

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday April 27, 2021

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened virtually at 9:02 a.m. with the following persons in attendance:

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, County Commissioner
Bobby Rucci, Vice President, County Commissioner
Gilbert O. Bowling, III, County Commissioner
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed., County Commissioner
Mark Belton, County Administrator
Wesley Adams, County Attorney
Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Call to Order/Pledge

Commissioner Collins called the meeting to order, and Commissioner Bowling led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present.

Announcement of Charles County Board of County Commissioners' Proclamations Issued for May 2021

2021-22 National Donate a Lunch Day

Comments

There were no comments.

Charles County Health Department Update: Coronavirus/COVID-19

Dr. Dianna Abney, Health Officer, Charles County Department of Health; Ms. Michelle Lilly, Director, Department of Emergency Services, and Mr. William Grimes, Vice President, Ancillary Services & Incident Commander, UM Charles Regional Medical Center provided an update on COVID-19 statistics and how they are responding to COVID-19.

Ms. Lilly indicated that COVID positive numbers were lower and maintaining at the lower numbers. She also informed the Commissioners that the Department of Emergency Services will continue to provide logistical support for vaccine clinics and monitor COVID in the County.

Dr. Abney reviewed that the County was in the vaccination phase three (3) which everyone sixteen (16) years old or older are eligible to be vaccinated. She shared information on the vaccinations and the multiple vaccination clinics, mobile vaccines, Vaccine Equity Task Force Sites and other vaccine partners. She reported the statistics on COVID vaccination doses given to Charles County residents. She also reviewed COVID cases by age and Charles County COVID deaths by age. She indicated that the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has resumed the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, since they are confident that it is safe and effective in preventing

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COVID-19 and that data shows that the known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risks in individuals eighteen (18) years of age and older. She clarified that the State mobile testing van will be in Charles County during the week of May 3, 2021 for four (4) to five (5) days. She also discussed recommendations for fully vaccinated people.

Mr. Grimes indicated that the number of COVID patients ranged from six (6) to twelve (12) the last several weeks. The hospital will continue to evaluate the visitation policy and consider if it needs to be more restrictive. He also mentioned that the hospital had its one hundredth (100th) patient die in the hospital of COVID-19.

Ms. Jennifer Harris, Chief of Media Services, Office of the County Administrator, reviewed the County's communication efforts related to COVID 19. She discussed COVID-19 Vaccine Priority list, the latest Maryland GoVAX Commercial with Dr. Nalin Mathur, and the Vaccine Rumor Control on social media, and frequently asked questions.

Mr. Jason Stoddard, Director of Safety, Charles County Public Schools joined the discussion to update the Commissioners on vaccinations for Charles County Public School staff; the decrease in COVID positive cases and low numbers and no community spread has remained steady; He also provided an update on social distancing in classrooms and in-person instruction and the plan for in-person graduation ceremonies in the spring.

The Commissioners agreed to schedule the Charles County Health Department Update on the Coronavirus/COVID-19 every other week starting in May.

Approval of the Minutes of April 20, 2021

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of April 20, 2021.

Announcement: Next Commissioner Session will be held May 4, 2021

Ms. Carol DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners, announced that the next scheduled sessions are on May 4, 2021.

Approval Items

Intercategory Budget Change Request-Board of Education

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci, and passed with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to the Board of Education's Intercategory Budget Change Request for FY2021 for twenty-eight point nine million dollars (\$28.9).

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Commissioner FY2021 Budget Rollover Exception to the County Commissioner Expense Policy Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Rucci, and passed with Commissioners Coates, Rucci, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor of a one-time rollover exception of the County Commissioner Expense Policy SOP for FY2021 funds. *Commissioner Bowling was opposed.*

A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Coates-yes; Commissioner Rucci-yes; Commissioner Stewart-yes; Commissioner Bowling-no; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed four (4) to one (1).

Briefing: Melwood Horticultural Center Update

Ms. Larysa Kautz, President/CEO, Ms. Jewlyn Cosgrove, Vice President of Government Relations, and Ms. Marchesa Whittington, Melwood, provided an update on Melwood. They reviewed the fifty-eight (58) year history from 1963 to 2020 and indicated that Melwood is now one of the largest nonprofit employers of people with disabilities in the country. They discussed Melwood's vision and mission; provided an overview of all their employment contract locations and the services they offer; and reviewed Melwood's programs and activities such as Business Services, Community Services and Operation Tohidu Healing Retreat for Injured Veterans.

