

**County Council of Dorchester County
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 5, 2021**

By conference call, open to the public, the County Council of Dorchester County convened in Open Session at 5:51 p.m. on the 5th day of January, 2021. A roll call of the members was conducted. Present on the conference call were: Jay L. Newcomb, President, William V. Nichols; Ricky C. Travers and George L. Pfeffer, Jr. Also present via telephone and in Room 110 was Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager and E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney. Councilwoman Nagel joined the meeting late.

REGULAR SESSION

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Nichols led the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Councilman Newcomb noted that after publication of the agenda, the following items were added: Housing of Detainees Agreement-U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement-Department of Corrections, and Request to Proceed-Internet-Phone Service-Leonard Lane Property-Recreation and Parks. The Council approved the amended agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Council approved the minutes of November 17, 2020 and December 1, 2020.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

The Council approved the vouchers as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Councilman Newcomb reported total cash and investments as \$15,844,852.54.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY

By conference call, the Council convened into Regular Session on January 5, 2021 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; and, §3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

Present on the conference call were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; William V. Nichols; George L. Pfeffer, Jr.; and, Ricky C. Travers. Councilwoman Nagel joined the meeting late. Also present via the conference call was Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager. Voting in favor of the Closed Session were the present Council Members. Councilman Newcomb and Councilman Nichols were also present in Room 110.

By conference call, the Council convened in a Closed Session on January 5, 2021 at 5:05 p.m. Present on the conference call were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; William V. Nichols; George L. Pfeffer, Jr.; and Ricky C. Travers. Also present via the conference call was Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager. Councilwoman Nagel joined the meeting late. Councilman Newcomb and Councilman Nichols were also in Room 110. E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, joined the meeting late.

Councilman Newcomb said the Council convened into a Closed Session at 10:42 a.m. on December 18, 2020 to conduct an interview for the Assistant Finance Director position pursuant to §3-305(b)(1).

He advised that the Council convened into a Closed Session at 5:04 p.m. on January 5, 2021 to discuss the following items pursuant to §3-305(b)(1) and pursuant to §3-305(b)(7):1) approved request of Public Works Director to promote an individual to fill a Fleet Manager position by a 3 to 1 vote; 2) discussed request of Public Works Director for an employee to use time;3) discussed a matter regarding paid leave; 4) approved the request of the Planning and Zoning Director to hire an individual to fill a Zoning Inspector Vacancy a 5 to 0 vote; 5) discussed personnel matters relating to a County Division; 6) discussed a proposed incentive to increase employment opportunities; 7) discussed a personnel matter in a County Department; and,8) received legal advice from County Attorney regarding a proposed lease agreement.

COMMENDATIONS-RETIREMENT-KATHLEEN WALLER

The Council presented a Commendation to Kathleen Waller congratulating her on her retirement and commending her for 16 years of service to Dorchester County.

COMMENDATION- JOSEPH CARPENTER

The Council presented a Commendation to Joseph Carpenter recognizing that he was honored by the Mothers Against Drunk Driving for Maryland for his continued commitment to eliminate drunk driving and thanking him for being a vital component in the reduction of alcohol related deaths in Dorchester County.

COMMENDATIONS-ELIZABETH STACEY, CHRISTOPHER TOLLEY

The Council presented Commendations to Elizabeth Stacey and Christopher Tolley for their actions which resulted in the saving of a life of an individual in imminent danger of death.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The Council adjourned into Legislative Session.

INTRODUCTION

AN ACT OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF DORCHESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND PURSUANT TO SECTION 12-512(D) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARTICLE AND PURSUANT TO SECTION 40-20 OF CHAPTER 40 OF THE DORCHESTER COUNTY CODE CLOSING AND ABANDONING CANNON ROAD, A PUBLIC COUNTY ROAD AND BOAT RAMP SITUATE IN THE LAKES ELECTION DISTRICT OF DORCHESTER COUNTY, MARYLAND.

E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, said before the Council for introduction is a Bill to close and abandon Cannon Road and a boat ramp situate in the Lakes Election District of Dorchester County. The Council agreed to proceed with publication of a public hearing.

