocean City, West Fenwick, and Snow Hill; Obesity - One of the Most Pressing Preventable Health Issues in Maryland for Adults and Children; Obesity-Related Health Issues in Maryland; Pioneers in Health Literacy Improvement 2<sup>nd</sup> graders pilot program at Ocean City Elementary School extended to grades 3-5 and serving more than 2,400 students, with a 2016-2017 goal of instituting pilot programs in grades 7 and 8; Patient Electronic Record Keeping Services - revolutionizing the way patients, physicians and other healthcare service providers interact for better delivery of healthcare services; Supportive Care Services; and FY16 Strategic Investments, which include Home Sleep Studies and Supportive Care Services Expansion. Mr. Franklin also reviewed the 2020 Master Facilities Plan - Regional Care Center, Women's Health, Patient Care Area Redesign, Surgical Services Renovation and Clinical Decision Unit, and the Emergency Department; AGH/Health System Financing the Future; Year over Year Comparison; Efficiency and Innovation; Cost Reduction/Saving through Telemedicine Partnership; Community Impact and its FY15 Benefits; and AGH & Health System Vision - to be the leader in caring for people and advancing health for Worcester County residents and visitors.

Commissioner Bunting asked whether people should visit an emergency room or urgent care provider when in need of medical attention, but they cannot be seen by their primary care provider. Dr. Franklin confirmed that visiting an immediate care facility is a better option for someone whose condition does not rise to the level of an emergency, but stated that individuals should follow up with their primary care physicians to assure continuity of care. He cautioned that individuals should not seek assistance from immediate care for ongoing issues for which treatment is already being provided by another physician due to the likelihood of medication problems or contradictory treatment issues. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Franklin for his presentation.

The Commissioners reviewed a letter from Bryan Hall, Vegetation Management Program Coordinator for Choptank Electric Cooperative (CEC), advising that CEC will be performing cyclical tree trimming in Berlin, West Ocean City, Snow Hill and Mt. Olive area during the next year.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Development Review and Permitting Director Ed Tudor and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to schedule a public hearing on Rezoning Case No. 396 for March 1, 2016. This application was submitted by Attorney Hugh Cropper, IV, on behalf of the estate of Mildred L. Parsons/Margaret P. Bunting, and seeks to rezone approximately 11.5 acres of land located on the east side of MD Rt. 589 north of Gum Point Road, and more specifically identified on Tax Map 21 as Parcel 72 in the Third Tax District of Worcester County, Maryland, from A-1 Agricultural District to C-2 General Commercial District. Mr. Tudor advised that the application received a favorable recommendation from the County Planning Commission.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Mr. Tudor and upon a motion by Commissioner Church, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to schedule a public hearing on Rezoning Case No. 395 for March 1, 2016. This application was submitted by Mr. Cropper on behalf of Sun TRS Frontier, LLC and seeks to rezone approximately 36 acres of land located to the east of MD Rt. 611 north of MD Rt. 376, and more specifically identified on Tax Map 33 as part of Parcel 94 in the Tenth Tax District of Worcester County, Maryland, from C-2 General Commercial District to A-2 Agricultural District. Mr. Tudor advised that the application received a favorable recommendation from the County Planning Commission.

In a related matter, The Commissioners agreed to extend the deadline for the submission of exhibits for Rezoning Cases No. 395 and 396 to February 5, 2016.

The Commissioners reviewed a letter from Walid Saffouri, Program Administrator for the Engineering and Capital Projects Program Office of Budget and Infrastructure Financing for the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), announcing that the Ocean Pines Wastewater Treatment Plant is exempt from paying into the Bay Restoration Fund (BRF) during the calendar year 2016. This exempts residents in the Ocean Pines Sanitary Service Area (SSA) from paying the \$2.50 monthly charge into the BRF, commonly referred to as the Flush Fee. Ocean Pines Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) meets the criteria for exemption, which requires a maximum effluent concentration of 3 milligrams per liter (mg/l) of total nitrogen and 0.3 mg/l total phosphorous.

Pursuant to the recommendation of County Attorney Maureen Howarth and upon a motion by Commissioner Mitrecic, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Commission President Bunting to sign a letter of support for Senate Bill 131/House Bill 126 Worcester County - Recycling at Special Events - Exemptions, with a clarifying amendment, which was submitted by the Eastern Shore Delegation to exempt Worcester County from the provisions of Section 9-1712 of the Environment Article requiring special event organizers to provide for recycling at special events that occur on publicly-owned sites, streets, or parks and serve food or drink and expect 200 or more people to attend; or as an alternative, that special events for non-profit organizations be exempt from these requirements, since these organizations rely on the proceeds from special events to fund their annual programs.

The Commissioners reviewed and discussed various board appointments. Board appointments were previously confirmed in closed session, but following a recommendation by County Attorney Maureen Howarth, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to discontinue this practice and confirm appointments in open session to provide greater transparency.

Upon nominations by Commissioner Church, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to appoint Mark Wittmyer as a business representative member of the Local Development Council for the Ocean Downs Casino for a four-year term expiring December 31, 2019 to fill the vacancy created by Linda Dearing whose term expired; and reappoint Michelle Bankert to the Commission for Women for a three-year term expiring December 31, 2018, and Deborah Maphis and Gail Fowler to the Water and Sewer Advisory Council for the West Ocean City Service Area for four-year terms each expiring December 31, 2019.

Upon nominations by Commissioner Elder, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to appoint Shawn Johnson to the Recreation Advisory Board and Curt Lambertson to the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board for four-year terms each expiring December 31, 2019 to fill the vacancies created by the expiration of the terms of Burton Anderson and Donnie Powell, respectively.

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 Lockfaw, the Commissioners unanimously voted to meet in closed session at 11:17 a.m. in the Commissioners' Conference Room to discuss legal and personnel matters permitted under the provisions of Section 3-305(b)(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; and Kim Moses, Public Information Officer. Topics discussed and actions taken included: receiving legal advice from counsel; and performing administrative functions.

The Commissioners adjourned to meet again on February 16, 2016.