

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday March 19, 2024 (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
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed., County Commissioner
Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator
Jenifer Ellin, Acting 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. *Commissioners Bowling, Patterson and Collins were in person; Commissioners Coates and Stewart were virtual.*

Commissioners' Comments

Commissioner Bowling commented on the Town Hall Meeting he had and the high turnout and thanked staff and the Bryans Road VFD.

Commissioner Patterson thanked Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services for attending his town hall and discussing budget; he also acknowledged St. Charles High School boys' basketball team for playing in the State Championship game.

Approval of the Minutes of March 12, 2024

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of March 12, 2024.

Announcement

Next Scheduled Session(s): April 9-10, 2024.

Approval Items

Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers

(Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services)

FY2024 Budget Transfer Request #607 Close Capital Project and Move Funds to Contingency Inflation Project

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2024 Budget Transfer Request #607 for forty-three thousand and seventy dollars (\$43,070.00).

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FY2024 Budget Transfer Request #844 Mid-Year PIN for Right of Way (ROW) Technician

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2024 Budget Transfer Request #844 for fifteen thousand nine hundred dollars (\$15,900.00)

FY2024 Budget Amendment Increase #852 Charles County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) Four (4) New Mid-Year PINS for Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Program

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2024 Budget Amendment increase #852 for fifty-three thousand four hundred dollars (\$53,400.00).

Request to Declare Charles County a "Stroke Smart County"

(Ms. Shellee Stine, Ms. Kelly Crabtree, Ms. Sharon Khoo, Ms. Mary Levy, and Mr. Darwin Weigel University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center Stroke Team)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve declaring Charles County a Stroke Smart County.

The Commissioners directed the County Attorney to prepare a resolution for approval in May since it is Stroke Month Awareness.

Letters of Commitment: Partner on Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Grant Applications

(Ms. Beth Groth, Climate Resilience and Sustainability Officer, Department of Planning and Growth Management)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the three (3) letters of commitment.

Letter of Support: FY2025 Federal Earmark Funding-Southern Maryland Workforce 2030

(Ms. Kelly Robertson-Slagle, Director, Department of Economic Development)

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

Change Order #2 Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Electrical and Automation Improvements, ITB 22-31

(Mr. Ahmed Alqazzaz, Project Manager, and Mr. Olin Status, Senior Project Manager, Department of Public Works-Utilities)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Change Order #2 for a credit of eight hundred and sixty-one thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight dollar and seventeen cents (\$861,778.17).

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Legislative Update: 2024 Maryland General Assembly Session

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Associate County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney; Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting 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 2024 Maryland General Assembly Session.

The Charles County Legislative Proposals

- *HB440 Motor Vehicle Registration - Exceptions for Golf Carts and Low Speed Vehicles - Cobb Island*
Passed out of House moved to Senate.
- *HB972 Motor Vehicles – Off-Highway Vehicles – Clarifications and Revisions*
Passed out of House moved to Senate.
- *HB690 Charles County - Adult Protective Services Review Board - Membership*
Passed out of House moved to Senate.
- *HB1321 A proposal to enact a Parkland Dedication Ordinance to require property developers pay a fee to be used instead of dedicating land (i.e., "fee-in-lieu"), or a combination of dedication or construction of recreational facilities.*
Passed out of House moved to Senate.
- *HB687 Charles County – Governing Bodies of Common Ownership Communities – Member Training*
Passed out of House moved to Senate.

Ms. Mitchell reviewed other State proposed legislation:

- *SB589 Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland - Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission – Funding.*
Passed out of House moved to Senate.
- *HB899/SB691 Higher Education – Firefighters and EMS Recruitment and Retention – Scholarship and Loan Repayment Assistance.*
Crossed Over.
- *HB1092/SB0649 Public Safety Answering Point Personnel - Training in Telecommunications Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation*
Crossed Over.
- *HB477/SB644 Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases and Holdover Tenancies - Local Just Cause Termination Provisions*
Crossed Over.
- *SB589/HB812 Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland - Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission – Funding*
Crossed Over.
- *HB366/SB0049 Restrictions on Use - Solar Collector Systems – Alteration*
Crossed Over.
- *HB1090 Revitalizing Neighborhoods Through Homeownership Program and Fund – Established*
Did not cross over.

