

**County Council of Dorchester County
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2021**

The County Council of Dorchester County convened in Open Session at 6:10 p.m. on the 16th day of November, 2021. The meeting was also available to the public by conference call. A roll call of the members was conducted. Present on the conference call and in Room 110 were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; Libby Handley Nagel, Vice President; William V. Nichols and George L. Pfeffer, Jr. Also present in Room 110 and via telephone were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney; and Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager.

REGULAR SESSION

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Travers led the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

After publication of the agenda:

- the following items were added: Online Sales Grant Award Request-Economic Development, Referral To Planning Commission-Planning And Zoning, Proposed Lease
- an item titled "Vaccine Mandate Resolution" was removed from the agenda.

The Council approved the amended agenda.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

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

FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Councilman Newcomb reported total cash and investments as \$20,073,518.96.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY

The Council convened into Regular Session on November 16, 2021 at 5:04 p.m. 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 discuss The meeting was also available to the public by conference call. Present on the conference call and in Room 110 were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; Libby Handley Nagel, Vice President; William V. Nichols; and George L. Pfeffer, Jr. Also present in room 110 via the conference call was Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager. Voting in favor of the Closed Session were the present Council Members.

The Council convened into a Closed Session at 5:05 p.m. on November 16, 2021 to discuss the following items pursuant to §3-305(b)(1).

- 1- Approved the request of the Emergency Services Director to hire an individual as an Emergency Medical Technician to fill a vacant position by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 2- Approved the request of the Emergency Services Director to hire an individual as a 911 Dispatcher to fill a vacant position by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 3- Approved a request to hire individuals as Visitor Center Clerks by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 4- Approved the request of the Director of the Department of Corrections to hire an individual as a Correctional Officer to fill a vacant position by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 5- Approved the request of the Public Works Director to hire an individual as a Motor Equipment Operator III in the Highway Division to fill a vacant position by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 6- Discussed a personnel matter relating to a specific County employee or specific County employees.
- 7- Obtained legal advice from County Attorney regarding a matter relating to a proposed lease.

Present on the conference call and in Room 110 were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; Libby Handley Nagel, Vice President; William V. Nichols; and George L. Pfeffer, Jr. Also present via the conference call was Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager. E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney joined the meeting late via conference call and in Room 110.

PROCLAMATION-YOUTH HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS MONTH

The Council presented a Proclamation declaring November 2021 as “Homeless Youth Awareness Month.”

JOHN AND JANICE WYATT FOUNDATION PRESENTATION-CAMPAIGN FOR GRADE LEVEL READING

John Wyatt, John & Janice Wyatt Foundation, spoke about his and his wife’s decision to form the foundation in order to assist the youth. Jymil Thompson, provided information regarding the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading which is to improve third grade reading proficiency with all stakeholders in the community placing a critical role. Chris Wheedleton said the goal is to ensure that student are ready for kindergarten, noting that Nancy Shockley, Local Management Board Director, is part of the coalition for this purpose. He asked the Council to spread the word about this program. Ms. Lane advised Council that Sheriff James Phillips has advised that the Sheriff’s Office is in favor of this campaign and will be a part of it.

DISCUSSION-USE OF COUNTY FACILITY FOR EMERGENCY PET SHELTER

The Council briefly discussed the potential use of the County building located in Vienna as a Pet Shelter, which currently houses Dog Control and EMS Station and agreed to ask Sheriff Phillips for his comments about this proposed use.

CHRISTMAS TREE PLACEMENT REQUEST-CIRCUIT COURT HOUSE

The Council approved the request of Amy Craig, Clerk of the Court, to place a Christmas tree on the bandstand at the on Saturday, November 20 with a lighting ceremony on Saturday, December 11. She invited the Council to attend this ceremony.

