

County Council of Dorchester County
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 2, 2021

The County Council of Dorchester County convened in Open Session at 6:05 p.m. on the 2nd 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; George L. Pfeffer, Jr.; and, Ricky C. Travers. 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 Pfeffer led the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

After publication of the agenda, the following item was removed in order for the Director to obtain further information for placement on a future agenda: Request To Submit Grant Application-EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant-Economic Development; and, 2) the following items were added: Request for Letter of Support-Marylanders for Better Beer & Wine Laws; Building Permit Application Approval Request-Soil Conservation and Referral to Planning Commission-Text Amendment-Planning and Zoning, Correspondence to Department of Natural Resources-Dredging Priorities. The Council approved the amended agenda.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

The Council approved the vouchers as presented.

FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Councilman Newcomb reported total cash and investments as \$24,900,934.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY

The Council convened into Regular Session on November 2, 2021 at 5:24 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 in Room 110 were: Jay L. Newcomb, President; Libby Handley Nagel, Vice President; William V. Nichols; George L. Pfeffer, Jr.; and, Ricky C. Travers. Also present in Room 110 via 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 5:25 p.m. on November 2, 2021 to discuss the following items pursuant to §3-305(b)(1).

- 1- Approved the request of the Finance Director to hire an individual to fill a vacant Accounting Manager position by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 2- Deferred the request of the Economic Development Director to hire an individual to fill a vacant Business Development Manager position to obtain additional information;
- 3- Discussed the results of recent interviews conducted for the Director of the Department of Corrections and agreed to hire an individual to fill this vacant position by a 5 to 0 vote;
- 4- Approved the request of the Emergency Services Director to hire an individual as an on call EMT and an individual as a full time Paramedic by a 5 to 0 vote.

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

MEETING WITH LEGISLATORS-2022 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Senator Adelaide Eckardt said: 1) she is working on issues relating to wastewater treatment and failing berm infiltration ponds; 2) she has run interference for the Twin City Wastewater Project to ensure funding; 3) the McKeil Point project is moving forward; 4) Dorchester County Sanitary District, LLC is in need of additional funding for the Bonnie Brook Water Treatment System, which she believes needs Council's attention; 5) she met with Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) staff today regarding flooding; 6) waste water treatment, salt water intrusion and flooding are issues that will have to be addressed in the County; 7) she is debating whether to submit legislation to have counties develop a plan to address these issues, in consultation with MDE and Department of Agriculture staff; however, she prefers this to be a local action. She explained that she is in favor of each county identifying broadband provider(s) to ensure last mile coverage and is working with the State regarding this as well.

Senator Eckardt said she will submit the following legislation the Council wishes to pursue: 1) addition of a new Section 21-104.5 to Title 21, Subtitle 1 of the Transportation Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to allow the operation of a golf cart, with certain conditions, on a highway on Upper or Middle Hoppers Island and Taylors Island and amend Section 13-402(c)(12) to waive the registration requirement if a golf cart is operated in accordance with Section 21-104.2 through 21-104.5 of the Article; 2) to amend Section 1-113 of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland which requires legal advertisements and legal notices to be published in a "newspaper of general circulation" to include online advertising as an alternative; and 3) to amend Section 10-312(f) of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland entitled "County property; housing projects; franchise; required notice," as it relates to leases, to allow the County to enter into a lease for a term of five years or less, without providing notice of publication for three successive weeks. Senator Eckardt referenced the public notice bill, noting that legislators were able to work out a media special exception for Dorchester County which did not move forward. She cited her understanding that the goal is to allow the County the ability to place notices online when there are no news publications.