REGULAR SESSION

MANAGERS COMMENTS

REQUEST TO USE COUNTY PROPERTY-BOARD OF EDUCATION-RECREATION AND PARKS

The Council approved the request of Frank Stout, Recreation and Parks Director for authorization to assist the Dorchester County Public School meal distribution program by allowing food service staff to utilize space in the Recreation and Parks Office at 446 Willis Street on Monday and Thursday afternoons between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. beginning on January 7, 2021.

FY2021 DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BROADBAND GRANT-BAY COUNTRY COMMUNICATIONS

The Council approved the request of Brian Roche, Bay Country Communications, for the County to sponsor a FY 2021 Broadband Grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), which is a pass through to Bay Country Communications (BCC), to continue to build fiber to underserved areas along Route 343/Neck District and Town Point. The Council acknowledged that: 1) there is no cost to the County as BCC will fund 100% of the project with 50% of the costs being reimbursed by the Office of Rural Broadband; 2) the County's Finance Office will act as a pass-through for the matching funds once Bay Country Communications completes the project to the satisfaction of the funding agency and Dorchester County by June 30, 2022; 3) as part of this process a signed application needs to be submitted by January 15, 2021 along with an updated W-9; 4) once approved a Memorandum of Understanding must be submitted by April 15, 2021; and, 5) a Subrecipient Agreement will be entered into between the County and BCC. The Council also approved Mr. Roche's request for a cover letter for the application.

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES GRANT MODIFICATION-ELLIOTT ISLAND JETTY PROJECT-PUBLIC WORKS

The Council approved the request of Dave Edwards, Public Works Director, for the execution of a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) grant modification for an additional \$35,000 for the FY2020 Waterway Improvement Fund Grant provided to the County for repairs to the Elliott Island Jetty.

REQUEST TO PURCHASE-MOWER-LANDFILL-PUBLIC WORKS

The Council approved the request of Mr. Edwards to purchase a John Deere zero turn mower from Atlantic Tractor, LLC at the cost of \$ 10,315.48 for the Landfill utilizing the Maryland State Contract with FY 2021 Capital Budget funds. In response to a question from Councilman Pfeffer, Mr. Edwards confirmed that the request is to piggyback on a State contract. He explained that the purchase is through a John Deere Dealer and the price for all dealers.

REQUEST TO AWARD-ELLIOTT ISLAND JETTY PROJECT-PUBLIC WORKS

The Council approved the request of Mr. Edwards to award the Elliott Island Jetty Project to Coastal Design & Construction \$585,100, the lowest bidder. The Council acknowledged that funding for this project is through several Department of Natural Resources grants.

REPAYMENT-MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION FUNDS-PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Edwards advised that: 1) Dorchester County is required to pay back the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) \$ 462,837.77 for professional engineering services provided to the County for Bestpitch Ferry Bridge; 2) the Council has the option to pay it back in full or to set up a payment plan not to exceed 24 months; and, 3) payment must be made regardless of whether Council chooses to repair the bridge. Mr. Edwards asked if the Council prefers: 1) a lump sum or payment plan; and, 2) if Council prefers to repair and open Bestpitch Ferry Bridge or leave it closed. Mr. Edwards said the bridge repairs will cost roughly \$100,000 and road repairs will cost approximately \$100,000, which will provide an additional seven to 10 years of useful life to the bridge. Councilwoman Nagel made a motion to proceed with a repayment plan and move forward with repairing the bridge and roadway which Councilman Nichols seconded. Pursuant to questions from Councilman Pfeffer, Mr. Edwards said: 1) the repayment is for design work provided by MDOT for the Bestpitch Bridge; 2) after he was notified by MDOT and the Federal Highway Administration that there was a past due balance he searched Public Works files; 3) it is his understanding that several Directors ago, MDOT provided professional engineering services for the design of the bridge which had to be built within an allocated time frame after it was completed; 4) since a bridge was not built within that time frame repayment is required; 5) the cost to repair the Bestpitch Bridge is approximately \$100,000 with another \$100,000 for road repairs which will provide another seven to ten year lifespan; 6) pursuant to studies conducted by the Department of Natural Resources, due to the rising tide in this area it is believed that this area may be underwater within the next 10 to 15 years and as a result, if Council agrees to repair the bridge only the minimum repairs will be

made to place it back in service; and, 7) based on his recollection, pursuant to a traffic study, roughly 50 to 70 cars per day use the bridge, depending on the time of the year.