PRESENTATION-HARRIETT TUBMAN STATUE SITE

Adrian Holmes, Alpha Genesis Community Development Corporation President, thanked the Council for its approval to place a Harriett Tubman statute on the Circuit Court property. She noted that their original budget was \$250,000 and that to date with donations and grants they have raised \$192,299.81 with a year to go. Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning Director; presented the site design for the Harriet Tubman Statue site. In response to a question from Councilman Travers. Mr. Hamon said the hill will remain intact, small retaining walls may be built and the area will need American Disabilities Act guidelines for landings. He noted that the design is still conceptual. Ms. Holmes said a request has been submitted to the City of Cambridge for its participation in this project. She noted that they are selling bricks to raise funds for this project which in addition to the funds garnered by the public or through grants, the County's contribution, and a potential City contribution will provide the funding necessary for the project. Pursuant to an inquiry, Ms. Lane said the Council has agreed to contribute \$55,000 from the Transfer Tax Fund for hardscaping for the project.

PLAN PRESENTATION-REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Mike Detmer, Chair, Redistricting Commission, provided an overview of the plan the Redistricting Commission approved. take census and rebalance districts their mission noting that: 1) the County's population was down by approximately 200 people; 2) there was fluctuations in several districts so changes were required; 3) the overall consensus was to divide the census number by five, which equated to 6,906 with the goal of getting that number for as many of the districts as possible; and, 4) District 4 was not changed; 5) the largest change is in the City of Cambridge as it grew more in relation to the rest of the County which decreased in size. He referenced the census count delay due to COVID-19 which condensed the redistricting process into a short time frame.

Dr. Theresa Stafford, Vice Chair, Redistricting Commission thanked Councilman Nichols for recommending her appointment to the committee. She said it was a very educational process. She explained that one of the items the Commission members identified for future consideration is creating more than one minority district.

Mr. Merryweather said a public hearing is required thirty days after this presentation. The Council agreed to proceed with the public hearing which will be held on December 7, 2021. In response to a question from Councilman Newcomb, Mr. Detmer provided a summary of changes to the various districts. Councilman Pfeffer questioned whether any of the Committee members were politically pressured or intimidated that affected their reasoning for the maps. Mr. Detmer cited his opinion that this did not happen, noting that it was a spirited discussion. Pursuant to a

query from Councilman Travers, Mr. Detmer said there was more of a density in District 3. He noted that East Cambridge was moved into District 3 so it was not in a rural southern district.

On behalf of the Council, Councilman Newcomb thanked the members for their service on the Committee.

MANAGERS COMMENTS

REQUEST TO SOLE SOURCE-MAINTENANCE BUILDING OVERHEAD DOOR REPAIR-AIRPORT

The Council approved the request of Steve Nuwer, Airport Director, to sole source with Salisbury Door and Hardware to repair the rear overhead door and wall of the Airport Maintenance Building using funding from Local Government Insurance Trust, the County's insurer, less the County's deductible.

LEASE RECOMMENDATION-AIRPORT

The Council approved the request of Mr. Nuwer to lease to David Curtis Space A in the South Hangar effective November 1, 2021. E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, advised that there is a specific statute under the Aviation Article that gives the County the power to enter into such leases without a public hearing process.

SURPLUS PROPERTY REQUESTS

Airport

The Council approved the request of Mr. Nuwer to surplus a 2004 Ford Expedition, (VIN# 1FMPU16LA72016), presently used as a courtesy vehicle.

Emergency Services

The Council approved the request of Dozia Rahilly, Emergency Services Division to surplus a 2005 Ford Expedition.

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GRANTS-SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Council accepted the following grant agreements between the Dorchester County Sheriff's Office and the Maryland Department of Transportation for the following contingent upon the Council President executing the documents:

- \$7,052.00, DUI Enforcement
- \$2,964.00, Speed Enforcement
- \$2,064.00, Occupant Protection Enforcement

The Council also agreed that the pay for the Sheriff's Office for overtime hours will be at a time and a half pay rate for the participating deputy. The Council recognized, pursuant to E. Thomas

Merryweather, the legal entity to enter into agreements is the Council President. The Council confirmed that the Council President is the legal entity that is duly authorized to legally bind the County so all grant applications and grant awards need to be signed by the Council President.

