

**County Council of Dorchester County  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
July 16, 2019**

The County Council of Dorchester County met in regular session on July 16, 2019 with the following members present: William V. Nichols, President; Jay L. Newcomb, Vice President; Libby Handley Nagel; George L. Pfeffer, Jr. and Ricky C. Travers. Also present were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney; Keith Adkins, County Manager, and Donna F. Lane, Executive Administrative Specialist.

**REGULAR SESSION**

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilman Nichols led the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

**CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

Keith Adkins, County Manager, said after publication a Request to Sole Source-Purchase Gradall-Public Works was added to the agenda and an item, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge Land Acquisition was removed. The Council approved the amended agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Council approved the minutes of July 2, 2019 with Councilman Travers abstaining since he was not present at that meeting.

**APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS**

The Council approved the vouchers as presented with Councilman Travers abstaining for payments made to Simmons Center Market.

**FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS**

Councilman Nichols reported total cash and investments as \$7,245,868.69.

**CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY**

The Council convened into Regular Session on July 16, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 110, County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, Maryland 21613 and motioned to adjourn into Closed Session pursuant to Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, pursuant to §3-305(b)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction. Present were: William V. Nichols, President; Jay L. Newcomb, Vice President; Libby Handley Nagel; George L. Pfeffer, Jr. and Ricky C. Travers. Also present were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, Keith

Adkins, County Manager; and Donna F. Lane, Executive Administrative Specialist. Voting in favor of the Closed Session were all of the present Council Members.

The Council convened in a Closed Session on July 16, 2019 at 4:31 p.m. to discuss the following items: 1) denied a request for compensation by a 3 to 2 vote; 2) discussed matters relating to a promotion and resulting vacancy in Department of Corrections and agreed to restore a position by a 4 to 1 vote; 3) approved the request of the Emergency Services Director to hire two individuals to fill vacant Emergency Medical Technician positions by a 5 to 0 vote; 4) approved the request of the Emergency Services Director to hire an individual to fill a 911 Center Shift Supervisor vacancy by a 5 to 0 vote; 5) discussed personnel matters relating to a County Department; 6) discussed the filling of a vacant position in a County Department; 7) discussed personnel matters relating to a County Department; 8) based on the recommendation of the Emergency Services Director agreed to change the status of an employee as a Paramedic from on-call to full-time to fill a vacancy by a 5 to 0 vote; and, 9) based on the recommendation of the Emergency Services Director agreed to change the status of an employee as an Emergency Medical Technician from full-time to on-call by a 5 to 0 vote.

Present were: William V. Nichols, President; Jay L. Newcomb, Vice President; Libby Handley Nagel; George L. Pfeffer, Jr. and Ricky C. Travers. Also present were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney; Keith Adkins, County Manager, and Donna F. Lane, Executive Administrative Specialist. The purpose of the Closed Session is also set forth in the Written Statement of Closing a Meeting Under the Open Meetings Act, which will be provided upon request. Voting in favor of the Closed Session were all of the present Council members.

## **REGULAR SESSION**

### **COMMENDATION-STEVE MILLS-RETIREMENT**

The Council presented a Commendation to Steve M. Mills, Jr. congratulating him on his retirement and commending him for 30 years of service to Dorchester County.

### **COMMENDATION-KIM VICKERS-RETIREMENT**

Councilman Pfeffer read a Commendation to Kim Vickers congratulating her on her retirement and commending her for 31 years of service to Dorchester County.

### **PRESENTATION-COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM PLAQUE-FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

Craig "Julius" Lockhart, Floodplain Management Specialist, Floodplain Management and Insurance, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Regional III, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, presented to the Council a Community Rating System plaque. He noted Dorchester County has reached a Class 6.

## **MANAGERS COMMENTS**

### **MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT-WICOMICO COUNTY-EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The Council agreed to enter into a Mutual Aid Agreement between the Wicomico County Department of Emergency Services and Dorchester County Department of Emergency Services to be used in the event of a planned event or an emergency/disaster.

### **LICENSE AGREEMENT EXTENSION-EASTERN SHORE INNOVATION CENTER-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Council approved the request of Susan Banks, Economic Development Director, to enter into a License Extension Agreement with Purdy Group, LLC for a fourth year extension which ends on May 31, 2020 with all other terms and conditions remaining the same.