The motion to repair the road and bridge passed with Councilman Pfeffer opposing. Councilman Travers noted that funds are not available to build a new bridge. Councilman Newcomb noted that there also issues with right-of-ways that would need to be addressed if a decision was made to build a new bridge. Mr. Edwards noted that eminent domain may have had to been exercised as well, noting that the proposed structure of the bridge was large an extended through the marsh. Pursuant to Councilman Newcomb's query, Councilman Travers and Mr. Edwards confirmed that due to the Maryland Historical Trust, in addition to building a new bridge, the County would have had to make repairs to keep the old bridge standing.

SOLE SOURCE REQUEST-SIDEWALK REPAIR--PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Edwards presented his request to sole source for the removal and replacement of approximately 350 ft. of sidewalk on Spring Street. Councilman Nichols stressed the need to advertise for proposals in order to receive competitive bids. In response to a questions from Councilman Newcomb, Mr. Edwards said: 1) the entire sidewalk along Spring Street will be replaced; and, 2) the quote that was obtained for this work includes removing and replacing the sidewalk and concrete. The Council agreed to sole source with South Dorchester Masonry for the sidewalk repair at the cost \$16,625.00 using Transfer Tax Funds. Councilman Pfeffer opposed since multiple bids were not sought.

CHANGE ORDER REQUEST-COMPREHENSIVE PLAN-PLANNING AND ZONING

Based on the request of Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning Director, the Council approved a Change Order from Chris Rogers, AECOM, consultant, for the update of the County's Comprehensive Plan to create a separate chapter about solar installations at a cost not to exceed \$15,000 using funding from the Planning and Zoning Department's Operating Budget under contractual services.

REAL PROPERTY TAX COLLECTION AGREEMENT-TOWN OF ELDORADO-FINANCE

The Council approved the request of Michael Spears, Finance Director, to enter into an agreement between the County and the Town of Eldorado for the collection of real property tax by the County's Finance Department beginning with the July 1, 2021 tax year. The Council acknowledged that this is the last town the County does not bill for and collect real property taxes.

HANGAR LEASE-AIRPORT

The Council approved the request of Steve Nuwer, Airport Director, to enter into a lease with Carl Deakyne for hangar space in Space D at the South Hangar, at the Cambridge-Dorchester Regional Airport for a 12 month period commencing December 14, 2020 for \$2,400 annually to be paid on an advanced monthly basis.

MARYLAND INSTITUTE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEMS GRANT AWARD-CARDIAC DEVICE-EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Council approved the request of Dozia Rahilly, Emergency Services Director to accept a Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Grant Award of \$17,119.55 to purchase one Lifepack 15, and 2 CR AED's. The Council acknowledged that this is a 50/50 match grant with FY21 operating or capital budget funds being used as the County's match. Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager, said she will obtain clarification on whether operating or capital monies are to be used in the match.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT REQUEST-RESCUE FIRE COMPANY

Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager, advised that: 1) Rescue Fire Company (RFC) submitted a request for the following Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): 500 surgical masks, 100 N95s, 100 coveralls, 50 faceshields, goggles, 1 case of gloves per size; 2) pursuant to Emergency Services staff the gowns are reusable as are the face shields; and, 3) Emergency Services staff have advised that the following can be provided to RFC at this time: 20 gowns, 5 reusable goggles, 50 surgical masks and 10 to 20 N95s; however, gloves which are backorder are not available. Councilman Pfeffer made a motion to approve the request of RFC which was seconded by Councilman Travers. Councilman Travers noted that RFC responds to multiple calls.