Referring to the legislation to modify publication requirements for leases, Senator Eckardt said a hearing was held; however, some legislators are reluctant to move forward with it, noting she needs further clarification on the bill. Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager, explained that: 1) currently, pursuant to State law a public hearing must be held on leasing County property; 2) a public hearing notice must be advertised for three successive weeks; 3) each advertisement is approximately \$200; 4) there are several properties the County leases for \$1 a year; 5) the County lost a prospective tenant who needed to secure office space within a certain time frame due to the amount of times it had to be advertised; and, 6) leases can be placed on an a County agenda for which the public can make comment. Councilman Newcomb explained that the County expended \$600 in order to renew a lease between the County and the South Dorchester Community Foundation, Inc. for a \$1 due to the publication requirements. Senator Eckardt said perhaps defining parameters, such as a minimum value should be added to the proposed legislation. Mr. Merryweather said it is not logical for advertising costs to be more than the lease amount.

Councilman Pfeffer said he attended a Town of Secretary meeting during which it was noted that the United States Department of Agriculture had placed further regulations upon the project including conducting additional surveys. Senator Eckardt advised she has talked with Terry Fearins, Program Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture, that the steps they have completed are sufficient. She said she will provide the written confirmation she received regarding this matter.

Councilman Pfeffer advised that there are multiple counties who are in favor of online advertising. He said of the approximately 30 to 40 legislative initiatives were discussed by the Maryland Association of Counties, noting that the pursuit of having the option of online advertising was number seven. Delegate Adams said he has the legislative history on the current legislation which was passed in the 1940s. He opined that a local bill in lieu of a statewide bill should be pursued. Pursuant to his inquiry, Ms. Lane said: 1) the County currently has two newspapers of general publication; 2) the Star Democrat which an online edition on Mondays and Tuesdays; 3) the Dorchester Banner publishes a newspaper every Wednesday; and 4) if either of the newspapers cease publication or go to an online only format it will take longer to meet advertising requirements or obtain a remedy. Councilman Pfeffer encouraged the legislators to reach out to other colleagues in other parts of the State as he believes many, if not all, also have concerns about the lack of an online component.

Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes said she understands the issue, noting that there was also legislation introduced during the last legislative that dealt with digital advertising to which there was opposition by the media. She opined that additional discussions need to take place regarding online advertising, noting her belief that this needs to be addressed.

A discussion ensued regarding the legislation allowing golf cart use on Upper or Middle Hooper's Island and Taylors Island which included whether the County has the right to allow this use without seeking a State amendment and the unique characteristics of these islands compared to other areas in the State.

Delegate Sample-Hughes said she has visited various communities to identify issues, solutions and to seek input on whether legislation if warranted. She advised that she recently visited the Town of Hurlock officials and discussed their needs including a potential gas provider. She said

Town officials are seeking residents input on Chesapeake Gas as a provider. She noted that there will be a special session held on December 6, 2021 to address the following: the 23 vetoes of Governor Lawrence Hogan, the congressional map, voting for a new treasurer for the State of Maryland. She said she will seeking the Council's requested legislation. She advised that she is pursuing legislation for the use of a better quality of concrete by the Maryland Department of Transportation and health related bills. She noted that she serves on the Spending Affordability Committee which meets next week at which the condition of the State's finances will be discussed, which if positive, may result in funds being used to support local jurisdictions that have infrastructure issues.

Delegate Mautz said due to conflicts between the Senators and House Representatives in regards to a climate action bill many bills were not addressed during the last legislative session. He advised that in the oyster sanctuary report recently released, it was noted that many are failing or are no longer productive so legislation will be pursued in light of this report. He noted that during the last session Delegate Butler from Western Maryland pursued legislation to include woody biomass in the renewable portfolio. He said Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff felt strongly that it should be pursued. In response to a question from Councilman Newcomb, Delegate Mautz confirmed that the based on the data in the report, the most viable bottom is being worked, especially dredged bottom which results in a better mortality rate. He opined that during the upcoming legislative session discussions will be held regarding harvesting the oyster sanctuaries so they can become sustainable.

