

**County Council of Dorchester County  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 17, 2019**

The County Council of Dorchester County met in regular session on September 17, 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.

**OTHER**

Councilman Nichols stated that comments will not be taken on the live streaming/taping of meetings, which has been discussed four times and was not approved. He said he is working with another County, on behalf of the Council, on an alternative for the live scan system for the Sheriff's Office.

**CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA**

Keith Adkins, County Manager, said after publication the following item was added to the agenda: Request to Seek Competitive Bids-Special Grant Applications-MAA-Airport and Request for Relief-Business Personal Property Tax. The Council approved the amended agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Council approved the minutes of August 20, 2019 and September 3, 2019.

**APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS**

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

**FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS**

Councilman Nichols reported total cash and investments as \$1,846,301.21.

**CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY**

The Council convened into Regular Session on September 17, 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; and, pursuant to §3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter. Present were: William V. Nichols, 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 September 17, 2019 at 4:31 p.m. to discuss the following items: 1) approved a request to hire an individual to fill the Planning and Zoning Director vacancy by a 4 to 0 vote; 2) approved the request of the Acting Planning and Zoning Director for a lateral transfer of an individual to fill a Permit Technician vacancy by a 4 to 0 vote; 3) approved a request to remain on call as an Emergency Medical Technician by a 4 to 0 vote; 4) approved a request to return to full time status as a 911 Dispatcher by a 4 to 0 vote and a request to remain on call as a 911 Dispatcher by a 4 to 0 vote; 5) agreed to hire an individual to fill a vacant Custodian/Maintenance position in the Public Works Department by a 4 to 0 vote; 6) agreed to hire an individual to fill a Motor Equipment Operator IV position in the Landfill Division of the Public Works Department by a 4 to 0 vote; 7) confirmed personnel actions of State's Attorney by a 4 to 0 vote; 8) approved a request to remain on call as an Emergency Medical Technician by a 4 to 0 vote; 9) approved the request of the Director of Corrections to hire an individual as a Probationary Correctional Officer by a 4 to 0 vote; and, 10) obtained a legal opinion from County attorney. Present were: William V. Nichols, 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.

The Council convened into Regular Session on September 17, 2019 at 5:04 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.

The County Council of Dorchester County convened in Closed Session on 5:05 p.m. to discuss the following item: agreed to hire an individual to fill a Zoning Inspector vacancy in the Planning and Zoning Department by a 3 to 2 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.

## **REGULAR SESSION**

### **COMMENDATION-PAM GRAY-RETIREMENT**

The Council presented a Commendation to Pam Gray congratulating her on her retirement and commending her for her years of service to Dorchester County.

## PROCLAMATION-DORCHESTER COUNTY HERITAGE WEEK

The Council presented a Proclamation declaring September 22 to September 28, 2019 Dorchester County Heritage Week.

## CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING-USE OF SPRING VALLEY

The Council approved the request of Amy Craig, Clerk of the Court, to: 1) use Spring Valley for a Christmas tree lighting ceremony on November 30, 2019; 2) use a live tree which will be placed in a tub on the bandstand; 3) plant the tree in the side yard of Spring Valley after contacting Miss Utilities so it can be used for future ceremonies; and, 4) for a \$500 donation from the County's Contingency Fund.

## HEALTHY WATERS BRIEFING-CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Alan Girard, Eastern Shore Director, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, said he is present with Joanna Ogburn, JBO Consulting, Facilitator for Envision the Choptank Collaborative (ECC). Mr. Girard provided a brief State of the Bay. He recognized the progress made in the agricultural industry to improve water quality by utilizing cover crops. Ms. Ogburn explained that ECC is a volunteer initiative and provided a summary of the collaborative's goals, memberships and future plans. Mr. Girard referenced the two agendas he provided to the Council of an upcoming boat trip being planned for October 25<sup>th</sup> in Oxford, Maryland. He said local elected officials in the counties and municipalities throughout the Choptank River have been invited to participate, noting that there will two tours that day. He and Ms. Ogburn thanked the Council.