Pursuant to a question posed by Councilwoman Nagel, Ms. Lane said in December 2020 out of 23 medical calls RFC responded to 11. Councilwoman Nagel cited her concern about ensuring that County Departments have sufficient PPE and repeated requests from other entities which may deplete the inventory. She noted that no request for PPE has been received from any of the other volunteer fire companies in the County. In response to a question from Adam Pritchett, Chief, RFC, Ms. Lane repeated the amount of medical calls. Mr. Pritchett said RFC ran 10 medical calls in January and has an average of 300 per year. In response to a query from Councilwoman Nagel, Mr. Pritchett said the \$25,000 in CARES funding RFC received was for reimbursement of lost fundraising monies due to COVID-19 not for PPE. Councilwoman Nagel said other volunteer fire companies used those funds to cover lost funding and purchase PPE. Mr. Pritchett referenced email requests he sent regarding the process to receive additional PPE. He expressed his understanding that RFC responds to more calls than the other volunteer fire companies in the County Councilwoman Nagel noted that the number of COVID-19 cases has increased. Ms. Lane noted that in response to an inquiry from a volunteer fire company in the County, Susan Banks, Economic Development Director, provided clarification that the CARES funds can be used to purchase PPE or cleansing/sanitizing material, to supplement operational expenses, including utilities loans, vehicle maintenance incurred during the time period of 3/1/20 to 12/30/20 due to the inability to create revenue through fundraising efforts as a result of the COVID-19 public health crisis.

In response to a question from Councilwoman Nagel, Mr. Pritchett said RFC is working with the City of Cambridge on a budget. He cited his understanding that through the COVID funding all agencies were to be provided PPE. Mr. Pritchett said in addition to the average figure of 300 medical calls per year RFC responds to 700 other calls.

Pursuant to questions posed by Councilwoman Nagel, Mr. Pritchett confirmed that: 1) the coveralls are washable; 2) goggles can be sanitized; 3) coveralls can be washed 75 to 100 times. Councilwoman Nagel inquired about the amount of PPE, RFC needs at the current time, noting that PPE sought by the County has been backordered. He said he understands that PPE is on backorder. He said originally funds were available through the Health Department for PPE, a request was sent to this entity for a future order for bulk PPE, based on their request, to supply all agencies. He expressed his understanding that an additional order for PPE for future use was not sent. He stated that pursuant to the Health Department all future requests for PPE were to be through the Emergency Services Department.

In response to Councilwoman Nagel's question, Mr. Pritchett stated that: 1) he is not aware of the amount of PPE the volunteer fire company has in stock; 2) RFC mainly needs N95s and surgical masks. Ms. Lane noted that surgical masks are also on backorder. She expressed her understanding that the Health Department no longer has funds for PPE as they were expended. Based on Councilwoman Nagel's question, Mr. Pritchett said RFC is willing to accept a lower amount of PPE in order to ensure that there is an adequate supply for Emergency Services and other County Departments. He asked for clarification on the process for the submission of requests from the volunteer fire companies in the County for PPE.

Councilwoman Nagel posed the following questions regarding the original request for PPE using funds provided by the Health Department: 1) how many masks were provided to each volunteer fire company; and, 2) how that amount was determined, i.e. the size of the company. Mr. Pritchett said allotments of PPE were provided to them by the Emergency Services Department. He noted that the Dorchester County Volunteer Firemen's Association purchased 7,000 surgical masks, 500 for each department, which RFC has depleted. He said he has not asked other volunteer fire companies for masks. Ms. Lane noted that RFC is the only volunteer fire company that has asked for additional PPE from the County.

Pursuant to a query from Councilwoman Nagel, Councilman Nichols noted that in the original purchase in April 2020 using CARES funds allocated to the Health Department each volunteer fire company received 500 surgical masks plus a second purchase of 1,000 surgical masks by RFC. She asked whether 50 masks, 50 surgical masks, 50 face shields and 10 to 20 N95 masks was enough for RFC. In response to a question from Councilwoman Nagel, Mr. Pritchett said the call volume will determine the amount of PPE RFC needs for now. He noted that all of the active RFC members respond to calls, 50 masks would be used. In response to an inquiry from Councilwoman Nagel, Mr. Pritchett said all of the active members do respond to calls every day but they randomly do. Councilman Travers referenced Ms. Lane's statement that certain PPE has been backordered. In response to his inquiry, Ms. Lane stated that she is unaware of the receipt of PPE, and in particular, surgical masks and gloves by the Emergency Services staff today. She said she will check with staff. Councilman Pfeffer confirmed that his motion is to provide RFC the amount of PPE they requested. Councilman Travers said if necessary, any PPE not currently available can be provided to RFC at a later date when available. Councilman Newcomb noted that Emergency Services staff provided a list of PPE that they can provide RFC now, based on the current inventory.