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- HB974 *Prince George's County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Indian Head Highway PG 306-24*
Did not cross over.
- HB1407 *County Tier 1 Renewable Sources – Generating Systems, Capacity, and Generation – Prohibition, Studies, and Plans*
Did not cross over.

Ms. Mitchell also noted the Charles County Delegation Bond Bills for Southern Crossing, Indian Head Grocer Initiative, and Lions Camp Merrick.

**At about 10:24 a.m. Commissioner Stewart joined Session in person.*

Discussion: Developer Bond Release Policy

Commissioner Bowling; Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County; and Mr. Jason Groth, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management, discussed the general process of bonds. Developers must place the bond before permits are issued to start the project. Bonds are reduced as the project reaches specific milestones. Mr. Groth also described what type of infrastructure projects can be bonded.

The Commissioners directed staff to draft proposed policy/procedures and bring back for a follow-up presentation in sixty (60) days to address concerns discussed and with a tighter approach to bond reduction. They were directed to look at other jurisdictions as well.

Commissioner Stewart would like to have a future discussion on amenities required for projects.

Commissioner Bowling requested that signs for public hearings be made larger to 4x8. Commissioner Stewart agreed and will submit an agenda request related to signage/notices.

Discussion: Request for Traffic Study on Vivian Adams Drive in Waldorf, Maryland

Commissioner Stewart; Mr. Jason Groth, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management, discussed with the Commissioners the traffic safety concerns in this area and near the schools in that area. They discussed potential need of installing multiple options for entry and exit into the area due to ongoing and future development. Mr. Groth also discussed additional concerns brought by the Board of Education and the need to conduct an analysis of this area.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to have staff conduct a traffic study which should be completed while school is in session.

Charles County Departmental Highlights

Mr. Martin Harris, Director, and Mr. Brian Kagarise, Acting Program Manager, and Mr. Bernard Cochran, Deputy Director-Utilities, Department of Public Works, Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Department of Human Resources; Ms. Dina Barclay, Director, Department of Community Services; and Ms. Doria Fleisher, Community Engage Coordinator-Media Services, Office of the County Administrator, joined

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the Commissioners to provide a presentation outlining some of the department highlights. Ms. Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator, explained that department highlights will be provided bi-monthly alternating with bi-monthly updates on the Commissioners' goals and objectives.

The Commissioners directed staff to create signage which includes renderings and schematic pictures on properties indicating future use, such as the Pinefield EMS Station and La Plata Library Relocation site as displayed in the presentation and on all future projects.

The Commissioners requested that Media Services come back to provide an additional presentation with a more in-depth overview of the community engagement process.

Closed Session

At 12:19 p.m., motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, 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)(9) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to receive an update on collective bargaining matter. The reason for moving into closed session is to keep legal advice, negotiations, and strategies confidential.

Summary Closed Session Items

At about 12:40 p.m., the Commissioners went into closed session.

3-305(b)(7)(9) Update on a Collective Bargaining Matter

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Jenifer Ellin, Alexis Blackwell, Jacob Dyer, and Megan Donnick.

Staff provided a presentation that outlined the benefits that relate to collective bargaining.

At 1:07 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 4:00 p.m.

Roll Call

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present. *Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins were in person; Commissioners Coates was virtual.*

Charles County Boards and Commissions Annual Update

Briefing: Annual Update from Library Board of Trustees

Briefing: Annual Update from Area Council on Aging

Briefing: Annual Update from the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board

Briefing: Annual Update from Charles County Board of Social Services

Staff, Chairs, and members of the Library Board of Trustees, the Area Council on Aging, the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board, and the Charles County Board of Social Services provided an overview of their 2023 Annual Reports.

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Roll Call

A roll call was taken. Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins were present. *Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins were in person. *Commissioners Coates was absent.*

Commissioners' Public Comment Session

Commissioners held an open session to receive public comments on any issue. This agenda item was added for the Commissioners to listen to feedback only, twice each month during their regular meetings.

There were seven (7) people who provided comments in person and three (3) people who provided virtual comments. Any written comments received were added to the website for the public to view.