### **ADDENDUM NO. 1 LICENSE AGREEMENT-EASTERN SHORE INNOVATION CENTER-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Council approved the request of Ms. Banks to execute an Addendum to the current License Agreement with SunXAnalytical increasing its space to include 2,000 square feet of warehouse space at an additional rate of \$500 per month with all other terms and conditions remaining the same. Councilman Pfeffer questioned whether this will result in an increase in electricity costs. Mr. Adkins said the majority of the space will be used for storage.

### **REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT-RURAL MARYLAND GRANT-CAROLINE COUNTY LIBRARY-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Council approved the recommendation of Ms. Banks to send a letter of support for the Caroline County Library's Rural Maryland Council application for monies from the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund to develop a strategic plan for a comprehensive approach to preparing the next generation of workers.

### **REQUEST TO TERMINATE-FEDERAL LAND ACCESS PROGRAM GRANT-PHASE I TRANSPORTATION STUDY-FINANCE**

The Council approved the request of Cindy Smith, Assistant Finance Director, to terminate a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Land Access Program for funds for a Phase I Transportation Feasibility Study with the intention of developing and implementing a transportation system to and from Cambridge to the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and the Harriett Tubman National Monument since the project is no longer viable.

## BID AWARD - TAX LIEN FORECLOSURE PROPERTIES-FINANCE

Based on the recommendation of Ms. Smith, the Council agreed to award the following tax lien foreclosure properties: 1) 321 West End Avenue, Cambridge to Zsa "Keyia Sha'Don Giles for \$5,051; and, 2) 724 Glasgow Street, Cambridge to Mike and Kathi Swann for \$15,000.

## LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST-RURAL MARYLAND GRANT-MACE'S LANE COMMUNITY CENTER COMMITTEE

The Council agreed to send a request for a letter of support for Mace's Lane Community Center's Committee's Rural Maryland Council application for \$40,000 from the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund to establish a new public/private partnership for leveraging non-State sources of funding.

## REQUEST TO SOLE SOURCE-WALKWAY REPAIRS-VISITORS CENTER

The Council approved the request of Mr. Adkins to sole source with Gee McClain for repairs to the walkway under the Bill Burton Fishing Pier and to replace decking at the cost of \$2,600 with the placement of 8 tons of 50 to 100 pounds of stone to prevent wash. The County will supply the stone which will cost approximately \$500 and FY20 Tourism Budget funds designated for building repairs will be used to cover the cost of the stone.

## BESTPITCH FERRY BRIDGE DISCUSSION

Mr. Adkins said he received an email on June 28, 2019 from Rosemary Hodges, State Highway Administration, (SHA) inquiring about the status of the replacement of the Bestpitch Ferry bridge. He advised that she needs to know by July 17, 2019 whether any action will be taken on this project. He explained that federal funds were set aside in 2007 to be used within 10 years which were to be dispersed by SHA staff. He referred to the information Council received regarding the activities relating to this bridge, including pictures. He noted that after plans were 90% complete and the County had spent \$555,573.55 there was no further action taken. He said Ms. Hodges has not received any invoices from the County for this project. He noted that there are concerns about the elevation and it is predicted that in 2050 portions of this area will be underwater. He said there are issues regarding the road on both the west side and east side of the bridge due to elevation.

Councilman Nichols noted that the Bestpitch bridge is on the structural deficiency list. He questioned whether the funds set aside for the replacement of the bridge can be used for repairs. Mr. Adkins said the monies were only set aside for bridge replacement. He said in 2017 there were discussions with SHA personnel about constructing instead a wooden bridge next to the existing structure due to environmental issues and because there was no way to justify the amount of traffic over the bridge (30 vehicles or more daily).

Councilman Travers said the prior Council agreed to halt work on the bridge due to its proposed cost was well as the large scope of the project versus the return in investment and instead focus on repairing it.

Councilwoman Nagel stressed the need to take into consideration residents who live in the area have egress and ingress to their homes as well as visitors. Councilman Travers concurred. Mr. Adkins confirmed for Councilman Pfeffer that the funds the County expended were for the bridge design. He explained that SHA has not dispersed funds for this project; however, there were federal funds that may have been expended. In response to a query from Councilman Travers, Mr. Adkins said the Maryland Historical Trust staff have advised the bridge is historic; however, it is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places so funding cannot be obtained for repair/replacement. He noted that MHT has indicated it is amicable to a monument being placed in the area in lieu of maintaining the old bridge.