Councilman Pfeffer referenced his multiple requests regarding the County's PPE inventory and Emergency Services staff's reports regarding the multiple sources they can obtain this equipment when needed. He said companies have approached Emergency Services with stock on hand, including masks and PPE, which they turned down. He stressed the need to ensure that there is a sufficient amount of PPE available for all responders, even though vaccinations are now taking place, due to the unknowns about exposure and transmission. In response to a query from Councilman Newcomb, Councilman Pfeffer advised that MES was one of the vendors that Emergency Services staff did not purchase PPE from, despite it being readily available. He noted that a building has been constructed for the storage of PPE. Councilman Pfeffer concurred with Councilman Newcomb's statement that a lot of inventory has been used over the last several months.

In response to a question from Councilman Pfeffer, Mr. Pritchett said in April all agencies were asked the amount and type of PPE they needed. Councilman Pfeffer noted that a building has been constructed for PPE. He cited concerns about the low quantities of PPE which Emergency Services now has available. He expressed his belief that multiple vendors have been soliciting this Department. Councilman Newcomb said it is his understanding there were 50 calls on Saturday. He stated that there has been lots of inventory used over the last several months. Councilman Pfeffer concurred, noting the need for the volunteer fire companies to be protected from COVID. Ms. Lane said she will inquire about the issues Councilman Pfeffer referenced.

The motion to approve the request submitted by RFC failed with Councilman Nichols, Councilwoman Nagel and Councilman Newcomb opposing. Councilman Newcomb referenced the list the Emergency Services Department provided of the PPE they have available to provide. He said he supports providing that amount to RFC in order to not jeopardize the County's supply.

Based on a motion made by Councilwoman Nagel, the Council agreed to provide to RFC the items the Emergency Services Department have available. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Pritchett, Councilman Newcomb said future requests for PPE shall be submitted to Emergency Services. Ms. Lane asked to be copied on the requests.

CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE AND RELIEF ACT EXTENSION ADDENDUM

The Council agreed to execute a First Amendment to Federal Funding Certification and Agreement to extend the period of time Coronavirus Response and Relief Act Funds can be used from December 30, 2020 to December 31, 2021. The Council acknowledged that the majority of these funds have been expended.

RESTAURANT RELIEF GRANT MODIFICATION-MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

The Council agreed to execute a Modification to the Grant Agreement between the Department of Commerce and the County to increase the amount of Restaurant Relief funds by an additional \$139,886 and extend the disbursement date of these funds to March 31, 2021. Councilman Nichols abstained. The Council further agreed to offer these funds to those restaurants that did

not receive funding in round one. The Council briefly discussed the process for reviewing and approving applications. The Council acknowledged that Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager, will coordinate with Susan Banks, Economic Development Director, on the review process, noting that the Council will be presented the applications for its review and consideration.

CLEAN CHESAPEAKE COALITION-CONTINUED PARTICIPATION-COUNTY CONTRIBUTION

The Council agreed to continue to participate in the Clean Chesapeake Coalition and acknowledged that the County's contribution for FY21 is \$17,000 which is included in the current budget.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

The Council reappointed Jeremy Reid to the Agricultural Land Preservation Board for another five year term and the following individuals to the Electrical Examiners Board for another three year term: Jeff Bell, Electrician; Louis Koski, Master Electrician and Rodney Travers, Master Electrician.

POLL CONFIRMATIONS

The Council, confirmed its decisions in the interim between meetings, via poll:

- Approved CARES applications for the churches who submitted applications (list available by request) as well as the following by a 4 to 0 vote which are included in the December 18, 2020 vouchers that were approved by the Council with Councilman Travers abstaining for Simmons Center Market.
 - St. Johns Church, \$5,000
 - New Life Christian Church and Ministries, \$5,000
 - Landlord Application, \$3,180
 - Restaurant (Don Chuy), \$20,000
 - Ministers & Citizens for Change and Growth, Inc., \$5,000.00
 - Human Society of Dorchester County OBA Baywater Animal Rescue, \$5,000.00
 - St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Mary's Church, \$15,000.00
 - Porter Soul Food Restaurant LLC, \$10,000.00
 - Neck District Grill, \$20,000.00
 - Simmons Center Market, Inc., \$20,000.00
 - 400 Race Street LLC, \$10,000.00
 - The Good Shepard Association, \$5,000.00
 - South Dorchester Community Center, \$5,000.00
 - Landlord/ Tenant Program- Ginger Brannock- \$1900
- Denied a CARES application from the City of Cambridge for the City Election by a 3 to 2 vote;

- Approved CARES applications for businesses, restaurants and volunteer fire companies (lists available by request) by a 5 to 0 vote which were included in the December 4, 2020 vouchers that were approved by the Council.