Summary of Public Comments

In Person:

- Eighteen (18) citizens submitted legislative proposals in the fall of 2023 of which six (6) were related to the removal of a County Commissioner. This indicates an important concern to the citizens. Yet, on March 5, 2024, the Commissioners voted to kill this legislation. Since it is supposed to be a provision in the proposed Charter for removal of a Commissioner, the issue should not be used as a tool to push Charter government especially when the proposal for Charter came from the Commissioners not the citizens. This is not Representative Government.
- Stated that in November the Commissioners reviewed draft legislation for “Removal of an Elected County Commissioner” & sent staff back to look at concerns that Commissioner Collins had. When Staff came back on March 5, 2024, with a proposal, Commissioner Collins said it addressed concerns and that staff did an “outstanding job” with the legislation. Commissioner Collins’ concern now is that no other Code Home Rule County in Maryland has such a provision and the precedent it would set. Odd that something as important as this would be the issue Commissioner Collins decides not to lead on. Concerns related to the Interlocutory appeal legal fees for Commissioner Coates, no one moved on March 5, 2024, to do a budget transfer to fund those. Attorney Kevin Karpinski said that the fees would be due and payable by the County. The Board was not explicit in saying that the taxpayers of Charles County are not paying them. Does not want to be paying for Commissioner Coates appeals fees. Discussed Economic Development and attracting Businesses.
- Indicated that Commissioner Patterson said he would vote a person onto the Ethics Commission if he behaved himself. It true this would be a dangerous quid pro quo, especially since the legislation to remove a Commissioner did not move forward. These same three (3) Commissioners who voted to end consideration of the Bill to remove a Charles County Commissioner are also the same three (3) who are pro Charter Government. Feels this gives the public some advance insight into how the Charter will operate. Hopes Commissioner Patterson would respond directly to if he had this type of conversation.

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- Questioned if Watershed Conservation District (WCD) building density changed from one (1) unit per twenty (20) acres to one (1) unit per ten (10) acres as it was recommended back in 2017, was this accepted?
- Expressed anger at the disrespect shown to citizens who provide public comments. Commissioner Coates participated virtually earlier in the Commissioners' meeting but as soon as Public Comment Session began, she departed as always. Yet when topics like Charter Board comes up, she attends, and the vote is three (3) to two (2). Town Hall in Bryans Road conducted by Commissioner Bowling was because residents in Commissioner Coates' District do not feel she meets with her constituents. Commissioner Coates has a direct impact on our lives as one (1) of the five (5) Commissioners. Feels this is an insult citizen of Charles County. Wants news to cover the story happening in Charles County. When Commissioner Patterson is a deciding vote, he rarely gives details explanation of why he votes yes or no. He was made Vice President despite being the only freshman and that his campaign was funded to a large degree by Commissioner Coates, citizens are entitled to hear why he votes as he does. If not, feels others are making the choice for him.
- Requested making meetings later since people work. Also, feels that Commissioner Coates doesn't care to listen to people from the Western side of the County in her district.
- Spoke on Governor Moore's address to protect farmland but also the need to incentivize housing in places where they should be built. Discussed article talked about churches wishing to build affordable housing on their land. Governor Moore is pushing a bill that would streamline the zoning process & give affordable housing developers a density bonus. This bill would apply to nonprofits such as churches. She supports Governor Moore's effort however it's important to look at the fiscal and policy notes for this bill that is working its way through the house and senate. It is crafted to streamline the zoning for qualified projects in areas zoned for residential and mixed use, where we should build. Areas zoned for conservation like the Watershed Conservation District (WCD) or Agricultural Commercial (AC) are places where the Governor noted we should not build to protect our farmland and wild habitats. Approving Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) #23-173 is inconsistent with the County's Comp plan and the bill requested by Governor Moore. This ZTA is probably illegal. Discussed ideas to improve the agenda packets for the Board of County Commissioners meetings. She would like to see the agenda include all documents related to topic.

Summary of Public Comments

Virtual:

- Bill 2023-12 to remove a County Commissioner should have been moved to a public hearing. People deserve right to decide who represents them. Commissioner Coates is never present during public comments and the citizens deserve to be heard by Commissioner Coates. There have not been any town hall meetings in Bryans Road area until residents scheduled one on March 7, 2024 and invited all Commissioners. Commissioner Coates did not respond, and she represents this district. There were one hundred and thirty (132) citizens present, sixty-one (61)

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in person, and seventy-one (71) virtually. Unsettling that Commissioner Coates is present to vote on Bryans Road Sub Area Plan and rezoning Maryland Airport but never for public comments or to face citizens that she is supposed to represent. Citizens deserve to be heard.