The Council agreed to pursue the repair of the existing Bestpitch Bridge.

#### **POLL CONFIRMATION**

Mr. Adkins said in the interim between meetings, a poll to close County Offices on July 5, 2019 was conducted and failed due to lack of a majority.

#### **LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST-RURAL MARYLAND GRANT-EASTERN SHORE CLIMATE ADAPTATION PARTNERSHIP-REGIONAL PLANNING FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESILIENCE-PLANNING AND ZONING**

The Council agreed to send a letter of support for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy's application for monies from the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund for the Eastern Shore Climate Adaption Partnership: Regional Planning for Disaster Preparedness and Resilience.

#### **REQUEST TO SOLE SOURCE-PURCHASE GRADALL-PUBLIC WORKS**

The Council approved Mr. Adkins' request to sole source and purchase a Gradall for Public Works at the cost of \$404,806.87 using \$405,000 allocated in the FY20 Capital Budget to purchase this equipment.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Adrian Holmes, President, Alpha Genesis Community Development Corporation, introduced herself and said Jermaine Anderson, Acting Director, is also present.

Mr. Anderson stated that they were partners on the mural project for the Harriet Tubman Educational Center, which has gained popularity. He explained that he has been asked to host three United Nations African Ambassadors from Mali, Sierra Leone and Namibia on September 7, 2019. He explained that since part of the story the mural depicts is about the event(s) that happened on the Court House steps he has chosen that location for a ceremony on that day. The Council approved Mr. Anderson's request to use the Circuit Court House grounds on Saturday, September 7<sup>th</sup> for a drumming and libation ceremony with set up at 10:30 a.m. and the event ending at 1 p.m. Set up will include chairs and a tent in case of inclement weather.

Mr. Anderson was advised that he must coordinate with the Public Works Department on this event. He said he: 1) is working with the City of Cambridge and Mayor Victoria Jackson Stanley on the ceremony; and, 2) will partner with the Dorchester Center for the Arts for a ribbon cutting and dedication ceremony for the mural as well as the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce.

### COUNCIL'S COMMENTS/ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Pfeffer thanked the Planning and Zoning Department staff for their hard work which resulted in changing the County's Community Rating System rating from 8 to 6 which lowers flood insurance bills for residents. He asked Brian Soper, Environmental Planner, to pass along his thanks. He encouraged citizens to check on friends and neighbors during the hot weather.

Councilman Newcomb noted that Andrew Zimmerman is coming to Hooper's Island on August 2, 2019 to catch and eat crabs.

Councilman Nichols said he attended the Taste of Cambridge during which spoke with two individuals from out of town. He said they were impressed with the event and the area and said they would return next year. He noted that there were two busloads of individuals from Bowie who also attended the event.


Councilman Newcomb asked Meighan "Chis" Chisholm, Airport Director, to provide an update on Katie's at the Airport. He said there has been a steady stream of customers since the restaurant re-opened. He noted that this weekend the ramp was full of airplanes and during the week there has been more air traffic than usual. Councilman Newcomb thanked Mr. Chisholm for working with Katie Rhea. Mr. Chisholm commended the inmates from the Detention Center who assisted with getting the restaurant ready for the re-opening.

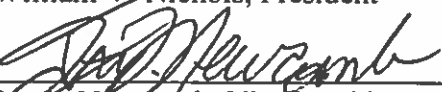
With no further business to discuss, the Council adjourned.

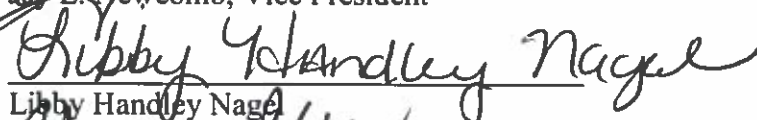
ATTEST:


  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Adkins  
County Manager

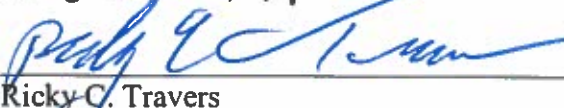
THE COUNTY COUNCIL  
OF DORCHESTER COUNTY:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William V. Nichols, President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jay L. Newcomb, Vice President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Libby Handley Nagel

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George L. Pfeffer, Jr.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ricky C. Travers

Approved the 6<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2019.