

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday March 8, 2022**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format, virtually and in person, at 1:06 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.

**Comments**

There were no comments.

**Approval of the Minutes of March 1, 2022**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of March 1, 2022.

**Announcement: Next Commissioners' Session(s) are Scheduled for March 15 and 16, 2022**

Ms. Carol DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners, announced that the next Commissioners' sessions are scheduled for March 15 and March 16, 2022.

**Approval Items**

*FY2022 Budget Transfer Request #9585 Detention Center Intake Area Construction*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2022 Budget Transfer Request #9585 for one hundred and nine thousand sixty dollars (\$109,060.00).

*FY2022 Budget Transfer Request #9622 Piney Branch Sewer Interceptor Upgrade*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2022 Budget Transfer Request #9622 for one hundred and seventy thousand dollars (\$170,000.00).

*Letter- Board of County Commissioners' Welcome Letter for New Businesses in Charles County*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve this welcome letter.

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**Legislative Update: 2022 Maryland General Assembly Session**

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Associate County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney; Ms. Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator; Mr. Joseph Green, and Ms. Sherri Simms, GS Proctor and Associates, Inc., provided updates on the 2022 Maryland General Assembly legislative session.

Ms. Mitchell provided an update on the following legislation in the 2022 Maryland General Assembly Session:

***HB1428 Code Counties - Legislative Procedure - Notice Requirements***

Hearing scheduled for March 11, 2022. Ms. Jenifer Harris, Chief of Media Services, will provide oral testimony.

***HB1416 Charles County - Property Tax - Credit for Volunteer Emergency Responders***

Hearing scheduled for March 15, 2022.

The Commissioners reached a consensus to send a letter of support.

***HB1423/SB865 Charles County - Alcoholic Beverages - Multiple Class B Licenses***

Awaiting Hearing Date.

***HB739/SB916 Workgroup to Study the Fiscal and Operational Viability of Public-Private Partnerships for Charles County Public Schools***

The Architect Association proposed an amendment to include an architect as a member type to this work group.

The Commissioners reached a consensus to send a letter of support as Bill is written.

***HB1415 Grading and Sediment Control Plans - Agricultural Land Management Practices - Definition***

Hearing scheduled for March 11, 2022.

The Commissioners reached a consensus to send a letter of support.

***HB514/SB388 Charles County - Natural Resources - Sunday Hunting***

Hearing scheduled on March 9, 2022. The Commissioners submitted letter of support and Commissioner Bowling will provide oral testimony.

***HB1187/SB726 Transportation - Highway User Revenues - Revenue and Distribution***

Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) supports this Bill. The Commissioners submitted letter of support and Commissioner Collins provided oral testimony.

***HB1124 Primary and Secondary Education - Local School Systems - Budget Reporting***

The Commissioners submitted letter of support.

***HB1290 Education - Public School Construction - Funding and Administration***

The Commissioners submitted letter of support.

***HB162 Public Safety - Law Enforcement - Body-Worn Cameras***

The Commissioners submitted letter of support with MACo amendments.

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***SB297 Gaming - Sports Wagering Facilities – Locations***

Prohibiting the Sports Wagering Application Review Commission from awarding a sport wagering license to a facility located within a 10-mile radius of certain designated Class B-1 or B-2 sports wagering facilities located in Calvert, Carroll, Charles, Frederick, and Washington counties.

Senator Elis requested a letter of support.

The Commissioners discussed how this would limit Economic Development in Charles County.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to send a letter of opposition describing the economic development concerns with the restrictive radius in Charles County.

**Briefing: Food Security and Food Resilience**

Ms. Lindsay Smith, Regional Food Systems Planner, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG); Mr. Mark Scott, Critical Infrastructure Specialist, DC Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management; and Ms. Anne Wallerstedt, Senior Director Government Relations, Maryland Food Bank, provided a presentation on food security and food resilience. Highlights included the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on food security, the response to food insecurity, Maryland Food Bank's impact, the COG FARM priorities, and planning for food and water resilience.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Rucci and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor for Charles County to establish a food security and resilience workgroup in Charles County.

This motion was clarified that staff would bring back an assessment to evaluate the process in Charles County before establishing a work group and would also provide recommendations to the Commissioners.

