

County Council of Dorchester County
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2021

By conference call, open to the public, the County Council of Dorchester County convened in Open Session at 6:00 p.m. on the 11th day of May 2021. A roll call of the members was conducted. Present on the conference call were and in Room 110 of the County Office Building was: Jay L. Newcomb, President; William V. Nichols; and, George L. Pfeffer, Jr. Also present via telephone and in Room 110 were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney; and Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager.

REGULAR SESSION

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Pfeffer led the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

The Council approved the vouchers as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Councilman Newcomb reported total cash and investments as \$7,707,767.

REGULAR SESSION

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

The Council convened into a public hearing, the second of three hearings on the proposed FY 2022 budget.

Beth Wilson, Director of Operations, Dorchester County Public Schools, acknowledged that Tim Brooke, Comptroller, Board of Education (BOE), is present. She asked Council to provide the \$321,000 local share of the over \$1 million fire alarm/emergency notification system for the entire Cambridge South Dorchester High School Complex included in the BOE's FY22 Capital Budget request. Mr. Brooke spoke in favor of providing the funds for this project. He noted that the school system has obtained the approval of the Interagency Committee for Public School Construction for use of State funds to cover the remaining cost for the project.

E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, noted that no one signed up to speak. He asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak.

Thomas Hurley, President, Cambridge Fraternal Order of Police Lodge No. 27, expressed his support of all of the law enforcement agencies in Dorchester County and their officers who place their lives and families on the line to protect citizens. He cited opposition to the actions taken by State legislators to remove due process protections for officers. He said there has been a sufficient loss of officers at the City of Cambridge Police Department and expressed concern that the same may occur at the Sheriff's Office. He expressed his hope that the Council will provide across the board raises to

Deputies this year and in future years. Based on Councilman Pfeffer's inquiry multiple individuals raised their hand in support of Mr. Hurley's request.

Mr. Merryweather asked if anyone on the telephone wished to speak. There was no response. He noted that a legislative public hearing/adoption will be held on May 18, 2021. The Council adjourned this budget public hearing. The meeting was recessed at 6:13 p.m. since the Constant Yield Hearing is scheduled for 6:30 p.m.

By conference call, open to the public, the County Council of Dorchester County reconvened in Open Session at 6:29 p.m. on the 11th day of May 2021. A roll call of the members was conducted. Present on the conference call and in Room 110 of the County Office Building were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; William V. Nichols; and, George L. Pfeffer, Jr. Also present via telephone and in Room 110 were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney and Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager.

CONSTANT YIELD HEARING

The Council convened into a Constant Yield Hearing. Mr. Merryweather said no one signed up to speak. Michael Spears, Finance Director, said the purpose of this meeting is to satisfy State regulations. He explained that due to assessment changes the same property tax rates will bring in new revenue. He said in accordance with Constant Yield laws lowering the property tax will yield the same amount of revenue as last year. He noted that the current property tax rate can be lowered which will yield the same amount of revenue as last year. He said the proposed FY22 budget does not include any changes to the tax rate so a moderate increase in revenue will be incurred during that fiscal year. Mr. Merryweather asked if anyone in the audience or on the telephone wished to speak. There was no response.

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 6th day of July, 2021.