Pursuant to a query by Delegate Adams, Delegate Mautz said the deer population has risen substantially which has negatively impacted the agriculture industry. He advised that Sunday hunting bills will be pursued, noting that the delegation has met with the Farm Bureau and independent farmers regarding this matter. He said he also meet with Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, DNR who is working on an evening permit program which will be more flexible and more advantageous for farmers and landowners. He noted that she has identified Montgomery County and Howard County as model counties for deer management which facilitate their own venison donation program that does not need legislative approval. He said he is scheduled to meet with the individual who heads the Montgomery program about its program. He cited his belief that there may be costs involved. He noted that the Farm Bureau is considering offering tax credits for farmers for damages to their crops.

Councilman Newcomb noted that those counties do not have Sika Deer, which are out more at night. In response to a question from Councilman Newcomb, Senator Eckardt said she floated an idea to several Senate Committees, including the Educational Health and Environmental Affairs Committee, on the deer meat bill. Pursuant to Councilman Newcomb's inquiry, she said she was going to propose an hour before dusk and an hour after dawn. She stressed the need to educate legislators and others on the devastating impact Sika deer have on the environment, noting that they are now migrating up the shore. Councilman Pfeffer noted that there are some in the northern part of the County. Councilman Newcomb asked if the delegation has received negative feedback, noting he received a call from a Cecil County resident who is opposed to such legislation. Delegate Adams said local courtesy bills on private properties have more success. He said a hunting club with 600 to 700 acres does not have to comply with regulations. He stressed that a large deer population is also a public safety issue, noting that he has hit several deer in his vehicle.

Councilman Travers noted that Aubrey Vincent, Chairwoman, on behalf of the Sanitary Commission, has asked the County for \$417,000 for the improvements for the Bonnie Brook Water System. Chairwoman Vincent said they have 120 days to notify the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) if they are able to secure the additional funding. In response to a question from Senator Eckardt, Ms. Vincent said they have advertised a request for proposals for the project twice. Pursuant to a query from Councilman Travers, Senator Eckardt said the State is waiting for a County contribution. She confirmed that the request is for the funds from the American Rescue Act Plan allocation the County received. Ms. Lane noted that the Sanitary Commission's request is one of several items the Council will consider at a future work session regarding the use of these funds. In response to questions from Councilman Newcomb, Ms. Vincent advised that: 1) the committee has \$75,000 earmarked for the project and funds from the U.S. Development Administration as well as bonds for \$325,000 and \$60,000; and, 2) the total cost of the project is \$1.98 million.

John Knox, President, Bonnie Brook Home Owners' Association, said the water system which was built in the 1960s serves the Elks Lodge as well as residents on Elk Lodge Road. Senator Eckardt said there are concerns due to the age of the meters they may not be providing accurate readings and the purchase of new ones may save money. Mr. Knox concurred with her statement, noting that there are also several leaks. Ms. Vincent said the USDA is providing \$1.5 million in the form of grants and loans. Based on a question posed by Councilman Pfeffer, Ms. Vincent said she will provide the Council a breakdown of the monies for the project, including the grants and loans. Pursuant to an inquiry from Councilman Travers, Ms. Vincent said they need an answer from the County by the end of December, noting that no additional USDA funds are available until April.

REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT-MARYLANDERS FOR BETTER BEER & WINE LAWS

The Council discussed with the legislators a request from the Maryland for Better Beer & Wine Laws for a letter in support of legislation to Request from Cailey Locklair, Maryland Alcohol Choice Coalition and Adam Borden, Marylanders for Better Beer and Wine Laws, for a letter of support to update Maryland's alcohol sales laws as follows:

- Eliminate current prohibitions on chain grocery store licensing and allow local liquor boards to accept beer and wine license transfers or issue new beer and wine licenses with off-premise privileges per existing rules and regulations that consider community input;
- Require any food retailer receiving a license, whether transferred or new, to sell at least 6 of 7 food categories including fresh produce, fresh and uncooked meat, and dairy products; and to devote 50% or more of the retail selling space or 6,000 square feet to these items; and
- Require any food retailer receiving a license to pay \$2,500 annually to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)'s Community Legacy Financial Assistance Fund in addition to its local licensing fee to help address the root causes of food insecurity in Maryland;
- Require any food retailer receiving a license, whether transferred or new, to sell at least 6 of 7 food categories including fresh produce, fresh and uncooked meat, and dairy products; and to devote 50% or more of the retail selling space or 6,000 square feet to these items; and

- Require any food retailer receiving a license to pay \$2,500 annually to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)'s Community Legacy Financial Assistance Fund in addition to its local licensing fee to help address the root causes of food insecurity in Maryland.

