

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format, in person and virtual, at 9:00 a.m. with the following persons in attendance:

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, County Commissioner  
Gilbert O. Bowling, III, County Commissioner  
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner  
Amanda M. Stewart, Ed.D, County Commissioner  
Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator  
Wes Adams, County Attorney  
Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

*\*Ralph Patterson, II, M.A., Vice President, County Commissioner was absent for the morning session and joined session later this day as noted.*

**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 Coates, and Collins were present in person and Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were virtual.

*\*Commissioners Stewart and Patterson were absent.*

**Commissioners' Comments**

There were no Commissioner comments.

**Approval of the Minutes of September 17, 2024**

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of September 17, 2024. *\*Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the Notice of Attendance minutes of September 18, 2024. *\*Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote*

**Announcement**

Next Scheduled Session(s): October 1-2, 2024.

**Briefing and Request for Approval: FY2024 Fourth Quarter General Fund Review**

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, reviewed the FY2024 General fund review. The year end estimate for FY2024 with an adjusted budget that includes thirty-five point two (\$35.2) million-dollar fund balance use. Due to favorable revenues and expenditure savings, the budget use will not be needed. The estimated year end gain is still subject to audit adjustments, so figures could still change. They continued with a more in-depth review of revenues, property taxes, expenditures, and fund balance. Proposed changes to the Committed to Fund Balance were discussed for Other Post Employment Benefit (OPEB) reserve; added studies for Comprehensive Plan Update and Space needs Task Force;

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

Hazmat Response Unit – replace current vehicle; CIP Pay Go; and Commissioner Cares CSM Scholarship to allow for Spring 2025 scholarships.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the FY2024 fund balance reserves as presented. *\*Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote*

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

Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; and Ms. Kelli Scherer, Budget Analyst II, Department of Fiscal & Administrative Services, provided an update on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds covering in each category the total obligations, total expenditures and unobligated balance. Ms. Ellin also reviewed changes to the rules related to the use and reporting of these funds and the recommendation for a change of use for some of these funds.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor to approve Transferring three hundred and fifteen thousand four hundred dollars (\$315,400.00) of ARPA funds from the Broadband category to the Indian Head School-Based Community Health Clinic project. *\*Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

**Work Session: 2025 Preliminary State Legislative Proposal Package**

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Assistant Deputy County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, reviewed the process for considering which proposals would be included in the Charles County Legislative Proposal Package for 2025.

- A proposal to dissolve the gaming permit review board.  
**Proposed by: the Office of the County Attorney/Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal.

- A proposal to rename the stadium alcoholic beverage license and allow for sale and consumption throughout the stadium.  
**Proposed by: David Martinez, Esq.**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal but not include a name change.

- A proposal to provide flexibility for intrafamily transfers in the Tier 4 septic zone.  
**Proposed by: Cooper Raleigh**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to explore handling this locally and have staff bring back for a briefing.

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners  
Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)

- A proposal to adopt legislation to prohibit operating unregistered motor vehicles, such as all-terrain vehicles, from being operated on a highway.  
**Proposed by: Charles County Sheriff's Office**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal.

- A proposal to require identification or satisfactory proof of identification so that a police officer may issue a citation for the violation of smoking cannabis in public.  
**Proposed by: Charles County Sheriff's Office**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal.

- A proposal to exclude certain complaints of police misconduct involving vehicle collisions from the review of the administrative charging committee.  
**Proposed by: Granville Johnson, Chairman Police Accountability Board**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal.

- A proposal to prohibit chiefs of law enforcement agencies from providing their recommendation for lesser discipline to police officers when making an offer of discipline based upon the administrative charging committees' findings of a sustained charge of police misconduct.  
**Proposed by: Granville Johnson, Chairman Police Accountability Board**

The Commissioners directed Ms. Mitchell to send letter to the delegation advising them of the outcome and providing the link to this discussion since it has broader implications. This was not supported for the proposal package.

- A proposal to amend the process for trial boards in connection with sustained complaints of police misconduct.  
**Proposed by: Granville Johnson, Chairman Police Accountability Board**

The majority of Commissioners present (Commissioner Bowling was opposed) to include in the proposal package.

