

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday March 28, 2023 Rescheduled to Wednesday March 29, 2023

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format, virtually and in person, at 3:02 p.m. with the following persons in attendance:

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, County Commissioner
Ralph Patterson, II, M.A., Vice President, County Commissioner
Gilbert O. Bowling, III, County Commissioner
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed., County Commissioner
Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator
Wes Adams, County Attorney
Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Call to Order/Pledge

Commissioner Collins called the meeting to order and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present.

Charles County Proclamations Issued in April 2023

2023-21 Fair Housing Month
2023-22 National Child Abuse Prevention Month
2023-23 Autism Acceptance Month
2023-24 Archaeology Month
2023-25 National Public Health Week
2023-26 National Animal Control Officer Appreciation Week
2023-27 National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week
2023-28 National Volunteer Week
2023-29 National Crime Victims' Rights Week

Comments

Commissioner Bowling inquired about an item in closed session, but there was no change to the agenda.

Commissioner Collins wanted to recognize Hospice of Chesapeake for the service provided for his father who had recently passed away.

Approval of the Minutes of March 21, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of March 21, 2023.

Announcement

Next Scheduled Commissioner Session(s): April 18 and 19, 2023.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to reschedule the in-person public hearings that were scheduled yesterday March 28, 2023 on Bill 2023-02 Maryland Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (MD PACE) and Docket 90 Amendment #22-90(22) Wooded Glen and Piney Reach Master Plan for Tuesday April 25, 2023 at 6:00 pm in the Government Building at 200 Baltimore Street La Plata, MD for in-person comments.

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Legislative Update: 2023 Maryland General Assembly Session

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Associate County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney; Ms. Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; Mr. Steve Proctor; Mr. Joseph Green; and Ms. Sherrie Simms, Lobbyists, GS Proctor and Associates, Inc. joined the Commissioners to provide an update on the 2023 Maryland General Assembly Session.

Ms. Mitchell informed the Commissioners that the status of the Charles County proposals has the same status as last week's update.

- *SB519 Charles County-Alcoholic Beverages- Unlicensed Establishments*
Has a hearing scheduled for March 30, 2023.

Ms. Mitchell reviewed the request from Delegate Debra Davis, Chair, Charles County Delegation-District 28, to consider supporting SB 491. The Charles County Board of Education did not take any position on this Bill.

- *SB491 Education - School Bus Contractor Employees – Negotiations*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, Collins present, voting in favor to send a letter of support. Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were opposed. A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Coates-yes; Commissioner Patterson-yes; Commissioner Stewart-no; Commissioner Bowling-no; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed three (3) to two (2).

Ms. Mitchell also reminded the public that the County is now accepting legislative proposals for additions or revisions to local laws in the County Code. Submissions are being accepted online through Friday April 21, 2023.

Approval Items

Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers:

(Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Mr. Ed Tucker, Chief of Animal Control, Department of Emergency Services)

FY2023 Budget Amendment Increase #455 Animal Shelter Increased Costs

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2023 Budget Amendment Increase #455 for sixty five thousand dollars (\$65,000.00).

Request for New Position- Charles County Sheriff's Office Mental Health Assistant

(Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, Department of Planning and Growth Management; Captain Kevin Leahy, Commander-Administrative Services Division, Ms. Erin Shoemaker, and Deputy Director of Budgeting, Charles County Sheriff's Office)

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the create the new position Personal Identification Number (PIN).

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Letter of Support Mid Atlantic Hydrogen Hub (MAHH)

(Mr. Trey Proctor, GS Proctor & Associates, Inc.; and Mr. Matt Erskine, Connected DMV)

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the letter of support for Mid Atlantic Hydrogen Hub.

Updates to Community Support Policy (CP.CC.01.005)

(Ms. Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; Ms. Crystal Hunt, Chief of Staff, and Ms. Julie Bryson, Assistant Chief of Staff, Office of the County Commissioners; and Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services)

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the changes to the Community Support Policy.

FY2024 Budget Work Session: Enterprise Funds Operating and Capital Improvement Projects and Fees and Charges

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, provided a Fiscal 2024 Budget Work Session on the Enterprise Funds Operating and Capital Improvement Projects. An overview was provided on: The Landfill Operations proposed budget of thirteen million nine hundred and seventy three thousand two hundred dollars (\$13,973,200.00); the Environmental Service Fund proposed budget of nine million two hundred and eighty six thousand four hundred dollars ((\$9,286,400.00); the Watershed Protection and Restoration Fund proposed budget of seven million seven hundred and thirty four thousand one hundred dollars (\$7,734,100.00); and the Inspection and Review Fund proposed budget of nine million six hundred twenty eight thousand one hundred dollars (\$9,628,100.00). A review of the proposed fees and charges was also provided.

The budget public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday April 26, 2023.

Mr. Dyer also informed the Commissioners about a new podcast title “Let’s Get Fiscal.”

