

**Special Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Thursday August 10, 2021**

The special meeting of the County Commissioners was convened virtually at 5:00 p.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.

**Closed Session**

At 5:02 p.m., Commissioner Rucci made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bowling 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)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to seek legal advice on strategies to address recent increase in COVID-19 positive numbers. The reason for going into closed is to keep legal approaches confidential.

**Summary Closed Session Items**

At 5:06 p.m. the Commissioners went into virtual closed session.

**3-305(b)(7) Legal Advice**

Present: Commissioners Collins, Rucci, Bowling, Coates, and Stewart, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Deborah Hall, Dr. Diana Abney.

Dr. Diana Abney, Health Officer, Charles County Department of Health, reviewed information related to COVID-19 cases in Charles County.

Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, reviewed legal options related to safety concerns due to the increase in COVID-19 positive cases.

At 5:29 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this closed session.

The Commissioners returned to open session at 5:32 p.m.

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**Roll Call**

A roll call was taken. All the Commissioners were present.

**Discussion: Charles County Response to Coronavirus/COVID-19**

Dr. Dianna Abney, Health Officer, Charles County Department of Health; Ms. Michelle Lilly, Director, Department of Emergency Services; Mr. William Grimes, Vice President, Ancillary Services & Incident Commander, UM Charles Regional Medical Center; and Ms. Bonnie Grady, Charles County Chamber of Commerce joined the Commissioners to discuss increasing cases of COVID-19 in the Charles County.

Dr. Abney recommended that everyone over age of five (5) should wear masks indoors even if vaccinated.

Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, opined that in order to mandate indoor wearing of masks in the County that the Commissioners must reimpose the State of Emergency, which would be consistent with the Health Article.


Mr. Adams read the proposed resolution out loud for the record. This mandate would take effect at 5:00 p.m. on Friday August 13, 2021 through September 12, 2021. This Local State of Emergency would be limited to imposing the mask mandate only.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Resolution 2021-13 Renewed Declaration of a Local State of Emergency (*the number was administratively corrected from the originally stated 2021-12 to be correctly numbered 2021-13*).

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor change all the September scheduled Commissioner public hearings from being held in person to being held virtually.

At 6:06 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to adjourn.

  
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Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk

  
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Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

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**FORM OF STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING**

Location: Virtual- MS Teams                      Date: August 10, 2021

Time: 5:02 p.m.

Motion By: Commissioner Rucci

Seconded By: Commissioner Bowling

Vote to Close Session:

	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gilbert O. Bowling, III.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Amanda Stewart, M.Ed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bobby Rucci	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE SESSION**

**General Provisions Article §3-305(b):**

(1)  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)  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)  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**

**Appendix C C-2**

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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: To Seek Legal Advice on Potential COVID-19 Mandates**

REASON FOR CLOSING: To keep legal approaches confidential.

  
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Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President