Briefing: FY2021 Third Quarter General Fund Review

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, and Ms. Debra Posey, Senior Budget Analyst, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services reviewed the third quarter FY2021 year end estimates of a one million four hundred and eighty-three thousand five hundred- and fifty-dollar (\$1,483,550.00) loss. The FY2021 Adjusted Budget includes a ten point nine million dollar (\$10.9) of fund balance use. Due to favorable revenues, it is projected that the one point five million dollars (\$1.5) will be needed to offset the estimated net operating loss. Staff went on to review revenues, expenditures, non-spendable and spendable funds, and unassigned fund balance.

FY2022 Budget Work Session: General Fund and Special Revenue Funds

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, and Ms. Debra Posey, Senior Budget Analyst, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, reviewed the proposed FY2022 General Fund Budget and Special Revenue Funds. They reviewed the highlights of changes to expenditures for each organization that is included in the propose FY2022 Budget. An overview was provided of the proposed FY2022 Special Revenues by source with a total of forty-two million six hundred and forty-one thousand eight hundred and eighty-four dollars (\$42,641,884.00).

Ms. Ellin concluded the work session reminding the Commissioners that the add/delete form for their proposed budget changes were due by April 28, 2021 and that the review of these proposed changes will be on May 4, 2021.

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Meet and Confer with the Town of LaPlata and the Town of Indian Head: FY2022 Tax Differential

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, provided an overview of the requirement to meet and confer based on state law and explained the tax differential. Mr. Dyer provided an overview of the proposed FY2022 Tax Differential for the Town of LaPlata and for the Town of Indian Head.

The proposed rate calculation for the Town of Indian Head for the Fiscal Year 2022 would be point zero two six which is lower than FY2021 due to COVID pandemic. The FY2021 rate calculation was zero three nine (.039) for the residents of Indian Head. Mr. Brandon Paulin, Mayor, Town of Indian Head, requested that the rate remain the same as it was in FY2021.

The Commissioners reached a consensus to keep the rate calculation at point zero three nine (.039) for the residents of Indian Head.

The proposed rate calculation for the Town of LaPlata for the Fiscal Year 2022 would be point one four two (.142) for the residents of LaPlata. This is higher than last year which means residents in the Town of LaPlata will receive an increased tax credit. Ms. Jeannine James, Mayor, and Mr. Kevin Greenville, Town Treasurer, Town of LaPlata, expressed their satisfaction with the proposed rate calculation.

The Commissioners reached a consensus to keep the rate calculation at the calculated rate of point one four two (.142) for the residents of LaPlata.

Update: Commissioners' Goals and Objectives- Goal 4: Education

Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Ms. Kristin Baucom, Human Resource Coordinator, Ms. Kimberly Pelczar, Benefits Coordinator, Ms. Renesha Miles, Chief Equity Officer, and Ms. Shelly Felice, Recruitment and Retention Administrator, Department of Human Resources, provided an update on the Commissioners' Goals and Objectives- Goal Four: Education. They reviewed the Board of Education (BOE) and College of Southern Maryland (CSM) funding since FY2019; the formal collaboration with the BOE and CSM and Human Resources workforce development objectives and programs.

Commissioners' New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Closed Session

At 11:29 a.m. Commissioner Rucci made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to move into Close Session where all or a portion of this session may be closed pursuant to Section 3-305(b)(3)(7)(10) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to discuss one (1) agreement; review appointments to Commissioner Appointed Boards and Commissions and to discuss/review the development and implementation of emergency plans for the County. The reason for going into closed is to keep negotiations strategies, plans and approaches, and personnel information confidential.

Summary Closed Session Items

At 11:50 a.m. the Commissioners went into virtual closed session.

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3-305(b)(7) Legal: Agreement

Present: Commissioners Collins, Rucci, Bowling, Coates, and Stewart, Mark Belton, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Jennifer Ellin.

Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, reviewed the proposed pilot agreement.

The Commissioners reached a consensus on the agreement. The official action took place later this day and can be found in these minutes under Additional Approval Items

3-305(b)(10) Development and Implementation of Emergency Plans

Present: Commissioners Collins, Rucci, Bowling, Coates, and Stewart, Mark Belton, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto and Michelle Lilly.