- A proposal to remove the required petition of support for applicants for an alcoholic beverage license.  
**Proposed by: Kathleen Quade, Chair Board of License Commissioners**

The Commissioners asked for more information from other jurisdictions on how they handle this concern.

The Commissioners present agreed to bring back this work session later this day in the afternoon.

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

**Closed Session**

At 11:42 a.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, 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)(1)(3)(7)(8) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to discuss a potential land acquisition; to discuss a settlement agreement and to review vacancies on Commissioner appointed Boards and Commissions. The reason for moving into closed session is to keep legal advice, negotiations, strategies, and personnel information confidential.

*\*Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

**Summary Closed Session Items**

At about 11:50 a.m., the Commissioners went into closed session.

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

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Jenifer Ellin, Martin Harris, Elizabeth Theobalds, Frances Sherman, Dottie Drinks, Keith Roumfort, Terri Kahouk, and Samantha Knott

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor to authorize staff to enter into negotiations for up to a specified amount. *\* Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins present, voting in favor to authorize staff to begin discussions related to specific transfer if acquisition is unsuccessful. *\* Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

**3-305(b)(7)(8) Additional Settlement Agreement**

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins, Wes Adams, Carol DeSoto, Jenifer Ellin, Olin Straus, Ed Gorham, Samuel Walter, Martin Harris, Bernard Cochran, Terrah Dews.

The Commissioners present reached a consensus on the proposed settlement agreement. Official action took place later this day under Approval Items- Additional Settlement Agreement.

**3-305(b)(1) Personnel: Vacancies on Commissioner Appointed Boards**

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

The Commissioners present reached a consensus on appointments and took official action later this day under Approval Items-Action on Boards and Commissions.

At 12:23 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins present, voting in favor to end this close session. *\*Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

At about 2:05 p.m. the Commissioners returned to open session.

**Roll Call**

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

**Annual: Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) Tour 2024**

Mr. Paul Wiedefeld, Secretary Maryland Department Transportation (MDOT) and other State of Maryland transportation officials met with the Commissioners in person as part of the State's Annual Transportation Tour to brief local jurisdictions on the state of Maryland's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), and capital budget. Members of the Charles County State Delegation, Delegates Patterson, Davis, and Senators Ellis joined the meeting as well. Participants discussed MDOT's Draft FY2025- FY2030 Consolidated Transportation Program. Commissioner Collins expressed his understanding of the State's budget challenges but the County cannot accept the proposed cuts to the Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) project after decades of tireless efforts. SMRT continues to be Charles County's highest transportation priority as well as for Prince George's County. He spoke on the fifteen (\$15) million-dollar Federal Earmarks given for this project which the MDOT is required to match. He stressed the need to complete the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for SMRT and obtain a Record of Decision from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). These concerns were echoed by staff, the delegation, and public comments.

There was one (1) public comment given.

*\*At about 3:15 p.m. Commissioner Patterson joined session virtually.*

*\*Break 3:20 p.m. – 4:02 p.m.*

**Roll Call**

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

**Approval Items**

**Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers**

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

**FY2025 Budget Transfer Request #226 County Match of Maryland Bikeways Grant First Phase Study**

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2025 Budget Transfer Request #226 for eighty-eight thousand eight hundred and seventy dollars (\$88,870.00).

**Change Order #7 Animal Shelter**

(Mr. Yale Lewis, Senior Project Manager, Ms. Britta Hertling, Chief of Capital Services, Bernard Cochran, Deputy Director-Utilities, Department of Public Works)

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Change Order #7 Animal Shelter for one hundred and sixty-five thousand six hundred and twenty-four dollars and fifty-five cents (\$165,624.55).

**Action on Boards and Commissions**

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to reappoint Dawud Abdur Rahman and William Murray and appoint Ryan Sekuterski to the Planning Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to reappoint Tia Spencer-Blake and appoint Espirita Garrison as the District 2 Representative and Quantral Fletcher as the at large member to the Charles County Police Accountability Board.