- Approved the distribution of CARES funding to the following by a 5 to 0 vote:
 - Hometown Pride, \$17,500
 - Hoopers Memorial United Methodist Church in Hoopersville, \$5,000
 - American Legion Post 91, \$5,000
 - For Personal Protective Equipment, \$20,550

- Approved a payment to P&G Construction in the amount of \$16,572.25 for the renovation of a space at the Public Safety Complex using Contingency Funds and monies from the Business Expense Capital Line Item by a 5 to 0 vote.

HOUSING OF DETAINEES AGREEMENT-U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT-DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

The Council agreed to enter into an Agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the housing of ICE detainees at the Detention Center pending final review and/or legal review. In response to a question from E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, Joseph Hughes, Director, confirmed that the Department of Corrections has the capabilities to follow the terms and conditions of the agreement. Director Hughes said due to COVID-19 only 55 ICE detainees can be housed at the Detention Center. He noted that they will be held in a separate pod.

REQUEST TO PROCEED-INTERNET-PHONE SERVICE-LEONARD LANE PROPERTY-RECREATION AND PARKS

The Council approved the request of Frank Stout, Recreation and Parks Director, to proceed with connecting to available fiber for internet service to the Leonard Lane property utilizing Bay Country Communications and to use the County's existing infrastructure for phone service. The Council acknowledged that Don Keyes, Information Technology Director, endorses the connection of this fiber network to the new location which will provide connectivity for this new County facility for access to files and folders from the County's server.

OTHER

Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning Director, said: 1) the City of Cambridge has received Federal Emergency Management monies for a mitigation study to develop a plan; 2) a panel of individuals from the City and County has been formed to assist with this endeavor; 3) the panel members are Larry White, Civil Engineer, the City's consultant who is overseeing the project; George Hyde, City Engineer; Steve Garvin, Emergency Planner; Matt Pluta, Barry White and himself; 4) the panel is in the final phases with a contractor to develop design solution strategies and community outreach for flood mitigation measures; 5) the goal is for each community to have tools to assess and mitigate issues due to flooding and storm water; and, 6) the County will benefit from the study in the long run.

Councilman Newcomb referenced a discussion during a prior Council meeting regarding Corkran Cemetary Road and anonymous comments from a public official that Councilwoman Nagel closed the road. He cited for the record that: 1) she did not close the road; 2) she contacted Public Works; 3) Dave Edwards, Public Works Director, placed closed signs on the road but did not block the road; 4) in the interim a wrecker had to pull another vehicle out of the road due to a large hole; 5) an ambulance responding to a call had to turn around and another unit access the scene on the other side; 6) the Council did not close road; and, 7) the Council agreed to pursue the legislative process to close the road. He noted that due to high tide, signs were placed on Palmers Mill Road and it was closed. He cited concerns about public safety if a road is in need of repair or impassable for a certain period of time and no signs are placed and a road is not closed. Councilman Pfeffer cited his understanding individuals in the community use the road, which he believes should be improved since there is only one area on the road that is in poor condition. Councilman Nichols cited concern about motorist's and children's safety had Mr. Edwards had not taken precautionary measures. Councilmen Newcomb and Nichols expressed their belief that the anonymous public official should have provided their name. Councilman Pfeffer concurred.

A discussion ensued regarding County Council members responding to inquiries from residents within other Council Members districts. Ms. Lane explained that she has asked Mr. Edwards to advise her when he is contacted by a Council Member regarding road issues he should advise the Acting County Manager/County Manager so that individual can ensure that the entire Council is made aware of them.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Council adjourned.

ATTEST:



Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager

THE COUNTY COUNCIL
OF DORCHESTER COUNTY:



Jay L. Newcomb, President



Libby Handley Nagel, Vice President



William V. Nichols



George L. Pfeffer, Jr.



Ricky C. Travers

Approved the 2nd day of March, 2021.