

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday December 5, 2023 (Legislative Day)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format, virtually and in person, at 9:01 a.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
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed., County Commissioner
Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator
Wes Adams, County Attorney
Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

**Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner was absent*

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. Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins were present.
**Commissioner Coates was not present.*

Proclamation(s) Issued for December 2023

2023-95 Human Rights Week and Day

Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Collins recognized National Pearl Harbor Day on December 7, 2023.

Commissioner Bowling and all the Commissioners offered condolences to the Cusick family for their loss of their nine-year-old son Finn Cussick to DIPG.

Approval of the Minutes of November 28, 2023

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of November 28, 2023. **Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

Announcement

Next Scheduled Session(s): December 12 and 13, 2023.

Approval Items

Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers
(Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative)

FY2024 Budget Amendment Increase #145 Charles County Sheriff's Office Donations Budget for Community Programs

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2024

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Budget Amendment Increase #145 for forty-two thousand two hundred two hundred dollars (\$42,200.00). *Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.

FY2024 Budget Transfer Request #593 Board of Education Capital Improvement Project-T.C. Martin Elementary School Project

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve FY2024 Budget Transfer Request #593 for three million five hundred and thirty thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,530,500.00). *Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.

Approval of Process: Volunteer Emergency Responders Tax Credit

(Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Mr. Eric Jackson, Chief of Treasury, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve a new full-time position: Tax Specialist as presented. *Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.

Briefing: Review Commissioners' Goals and Objectives

Ms. Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; Ms. Katharine Giacalone, President, Giacalone & Associates LLC; and Charles County Executive Leadership Team, joined the Commissioners and provided a presentation briefing the Commissioners on high level goals and objectives based on the Commissioners' election platforms, community feedback, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The briefing included a review of the five (5) focus areas: Economic Development, Quality of Life, Resiliency and Sustainability, Emergency Preparedness, Response and Safety, and Institutional Governance.

The Commissioners requested regular data driven updates for the public online and regular reports for the Commissioners.

**Break 11:28 a.m.-3:01 p.m.*

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins were present. *Commissioner Coates was not present.

Briefing: 2026 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Report-Waldorf Urban Park and Amphitheater

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Ms. Kelli Beavers, Director, and Mr. Sam Drury, Deputy Direct, Department of Precreation, Parks, and Tourism; and Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator, provided a status on the State funding, through the Maryland Bond Bill in 2022, which was given to support a Waldorf Urban Park and Amphitheater project. Currently this project is not included in the County's Capital Improvement Projects(CIP) FY2024-FY2028 and would need to be amended to add it

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to use this grant. Staff recommendations were to complete a feasibility study; once the study is completed, consider adding this project to the CIP; and work with the Charles County Delegation to re-purpose or utilize the available funding.

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to have staff complete the feasibility study and provide the Commissioners with an update on the results.

Briefing: FY2024 First Quarter General Fund Review

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, presented the FY2024 General Fund Report for the First Quarter ending September 30, 2023. The FY2024 Adjusted Budget includes a twenty-nine point five (\$29.5) million dollar of fund balance use. Due to favorable revenues, it is projected that twenty-six point seven (\$26.7) million will be needed to offset the estimated net operating loss. Mr. Dyer shared his concerns that the income tax returns are down statewide and for Charles County it is down four percent (4%) which could have an impact on the FY2025 budget.

Briefing and Request for Approval: Update on American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal & Administrative Services; and Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator, provided a status update on the County's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve transferring eight hundred and sixteen thousand nine hundred and fifty two dollars (\$816,952.00) from the Health Department ARPA accounts to the Department of Emergency Services to implement a Behavioral Health Crisis Response project to include the approval of eight (8) Personal Identification numbers (PINS) for four (4) Paramedics and four (4) Emergency Services Technicians. **Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

**Break 4:14 p.m. - 4:23 p.m.*

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins were present.

**Commissioner Coates was not present.*

Work Session: Bill 2023-09 Healthy Meals for Children

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Assistant Deputy County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County; and Ms. Doria Fleischer, Community Engagement Coordinator-Media, Office of the County Administrator, joined the Commissioners for a work session on Bill 2023-09 that would require restaurants in Charles County to offer a healthy meal and beverage option for kids. Ms. Fleischer reviewed an engagement plan to reach out for information from local restaurants on topics related to the time frames and other requirements in the bill.

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The Commissioners voted on amendments they wanted for this bill:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor change page three (3), line four (4) from:

A ½ CUP OR MORE SERVING....

To

A 1/4 CUP OR MORE SERVING

**Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor page three (3), line five (5) by striking out:

... EXCLUDING JUICE

**Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to change page three (3) lines thirty-six (36) and thirty-seven (37) from:

WATER OR SPARKLING WATER,

To

WATER, SPARKLING WATER AND FLAVORED WATER, ...

**Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to change page three (3), line thirty-nine (39) to take out:

...UNFLAVORED

**Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor change page three (3), line forty-three (43) to change:

6 OUNCES...

To

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8 OUNCES...

**Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

The amendments to Bill 2023-09 will be posted and a final work session will be scheduled on December 12, 2023.

Commissioner's New Business

There was no business discussed.

Ms. Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator, recognized Ms. Jesse Bungcayao and Ms. Erica Rizor for all their work and on Commissioners Goals and Objectives presentation.

Closed Session

At 4:51 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins 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) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to review a potential land acquisition; and review and receive legal advice on an agreement. The reason for moving into closed session is to keep legal advice, negotiations strategies, confidential. **Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

Summary Closed Session Items

At 4:55 p.m., the Commissioners went into closed session.

3-305(b)(3)(7) Review Potential Property Acquisition

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins, Deborah Hall, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Jenifer Ellin, Danielle Mitchell, and Judy Michael.

This item will be rescheduled for December 12, 2023 since Commissioner Coates was absent.

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

This item will be rescheduled

At 5:09 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to end this closed session and adjourn. **Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President