Pursuant to a query from Councilman Travers, Delegate Mautz said due to next year being election year it is premature to predict how this bill will be addressed during the legislative session. Delegate Mautz cited his belief that the major opponents of this legislation will be the Maryland Beverage Association. Delegate Sample-Hughes said she believes that there will no movement on such legislation until 2023, noting that the same members of the committee that opposed this legislation previously, will be hearing this type of legislation. She noted that State law does allow local jurisdictions to allow establishments the ability to sell alcohol with food for delivery. Councilman Travers said the trail period on this ends in 2022. Delegate Mautz noted that statewide bills are more controversial than local bills.

Councilman Pfeffer said legislation concerning the housing of immigration detainees by local jurisdictions was vetoed, citing concern about the veto being overridden. In response to a question posed by Delegate Sample-Hughes regarding the potential impact, Martha Sparks, Assistant Finance Director, recollected that one month the income garnered was about \$74,000 and was approximately \$60,000 another month. Councilman Newcomb said they are held in a separate pod due to COVID and the Warden's approval of detainees is required. Councilman Travers said the County is one of the detainees' last stops before deportation. He noted that the detainees are supposed to be low risk.

Councilman Travers questioned whether the legalization of marijuana will be pursued during the 2022 legislative session. Senator Eckardt said she has been assigned to a work group regarding this matter, noting her belief that adult recreational use will be discussed. She expressed her belief that and any such action will probably go to referendum. Delegate Sample-Hughes concurred, noting that the medical marijuana program is still in its beginning stages. Delegate Mautz pointed out that pursuant to federal requirements all individuals who seek a Commercial Driver's License are required to undergo drug testing. Delegate Adams said he was impressed with Cultra, which he toured.

City of Cambridge Commissioner and President Lajan Cephas questioned whether landbanking legislation will be pursued. Senator Eckardt said such legislation passed during a prior session and she will provide a copy to her. Commissioner Cephas cited her support for the pursuit of legislation for protection for County Council members of City Commissioners. Councilman Pfeffer explained that there are some State laws that address protection for State officials, noting that one of the Maryland Association of Counties 2022 legislative initiatives is to seek legislation to include elected and appointed positions.

Senator Eckardt advised that a Local Insurance Government Trust tort bill will be filed on behalf of Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc. so Council should receive a request for a letter of support from that entity.

ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION MEETING-MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Sean Powell, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT); Tim Smith, State Highway Administrator; Melissa Williams, Director of Planning and Programming, Maryland Transportation Authority; Travis Johnston, Director of Local Transit Support, Maryland Transit Administration, MDOT; Christine Nizer, Administrator, Motor Vehicle Administration, MDOT; Kristin Fidler, Program Manager, Maryland Port Administration, MDOT; Ashish Solanki, Regional Aviation Assistant Director; and Jay Meredith, District #1 Engineer were present. Deputy Secretary Powell, Mr. Smith, Ms. Williams, Mr. Johnston, Ms. Nizer, Ms. Fidler and Mr. Solanki provided an overview of the draft FY2022 to FY2027 Consolidated Transportation Plan as it related to their specific divisions.