## MANAGERS COMMENTS

### ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION MEETING TOPIC DISCUSSION

The Council agreed to discuss the following items with Maryland Department of Transportation officials during the Annual Transportation Meeting on October 15, 2019 at 7 p.m.

- Extension of guardrail at Route 50 at Vincent Road, both east and west bound over Higgins Mill Pond
- Review of intersection of Beaver Neck Village and Route 50 due to amount of accidents in this area
- Extend west bound turn lane on Route 50 to Route 16 to Church Creek
- Fully controlled signal at Bucktown Road due to limited visibility issues as a result of the turn/guardrails and identify any other measures to address safety in light of recent accidents in this location
- Traffic calming measures, i.e. circle, lights for Route 392/Route 14 intersection at Dockins
- Swap of Visitors Center and Woods Road
- Open the cross over to traffic to west bound Route 50 with an acceleration/merge lane heading west at the intersection of Airey's Road spur (cemetery end) and Route 50
- Study to address traffic issues at Crusader Road and Washington Street

#### FY 2020 PROGRAM OPEN SPACE ANNUAL PROGRAM-RECREATION AND PARKS

The Council approved the request of Frank Stout, Recreation and Parks Director, to submit the FY 2020 Program Open Space Annual Program to the Department of Natural Resources. Mr. Stout said he shared the draft plan with the County's liaison at the Department of Natural Resources who advised that design costs are not reimbursable until the project is completed. He said only two projects were selected which were included in the five year plan. He noted that the Annual Program can be modified.

#### EASTERN SHORE INNOVATION CENTER-LICENSE AGREEMENT EXTENSIONS-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Council approved the request of Susan Banks, Economic Development Director, to enter into a one year License Extension Agreement with iValue LED Light, LLC for a fourth year, commencing on September 21, 2019 and ending on September 21, 2020.

#### EASTERN SHORE INNOVATION CENTER-BUSINESS EXPANSION AND LICENSE AGREEMENT ADDENDUM NO. 1-ECON DEVELOPMENT

The Council approved the request of Ms. Banks to enter into an addendum to the current License Agreement with Quevera, LLC for its relocation from Suite 11 to Suites 6 and 7 to increase its space from 253 square feet to 420 square feet per month. The Council acknowledged that: 1) the monthly license fee will increase from \$268 to \$530 per month; and, 2) all other terms and conditions remain the same.

#### REQUEST TO OPEN ROAD-LORDS CROSSING-SECTION II-WARWICK ENTERPRISES, INC.

Mr. Adkins said before Council is a request from Jana Wheatley, Warwick Enterprises Inc., for the roads in Section II of the Lords Crossing Subdivision to be accepted into the County Road System. He stated that: 1) compaction documentation has been received from a certified engineer for the road base; 2) the road was paved with approximately 3" of asphalt with a final road thickness of 2 1/2" after rolled; 3) this section has approximately 8 tenths of road; and 4) Highway Division staff has reviewed and recommends acceptance into the Road System. The Council agreed to proceed with the opening of the road and approved the scheduling of a public hearing pursuant to Section 40-19 "Opening of County public roads" of the County Code.

#### RESERVE DOCKAGE REQUEST-RICHARDSON MARITIME MUSEUM

The Council approved the request of Jane Devlin, Executive Director, Richardson Maritime Museum, to reserve dockage at the County bulkhead for the following two vessels, two times, for no longer than seven days each: Dudley, a 64' buy boat and EE Moore, a 42' schooner.

#### FY 2020 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER GRANT APPLICATION-MARYLAND CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY-SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Council approved the request of Brittany Palmer, Grant Administrator, on behalf of the Sheriff's Office, to submit a FY 2020 School Resource Officer Grant application to the

Maryland State Department of Education under the Maryland Center for School Safety approximately \$85,000. The Council acknowledged that: 1) if the funds are received, a new resource officer will work at the following schools: South Dorchester K-8, Vienna Elementary and Warwick Elementary; 2) this will be a contract employee with no benefits; and, 3) there is no required match.