**Charles County Boards and Commissions Annual Update**

Briefing: Gaming Permit Review Board

Briefing: Annual Update from Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP)

Staff, Chairs, and members of the Gaming Permit Review Board and the LOSAP Board provided an overview of their 2023 Annual Report.

The Commissioners recognized Mr. William “Bill” Cooke for his thirty-one (31) years of service to the LOSAP Board.

*\*At about 4:16 p.m. Commissioner Patterson joined session in person.*

**(Continued)Work Session: 2025 Preliminary State Legislative Proposal Package**

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Assistant Deputy County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, continued her review of the proposals:

- A proposal to adopt legislation to deter squatter/trespassers.  
**Proposed by: Robin Woods**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal noting Commissioner Stewart’s concern with potential fraud issues.

- A proposal to amend the Maryland Homeowners Association Act.  
**Proposed by: Gloria Sawyers**

The majority of the Commissioners present, Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins were in favor to include this proposal. Commissioner Stewart was not in favor at this time and felt more research was needed. *\*Commissioner Bowling did not vote.*

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

- A proposal to provide certain minimum notice to school bus companies before terminating their contract.  
**Proposed by: Mark Koch, President Charles County School Bus Contractors Assoc.**

The majority of the Commissioners present, Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins were in favor to include this proposal. Commissioners Stewart and Bowling were not in favor.

- A proposal to make mini golf exempt from Charles County Admission and Amusement tax.  
**Proposed by: Doug Roth of Scary Strokes**

The Commissioners directed Ms. Mitchell to bring this back with more information.

- A proposal to allow county employees commissioned as special police officers to use their police powers to protect elected officials and employees.  
**Proposed by: Central Services Division Charles County Government**

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal.

The Commissioners agreed to bring the proposals submitted by Commissioner Collins back on another date. These proposals are:

- A proposal for state funding to support a public-private partnership for school construction to address space needs of full day prekindergarten under the Blueprint.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal for state funding to support a county sidewalk program to enhance the walkability of the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (Old Washington/Leonardtwn Rd)  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal to create Urban Bike Trail to connect the existing Indian Head Rail Trail to various destination on or near the Potomac River and points north, terminating at National Harbor.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal to commit state resources to the development of a ferry service connecting Indian Head to National Harbor and Alexandria, VA.  
**Proposed by Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal for enabling legislation to establish a classification of real property known as “blighted property” and to implement a higher property tax rate on that class of properties.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal seeking state funding to establish a mentorship program designed to reduce violent acts committed by and against the youth of Charles County.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal seeking state funding to create real-time crime centers.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

- A proposal seeking state funding to support the creation of murals throughout the county.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal seeking state funding to support the creation of an application competition.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**
- A proposal seeking state funding to assist with the creation of a housing trust fund.  
**Proposed by: Commissioner Collins**

*\*Break 4:53 p.m. to 5:02 p.m.*

**Roll Call**

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

**Commissioners' New Business**

There was no new business discussed.

**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 one (1) person who provided virtual comments. Any written comments received were added to the website for the public to view.

**Summary of Public Comments**

**In Person:**

- Speaker expressed concerns with and opposition to Charter Form of Government and increased costs of government.
- Speaker outlined reasons for not supporting Charter Form of Government
- Speaker spoke of concerns related to racial issues, political appointments, and Code Home Rule versus Charter Form of Government
- Speaker expressed opposition with Charter Form of Government
- Speaker outlined concerns that still have not been addressed by the Commissioners; time theft of a Commissioner, no report to address Commissioner's allegation of threats from the Ku Klux Klan
- Speaker expressed concerns and opinions on local governance related to transparency, ethical conduct, and campaign contributions.
- Speaker expressed concerns with Airport Business Park Zoning and proposed new map.

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners  
Tuesday September 24, 2024 (Legislative Day)

Virtual:

- Speaker inquired about the planning process for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan and concerns with community engagement and no response to public comments.

At 5:31 p.m. A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to adjourn.

---

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

---

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President