**Briefing and Request for Approval: Transit Division Annual Transportation Plan (ATP)**

Ms. Deborah Carpenter, Director, and Mr. Jeffrey Barnett, Chief of Transit, Department of Planning and Growth Management, provided a presentation overview of the Annual VanGO Transportation Plan. This is the grant application to the Maryland Department of Transportation Transit Administration for transit operating and capital assistance. Mr. Barnett reviewed the current status, application highlights, and request to approve the authorizing resolution needed for the application.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Resolution 2022-02 authorizing Charles County to file an application with the Maryland Transit Administration of the Maryland Department of Transportation for one or more grants under the Federal Transit Act.

**Update: Board of Election Procedures and Election Information**

Ms. Tracy Dickerson, Election Director, Charles County Board of Elections, provided an update on the board's election procedures and information. The board consolidated polling locations within the County. Polling locations available for the upcoming election will include C. Paul Barnhart Elementary School, Matthew Henson Middle School, La Plata High School, Mattawoman Middle School,

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McDonough High School, Samuel A. Mudd Elementary School, North Point High School, Milton M. Somers Middle School, St. Charles High School, Thomas Stone High School, and William B. Wade Elementary. Early voting centers will include Waldorf Jaycees, Sacred Heart Church Friendship Hall, and St. Joseph's Parish Center. Early voting centers are at the Waldorf Jaycees; St. Joseph Church in Pomfret; and Sacred Heart Church in La Plata. There will be six (6) drop box locations, Waldorf Jaycees, St. Joseph Church, Westlake High School, Lackey High School, Thomas Stone High School and at the Election Center Office.

**Briefing: College of Southern Maryland State of the College**

Dr. Maureen Murphy, President, Mr. Jose Gonzalez, Trustee, and Board of Trustees Members, College of Southern Maryland, provided a video presentation on the State of the College, including the economic value of the college and economic impact and investment analysis. Dr. Murphy recognized the County Commissioners with a certificate of appreciation for providing Charles County Care scholarships, which have provided educational opportunities for students.

**Briefing: Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD) Summer Youth Employment Program**

Ms. Ruthy Davis, Director, Regional Workforce & Business Development, and Mr. Greg Holtz, Youth Program Manager, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD), provided a PowerPoint presentation overview on the 2022 Summer Youth Program. This is a six (6) week paid employment and training program. The program offers County youth with the opportunity to develop skills, set career goals, and learn more about their community. They reviewed the benefits of the program, who they served, benefits, and costs. Student testimonies were shared along with a video from a student about the program.

**Commissioners' New Business**

There was no new business discussed.

**Closed Session**

At 3:23 p.m., Commissioner Bowling made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to move into Closed Session where all or a portion of this session may be closed pursuant to Section 3-305(b)(3)(1)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to discuss one (1) potential land acquisition and conduct interviews for two (2) Boards and Commissions vacancies. The reason for going into closed is to keep legal negotiations and strategies and personnel information confidential.

**Summary Closed Session Items**

At 3:56 p.m. the Commissioners went into virtual closed session.

**3-305 (b)(3)(7) Discuss Potential Property Acquisition**

Present: Commissioners Collins, Rucci, Bowling, Coates, Stewart, Deborah Hall, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Deborah Carpenter, and Judy Michael

Ms. Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator and Ms. Judy Michael, Property Acquisition Officer, provided an update on potential properties appraisals as previously requested by the Commissioners. Ms. Hall recommended that staff come back with a more comprehensive update to help the Commissioners decide.

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The consensus of the Commissioners was to move forward with having staff prepare a more in-depth project update for review and schedule a follow up discussion.

**Administrative**

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

Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, reviewed the County's Standard Operating Procedure for the Legislative Process and submitting letters of support and testimony.

**3-305 (b)(1) Boards, Commissions, and Committees Interviews**

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

The Commissioners conducted interviews with applicants for vacancies on the Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board) and for the Planning Commission.

The Commissioners provided direction on scheduling additional interviews for the Charles County Police Accountability Review Board.

The Commissioners reached a majority agreement on appointments and will take official action on March 15, 2022 under Action on Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

At 5:44 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this close session and adjourn.



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Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners



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Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

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Location: Virtual- MS Teams/Limited In-person

Date: March 8, 2022

Time: 3:23 p.m.

Motion By: Commissioner Bowling

Seconded By: Commissioner Coates

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**

(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.

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(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)(3)(7)Legal Discission on One (1) Potential Land Acquisition**

REASON FOR CLOSING: Keep legal strategies and negotiations confidential.

**3-305(b)(1) Personnel: Discuss Appointments Six (6) County Boards and Commissions Vacancies**

REASON FOR CLOSING: Keep personnel information confidential.



Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

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