- Expressed support of Bill 2023-12 to remove a County Commissioner should have been moved to a public hearing and expressed concerns that Commissioner Coates voted on not moving this Bill forward when it pertains to her. The majority of the public comments in favor of Zoning Text Amendment 23-173 Senior Housing are from people not in the County or the Bryans Road area.
- Expressed concerns of the notification process for the (Planning Commission) public hearing on April 1, 2024. Need better signage and location of signs related to public hearings such as the one on Docket 90 being held on April 1, 2024.

Work Session: Bill 2023-(13) Zoning Text Amendment 22-173 Independent Living Senior Housing Complex

Ms. Kelly Palmer, Planner III, Ms. Cynthia Bilbra, Planning Supervisor, Ms. Cathy Thompson, Assistant Chief of Planning, and Mr. Charles Rice, Planning Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management, joined the Commissioners for a work session on Bill 2023-13. Ms. Palmer reviewed proposed Zoning Text Amendment 22-73 Independent Living Senior Housing Complex as a permitted use within the Watershed Conservation District (WCD). This would be a new use and new definition in the WCD.

**At about 5:37 p.m. Commissioner Coates joined session.*

Commissioner Bowling expressed his concerns of moving forward with this Bill since he attended two (2) public meetings with residents in Bryans Road area with over one hundred and thirty (130) people at one and over seventy (75) people at other. The people were angry and felt not enough notification was given. Eighty percent (80%) of the public comments are from people outside of the County. We do need affordable housing, but many expressed concerns that this project will be for people coming in from other areas. He has serious challenges with this Bill. When he talked to some of the members of the church, they indicated that they would never have purchased this property if they thought they could not build here and were under the impression from the Commissioners they spoke with that they could easily change this zoning to build this complex there. Should hold off on this at this time. Concerns with not able to provide services and looks like this is spot zoning.

Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, provided the legal definition of spot zoning. Has legal concern can be construed as spot zoning. Mr. Rice explained that after staff researched other properties that would meet the same criteria in this Bill, there were two (2) other properties, Master Childs Church on Rt. 210 and First Baptist Church in Waldorf on Rt. 228.

Commissioner Collins questioned staff on acres used in the WCD and if property could be subdivided. He also questioned staff about water and sewer. Commissioner Collins also expressed the need for affordable housing and that this project has been in the works for over two (2) years. Since no specified plan within zoning for this type of housing, or in Bryan Road Area for this type of housing, the Bryans Road Area is a part of growth area. There is a need for this in this area. He feels that this a

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project that should be approved by the County and has concerns that people feel it will open up to people outside the community and which he feels is racial type comments. Feels that there were credible arguments that this may not be the ideal area but believes residents in Bryans Road would like to see affordable housing of this type in the Bryans Road Area. He disagrees that this is absolute spot zoning and inconsistent with what the County is trying to do and that this is a start to providing affordable housing.

Mr. Rice explained that as the Bill is written they could build this type of complex on the three (acres) which is a part of the larger ten (10) acres if they did not subdivide. He clarified that one limiting factor is that this project would need to have direct access to a roadway with arterial or higher classification. In the WCD there are only two (2) roads that meet that classification, Rt. 210 and Barry Road. It has access to sewer but does not believe it has direct access to water but may have access to onsite water. This is not uncommon in the County.

Commissioner Stewart is not surprised by the comment that a Commissioner told them to purchase the land and that the zoning would be approved even though not consistent with the Comprehensive (comp) Plan. She also addressed Commissioner Collins statement that affordable housing is needed in the Bryans Road Area. She stated that affordable housing is needed across the County, and affordable housing for seniors is needed across the County. This current plan is inconsistent with the Comp Plan, which is a ten (10) year plan. She knows that there are other areas and property owners in the Bryans Road Area that have water and sewer that would love to have this type of housing on their property, but some Commissioners are pushing this project and not other types of projects like this. We don't need to be spot zoning and should support senior housing in other areas of the Bryans Road Area. There are a lot of areas that need to be revitalized and we should not support a Bill in a new area that will tear down trees. We need to support other areas in Bryans Road that needs help being revitalized. Need to look at monies brought in by the health of the County's watershed and keep that in mind in policy decisions. A senior facility should not be so far away from services and amenities.