Update: Status Report and Review of Current Capital Projects

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, Mr. Jacob Dyer, Chief of Budget, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, provided a review and status update on the current FY2023-FY2027 Capital Projects.

Briefing: Billingsley Road Realignment Alternatives Study

Mr. Jason Groth, Deputy Director, Ms. Alicia Afroilan, Engineering Supervisor, Department of Planning and Growth Management; Mr. John Stevens, Chief of Capital Projects, and Mr. Brian Kagarise, Acting Program Manager, Department of Public Works; Mr. Matthew Wolniak, Sr. Vice President, and Ms. Jennifer Ray, Engineer, Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc., provided a review of the Billingsley Road Alternatives study. They reviewed the history of past studies and proposals for addressing realignment of Billingsley Road. They presented information on existing roadway conditions, traffic volumes, and environmental resources. A traffic analysis was conducted to evaluate the impact of various options on traffic volume, intersection levels of service, and changes in travel times. Concepts for horizontal roadway realignment were presented within the study area. Three (3)

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alternatives were provided with cost estimates: an option that upgrades the existing alignment; an option that creates a new alignment; and a hybrid option of the first two alternatives. Staff recommended the hybrid option and shared next steps for the planning process.

Commissioner's New Business

There was no new business discussed.

Closed Session

At 5:40 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, 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)(1)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to review on Commissioner appointed Boards and Commissions. The reason for moving into closed session is to keep personnel information confidential.

Summary Closed Session Items

At 5:49 p.m. the Commissioners went into closed session.

3-305 (b)(1)Personnel: Review of Vacancies on Boards and Commissions

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

The Commissioners reached a consensus and agreement on the appointments to the Board of Appeals, Interfaith Commission, Library Board of Trustees, LOSAP, and Board of Electrical Examiners.

Official action will take place on April 18, 2023 under Approval Items-Action on Boards, Commissions, and Committees.

At 6:00 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this Closed Session.

The Commissioners returned to open session at 6:05 p.m.

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present.

Public Hearing: Draft Bill 2023-02 Maryland Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program (MD PACE)

The Commissioners held a virtual public hearing on the Bill 2023-02 Maryland Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program. Ms. Kelly Robertson-Slagle, Director, and Ms. Michelle DeSoto, Deputy Director, Department of Economic Development; Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, and Mr. Eric Jackson, Chief of Treasury, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; and Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Associate County Attorney II, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County joined the Commissioners to provide an overview of the Bill which removes loan minimums, removes Loan to Value limits, removes maximum term twenty (20) or twenty five (25) years, removes Savings to Investment Ratio (SIR) of greater than one (1), and adds eligibility of Resiliency, Environmental Remediation and Refinancing.

There were no public comments given.

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A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to continue the public hearing In-Person on April 25, 2023 in the Government Building located at 200 Baltimore Street, La Plata MD.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this virtual portion of this public hearing.

Public Hearing: Docket 90 Amendment #22-90(22) Wooded Glen and Piney Reach Master Plan

The Commissioners held a virtual public hearing on the proposed Docket 90 Amendment #22-90(22) Wooded Glen and Piney Reach Master Plan. Ms. Heather Kelley, Planning Supervisor, Mr. Charles Rice, Assistant Chief of Planning, Department of Planning and Growth Management joined the Commissioners to provide an overview of the proposed amendment which would change the middle school site location to the Piney Church Road Neighborhood; would change the eighty five percent (85%) Rule which would allow residential construction to occur in the Village of Piney Reach Neighborhood Three (3) prior to completion of eighty five percent (85%) of the construction in the Village of Wooded Glen; and modification of buffer remediation plan since trees and other vegetation have regrown and naturally reestablished the buffer and the planting plan does not need to be implemented.

The Commissioners heard testimony from three (3) citizens.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to continue the public hearing In-Person on April 25, 2023 in the Government Building located at 200 Baltimore Street, La Plata MD.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this virtual portion of this public hearing.

Charles County Board of County Commissioners' Quarterly Town Hall Meeting

The Commissioners conducted their First Quarter Town Hall Meeting in a hybrid format, virtually and in person. Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins were present to address community questions, as well as Ms. Deborah Hall, Deputy County Administrator, and the following Directors and designees:

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services
Ms. Deborah Carpenter, Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management
Mr. Martin Harris, Director, Department of Public Works
Ms. Michelle Lilly, Director, Department of Emergency Services
Ms. Kelli Beavers, Director, Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism
Ms. Dina Barclay, Director, Department of Community Services
Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Department of Human Resources
Ms. Kelly Robertson-Slagle, Director, Department of Economic Development
Ms. Michelle DeSoto, Deputy Director, Department of Economic Development
Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney
Mr. Jason Groth, Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management
Ms. Jennifer Harris, Chief of Media Services, Office of the County Administrator
Ms. Renesha Miles, Chief Equity Officer, Department of Human Resources

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There were about fourteen comments or questions from the public.

Comments and questions submitted online were read.

At 9:19 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to adjourn.

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President