Jay Meredith, District #1 Engineer, said: 1) funding for design and construction of the full signalization of Bucktown Road and controlled left turns has been identified; 2) projects have been completed in East New Market which the Town Council sought; 3) funding approval has been obtained for project design at Aireys Spur which includes changing crossovers; 4) he is working with City officials regarding a hiker/biker trail from Washington Street to Bucktown Road with a crossover on Washington Street; and, 5) plans have been made for a full signal on Dorchester Avenue with a safe crossover for pedestrians and bicyclists. In response to a question from Councilman Travers, Mr. Meredith said a preliminary project being considered is the placement of a roundabout at Dorchester Avenue and Crusader Road. Deputy Secretary Powell commended Mr. Meredith's ability to administer the needs of the district he serves with minimal assistance. Mr. Meredith confirmed that measures will be taken to ensure that school buses will no longer be required to stop at railroad crossings that are no longer utilized, in response to a question from Councilman Newcomb. Councilman Newcomb commended Ms. Fidler for her assistance regarding dredging issues in the County. Ms. Fidler thanked him.

Councilman Newcomb referenced the legislation the Council asked the local legislative delegation to pursue earlier in the meeting regarding the use of golf carts in Upper and Lower Hoopers Island and on Taylors Island and asked MDOT officials to provide them their comments on this potential legislation. Pursuant to an inquiry from Councilman Newcomb, Ms. Fidler said federal partners, and the Senate Water and Energy Appropriations Committee have identified \$ 37.5 million of the U.S Army of Corps portion of the Mid Bay Project with a cost share of 65% from this entity and 35% from the State as a non-federal sponsor. She noted that there is funding in the Consolidated Transportation Plan for the next three years of the outlying years of the six year budget. Councilman Pfeffer thanked Mr. Meredith for addressing concerns at the Route 14/Route 392 intersection at Dockins, noting that the Commissioners of the Town of East New Market appreciated the lowering of the speed in that area. He cited concern about the intersection at Waddell's Corner due to the amount of accidents that have occurred there including two involving the fatality of an individual. Mr. Meredith said he addressing this area. Based on a question from Councilman Pfeffer, Ms. Fidler said the ports are not running 24/7, noting that the ports on the Western Shore are assisting with alleviating bottlenecks and they are not experiencing a hold up of goods. Councilman Pfeffer commended the staff of the Motor Vehicle Administration office in Salisbury, noting he was called one minute after his appointment time, and in 15 minutes had obtained his Real ID. He also spoke highly of the efficiency of using MVA's online registration process.

A discussion ensued between the Council, the legislators Secretary Powell and Ms. Nizer regarding the golf cart legislation. Secretary Powell said he will look into this matter.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

INTRODUCTION

BILL NO. 2021-18 AN ORDINANCE concerning: Amending the 2021-2022 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance of Dorchester County FOR the purpose of amending the County Budget, consisting of the Operating Budget, the Capital Budget, and the Grant Budget, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022; and appropriating funds for all expenditures for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2022.

E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney, said before Council for introduction is legislation to amend the 2021-2022 Annual Budget Appropriation Ordinance for the reappropriation of funds from prior Capital Budgets to repurpose \$429,460 for the purchase of a new replacement bulldozer for the landfill.

MANAGERS COMMENTS

FY23 ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN-DELMARVA COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Council approved the request of Andrea Waters, Transportation Grants Specialist, Delmarva Community Services, Inc. (DCS) - Delmarva Community Transit, to submit a FY 2023 grant application to the Maryland Transit Administration for operating and capital funding. The Council acknowledged that DCS will provide the local match in conjunction with the amount the County has awarded this entity through its budget process.

FY22 OPERATING BUDGET AMENDMENT-BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Council approved the request of W. Dave Bromwell, Superintendent of Schools, for an amendment to the Board of Education's FY22 Operating Budget with an increase in revenue from state sources under the BluPrint Maryland for Special Education Funds of \$373,171 and an increase in net expenses for Special Education of the same amount.

TAX SALE CASE DISCUSSION-FINANCE

Mr. Merryweather said he and Michael Spears, Finance Director, believe the City and County will be better served if they cooperate together on blighted properties sold at tax sale to make them suitable for transfer. The Council agreed that Mr. Spears can contact City officials regarding this matter.