FY22 MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY NON CAPITAL GRANT AWARD- CHESAPEAKE COUNTRY INTERPRETIVE PLAN-TOURISM

The Council accepted a FY22 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Non Capital Grant Award for the Chesapeake Country Interpretive Plan in the amount of \$50,000 with the match being from individual county contributions and through a potential grant through the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network or the Federal Highway Administration - Scenic Byways program. The Council acknowledged its October 19, 2021 approval for the issuance of a request for proposals for a consultant for this plan, which were due November 12, 2021.

FY22 MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY CAPITAL GRANT AWARD- BAYLY CABIN –TOURISM

The Council accepted a FY22 Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Capital Grant Award for the Bayly Cabin in the amount of \$25,250 contingent upon the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the future owner of this property. Councilman Newcomb opposed. The Council acknowledged that the match for this grant is from the Bartus Threw Foundation in the amount of \$25,000. E. Thomas Merryweather County Attorney, said if a new MOU is not entered into, the project shall not be pursued.

FY22 MARYLAND HERITAGE AREAS AUTHORITY MANAGEMENT GRANT- TOURISM

The Council agreed to accept a FY22 Management Grant through the Maryland Heritage Area Authority in the amount of \$100,000 with a cash match of \$80,733 from the Tourism Department Operating Budget consisting of salary, marketing office supplies, postage, mileage and membership line items and a \$19,967 in-kind match.

DISCUSSION-FY23 BUDGET PROCESS

The Council agreed to the scheduling of a work session with County Department Heads to discuss matters relating to the FY23 Budget process during which the Council's expectations will be discussed. The Council acknowledged that the attendees will also include, at minimum, two Council Members and the Acting County Manager.

POLL CONFIRMATIONS

The Council confirmed its decisions, in the interim between meetings, via poll which are listed below:

- in an effort to assist citizens impacted by the recent flooding event, agreed to the placement by the Public Works Department of roll off cans for citizens to dispose of

damaged property free of charge at the following locations from November 1, 2021 through November 6, 2021 by a 5 to 0 vote and then to extend the date to November 14, 2021 by a 5 to 0 vote:

- Crocheron Boat Ramp
 - Hoopersville Boat Ramp
 - Madison Boat Ramp
 - Ragged Point Boat Ramp
 - Taylors Island Boat Ramp
 - Toddville Church
 - Tylers Cove Boat Ramp
 - Wingate Boat Ramp
- to approve the request of Nancy Shockley, Local Management Board Director, to accept the following Emergency Rental Assistance Program Application requests by a 3 to 2 (no response) vote:
 - Arcade, LLC \$2,375
 - Cambridge Property Management, LLC \$12,735
 - Choptank Property Management \$8,000
 - RIG Holding, LLC \$3,340
 - Sue Kellam \$4,920
 - TMC Real Estate, LLC \$19,562
 - Woods Road Meadows \$7,825

ONLINE SALES GRANT AWARD REQUEST-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Based on the request of Susan Banks, Economic Development Director, the Council approved the below second round of recipients for the Online Sales and Telework Grant to split the total of the grant funds of \$26,269.93 equally among them which equates to \$3,752.84 for each.

April Goodman Originals
Harvesting Hope, LLC
Blackwater Bakery (late)
Thiaitalian Infusion Cuisine LLC
Beat The Rush Delivery
Layton's Chance Winery
Tis Divine Sweets and More (late)

REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMISSION-PLANNING AND ZONING

The Council approved the request of Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning Director, to refer to the Planning Commission for its December 1st hearing, for review and recommendation an amendment from the attorney for Suicide Bridge Restaurant to their previously approved Sewer Plan Amendment. The Council acknowledged that instead of connecting to the town of Hurlock, as previously approved, they propose to connect to the sewerage facilities of the Town of Secretary.

PROPOSED LEASE

The Council agreed to the drafting of a lease by the County Attorney in reference for space for Emergency Medical Services.

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 11th day of January, 2022.