#### TRAVEL REQUEST-TOURISM

The Council approved the request of Amanda Fenstermaker, Tourism Director, to attend the Maryland Tourism and Travel Summit from November 6 to November 8, 2019 at the Rocky Gap Casino and Resort in Flintstone, Maryland. The Council acknowledged that the cost for this conference is \$928 for which Tourism Operating Budget funds will be used.

#### RURAL DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY FUND-FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION-SUPPORT-SENATOR BENJAMIN CARDIN

Mr. Adkins advised that: 1) Senator Benjamin Cardin is encouraging the Council to submit public comment in support of the establishment of a Federal Communications Commission Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, which will direct up to \$20.4 billion to expand broadband in unserved rural areas; 2) they are seeking input on the County's unique broadband goals while the FCC works to finalize the program; and, 3) once the grant program is approved, Senator Cardin's office is ready to assist the County in applying for funds. The Council agreed to send a letter of support.

#### REQUEST TO SEEK COMPETITIVE BIDS-SPECIAL GRANT APPLICATIONS-MAA-AIRPORT

The Council approved the request of Meighan "Chis" Chisholm, Airport Manager, for authorization to expend \$14,867 in FY18 Capital Budget Funds for AECOM, the County's engineer for the Airport, to obtain at least three competitive bids, in lieu of advertising a request for proposals, for runway and taxiway crack repair/repainting and to submit a grant application to Maryland Aviation Administration for special grant funding of up to \$300,000. The Council recognized that since there is a short grant application submission deadline, if necessary, a poll on the bid award can be conducted. Mr. Chisholm explained that the FY18 Capital Funds to be used consist of monies from other capital projects which came in under budget and from another project that was not pursued.

#### REQUEST FOR BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Mr. Adkins said before Council is the request of Jamie Harrington, member of DMS Hurlock, LLC for relief from business personal property taxes owed for the years 2009 to 2014. Based on the recommendation of E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, the Council agreed to reduce the amount owed to \$8,970.06 with Councilman Pfeffer abstaining.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Council approved the request of Michael Wheatley, resident, to place a drop box for the Dorchester Santa Toy Drive sponsored by Dorchester Young Professional Group in the County Office Building.

Terry Robbins, resident, referenced a discussion and vote on live streaming meetings at the County Council's last meeting. Councilman Nichols noted that at the beginning of the meeting he announced that comments will not be taken on this item. Clair Citron expressed concern about not being able to make comments about this matter. Councilman Nichols noted that the Council has already acted on the request multiple times.

**COUNCIL'S COMMENTS/ADJOURNMENT**

Councilman Pfeffer encouraged the public to attend the time capsule opening at the Circuit Court House on Sunday, September 22, 2019.

Councilman Nichols said the next County Council meeting is October 1, 2019 at 6 p.m.

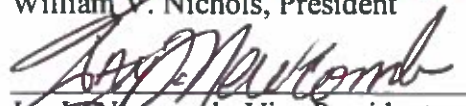
With no further business to discuss, the Council adjourned.

ATTEST:

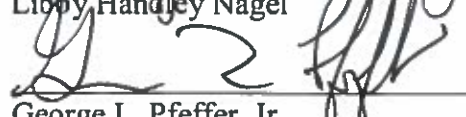
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Adkins  
County Manager

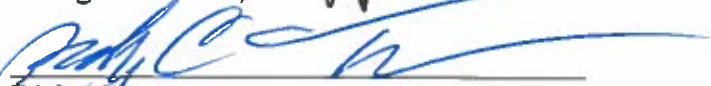
THE COUNTY COUNCIL  
OF DORCHESTER COUNTY:

  
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William V. Nichols, President

  
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Jay L. Newcomb, Vice President

  
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Libby Handley Nagel

  
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George L. Pfeffer, Jr.

  
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Ricky C. Travers

Approved the 1<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2019.