Ms. Lilly led the Commissioners in tabletop exercises related to the implementation of emergency plans related to spring storm weather emergencies.

3-305(b)(1)(7) Legal: Update on Sagepoint

Present: Commissioners Collins, Rucci, Bowling, Coates, and Stewart, Mark Belton, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, and Maquita Irvin.

Ms. Maquita Irvin, Commissioner Specialist, reviewed potential applicants for the Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board) and for the Nuisance Abatement Hearing Board.

The Commissioners requested that Ms. Irvin continue to find more applicants for the Liquor Board before scheduling any interviews.

The Commissioners reached a consensus on applicants for the Nuisance Abatement Hearing Board. Official action will take place on May 4, 2021.

At 12:51 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this Closed Session.

At 6:11 p.m. the Commissioners returned to open session.

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present.

Additional Approval Items

Change FY2022 Budget Calendar

A motion was made by Commissioner Rucci, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to change the FY2022 Budget Calendar to change the date to Adopt the FY2022 Budget on May 18, 2021.

Lanyard Power Morgantown Agreement

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the Lanyard Power Holdings Pilot Agreement.

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Public Hearing: Fiscal Year 2022 Constant Yield-Virtual

The Commissioners conducted a virtual public hearing on the FY2022 Constant Yield. Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, explained that this public hearing was a State requirement. It is a hypothetical tax rate to generate the same tax revenue for the next year.

There were no comments provided by the community.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to keep the record open until May 3, 2021.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rucci, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to close the public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rucci, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to set the tax rate on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 between 9:30- 11:00 am. This will take place virtually.

Public Hearing: Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budgets, the Fiscal Year 2022-2026 Capital Improvement Program, and Proposed Fees, Rates, and Charges

The Commissioners conducted a virtual public hearing on the Fiscal Year 2022 Operating Budget and the Fiscal Year 2022 through Fiscal Year 2026 Capital Budget. Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, presented an overview of the proposed balanced budget. She reviewed what was included in the proposed budget and the considerations taken to reach the proposed balance budget. Mr. Dyer reviewed the Enterprise Funds, which include: Water and Sewer Fund, Landfill Fund, Environmental Service Fund, and Watershed Protection and Restoration Fund. Ms. Ellin presented the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) proposed budget overview. Mr. Dyer concluded with the review of the Fees and Charges.

Eleven (11) speakers provided comments to the Commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rucci, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to keep the record open until May 3, 2021.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to close the public hearing.

At 7:36 p.m. a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to adjourn.



Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners



Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

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FORM OF STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING

Location: Virtual- MS Teams

Date: April 27, 2021

Time: 11:29 a.m.

Motion By: Commissioner Rucci

Seconded By: Commissioner Coates

Vote to Close Session:

	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq.	[x]	[]	[]	[]
Gilbert O. Bowling, III.	[x]	[]	[]	[]
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.	[x]	[]	[]	[]
Amanda Stewart, M.Ed.	[x]	[]	[]	[]
Bobby Rucci	[x]	[]	[]	[]

STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE SESSION

General Provisions Article §3-305(b):

(1) [X] To discuss:

(i) The appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction; or

[] (ii) Any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.

(2) [] To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals with respect to a matter that is not related to public business.

(3) [] To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto.

(4) [] To consider a preliminary matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State.

(5) [] To consider the investment of public funds.

(6) [] To consider the marketing of public securities.

(7) [X] To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

(8) [] To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

(9) [] To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations.

(10) [X] To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussions would constitute a risk to the public or public security, including:

(i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and

(ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans.

FORM OF STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING

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(11) [] To prepare, administer or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination.

(12) [] To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct.

(13) [] To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter.

(14) [] Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, discuss a matter directly related to a negotiation strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process.

TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

3-305 (b)(7) Legal: Potential Agreement

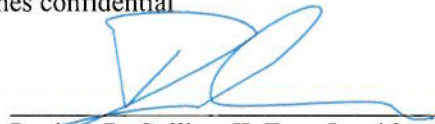
REASON FOR CLOSING: To keep legal negotiations confidential.

3-305(b)(1) Boards Commissions and Committees Appointments

REASON FOR CLOSING: To keep personnel information confidential

3-305(b)(7)(10) Review Development of Emergency Plans related to Spring Storms

REASON FOR CLOSING: To keep plans and approaches confidential



Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President