Commissioner Coates thanked Commissioner Collins for articulating what members in the community have expressed for the need of this affordable senior housing and agrees with this. Opportunity for community in that area to have a place to live in that area and supports this project.

Commissioner Patterson wanted to know if there was any other senior affordable housing in the Bryans Road Area to which Mr. Rice indicated not to his knowledge.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and failed, with Commissioners Bowling and Stewart present, voting in favor to not move forward at this time with this Bill and bring it back after the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins were opposed. A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Bowling-yes; Commissioner Coates-no; Commissioner Stewart-yes; Commissioner Patterson-no; Commissioner Collins-no. The motion failed two (2) to three (3).

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and failed with Commissioners Bowling and Stewart present, voting in favor to keep the record open to have staff address the conditions for senior living housing related to parking, landscape, pedestrian

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access to retail, public transportation and legal implications if considered spot zoning. Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins were opposed. A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Bowling-yes; Commissioner Coates-no; Commissioner Stewart-yes; Commissioner Patterson-no; Commissioner Collins-no. The motion failed two (2) to three (3).

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed with Commissioners Coates, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2023-13 Zoning Text Amendment #23-173 Independent Senior Living. Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were opposed. A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Bowling-no; Commissioner Coates-yes; Commissioner Stewart-no; Commissioner Patterson-yes; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed three (3) to two (2).

Commissioner's New Business

There was no new business discussed.

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present. *Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins were in person. *Commissioners Coates was virtual.*

Public Hearing: Proposed Bill 2024-02 Code of Ethics

Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, reviewed the administrative changes that corrects the updates from 2017 and reflects the change in State law. The changes included definitions for principal address and secondary home, added a one-year prohibition barring a former lobbyist, who is subsequently elected to office, from participating in certain matters, and other changes.

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

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2024-02 Code of Ethics.

Public Hearing: Proposed Bill 2024-(05) Amendment to Zoning Text Amendment 21-169 Critical Area

Mr. Charles Rice, Planning Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management; and Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Assistant Deputy County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, explained that the Commissioners accepted and approved the Critical Area Commission's conditional approval of Zoning Text Amendment 21-169, also known as Bill Number 2022-10, and that the Bill be amended to reflect the refinement and clarifying language to ensure consistency with Chapter one nineteen (119) of the 2008 Laws of Maryland, Section Nine (9). This new bill is a procedural one to reflect the approved language.

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

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A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2024-05 Amendment to Zoning Text Amendment 21-169 Critical Area.

Public Hearing: Proposed Bill 2024-(04) 9-1-1 Fee Increase

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Ms. Michelle Lilly, Director, Mr. Tony Rose, Deputy Director, Mr. Jeffrey Clements, Chief of Communications, Department of Emergency Services; and Mr. Marc Potter, Associate County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, reviewed the proposed bill. The State charges fifty cents (\$0.50) per month plus the County fee which has been seventy-five cents (\$0.75) since January 1, 2004. Recent changes allow to increase the County fee to cover the total cost of maintenance and operations of the County. Eight (8) Counties adjusted the fee to one dollar and fifty cents (\$1.50). The County Attorney's Office has determined that by keeping a range format in the County Code, it gives the County the flexibility in adopting a County fee on an annual basis and is recommending the 9-1-1 fee not to exceed two dollars and fifty cents (\$2.50) per line per month. Based on current projections, the fee would need to be increased from seventy-five cents (\$0.75) to one dollar and fifty cents (\$1.50) for July 1, 2024, to cover our costs.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2024-(04) 9-1-1 Fee Increase.

Public Hearing: Proposed Bill 2024-(03) Zoning Text Amendment 23-177 Transit Oriented Development Zone

Mr. Joel Binkley, Planning Supervisor, and Mr. Kirby Blass, Planner III, Department of Planning and Growth Management, explained that the amendment would allow motor vehicle fuel sales use and car washes in the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) District with conditions. The Planning Commission contends that the uses may be allowed with a Special Exception and only one (1) of the proposed uses shall be allowed in the entire TOD. The staff's position is that such uses should continue to be excluded from the TOD District.

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this public hearing.

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A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2024-(03) Zoning Text Amendment 23-177 Transit Oriented Development Zone.

At 7:12 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners present, voting in favor to adjourn.

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President