REQUEST TO SOLE SOURCE-REPLACEMENT OF FUEL STATION VEEDER ROOT MONITOR-PUBLIC WORKS

The Council approved the request of Dave Edwards, Public Works Director, to sole source with Delmarva Petroleum Service LLC a veeder root monitor replacement at the cost of \$5,747.36 with funding from the FY21 Capital under the phase 2 allocation for the fuel pump project.

REQUEST TO ADVERTISE FOR PROPOSALS-FUEL STATION SHED-PUBLIC WORKS

The Council approved the request of Mr. Edwards to advertise a request for proposals for a fuel station shed, which will provide shelter and safety to the fuel station utilizing funds will be from FY21 Capital Budget under the allocation for phase 2 of the fuel pump project.

REQUEST TO ADVERTISE FOR PROPOSALS-FUEL FARM CONCRETE-AIRPORT

The Council approved the request of Steve Nuwer, Airport Director, to advertise for proposals for repairs to a concrete containment slab surface measuring 16' x 30' for the fuel farm which is deteriorating and after a recent inspection by MDE was identified as needing to be repaired. The Council acknowledged that funds for the repair were approved in the Airport FY2021 Capital Budget.

LEASE RECOMMENDATION-AIRPORT

The Council approved the request of Mr. Nuwer to lease to Larry Kelley, Delaware Aviation Museum Association T-Hangar #30, effective immediately.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE ENFORCEMENT REQUEST-TOWN OF SECRETARY

The Council recognized that the Town of Secretary has submitted a request for the County to enforce the property maintenance code in that jurisdiction. The Council also recognized that Susan Webb, Assistant Planning and Zoning Director, submitted her comments regarding this request as follows: 1) there is currently insufficient staff to accommodate this request; 2) she recommends that the International Property Maintenance Codes be adopted which will assist with enforcement; 3) the County may be obligated to do so for the other municipalities in the County. The Council agreed that Councilman Pfeffer, Ms. Lane, Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning Director, will meet with Town of Secretary representatives to discuss this matter. Councilman Travers expressed his belief that Mr. Hamon should have provided the comments.

REQUEST TO RENEW CONTRACT EVERBRIDGE EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM-EMERGENCY SERVICES

Pursuant to the request of Dozia Rahilly, Emergency Services Director, the Council agreed to renew the Everbridge Emergency Notification System with funds from the Emergency Management operating budget under the contractual services line item being used for this purpose.

CAMBRIDGE WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT INC. MEMBERSHIP REQUEST-CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Based on a request submitted by Commissioner Lajan Cephas the County cited its preference of having the City and County's Economic Development Directors being voting members on the Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc. Board. The Council acknowledged that the City has not taken any action regarding this matter.

FY21 OPERATING ASSISTANCE GRANT-LAND BANK FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Council acknowledged that: 1) at its April 21, 2020 meeting, the Council approved the request of Cindy Smith, the prior Assistant Finance Director, to submit to the Department of Housing and Community Development a Technical Assistance Grant application to pay for a feasibility study/plan for the creation of a Land Bank with no County match requirement; 2) Mike Spears, Finance Director, is not interested in Finance spearheading a land bank initiative; and, 3) before them is the FY21 Operating Assistance Grant Award of \$17,500 to hire a consultant to provide a cost-benefits assessments for creating a Dorchester County Land Bank to assist with blight and abandoned housing and commercial properties for its review and consideration. Councilman Travers noted that Ms. Smith said it was a viable option for the County. Councilman Pfeffer expressed his hope that if the decision is made to proceed with establishing a land bank it will become self-sufficient with administrative costs being covered through the sale of property. The Council accepted the grant award.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING-SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS-SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Council agreed to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding, Implementation and Administration of Programs Involving Sheriff Deputies in Schools (MOU) between the County, the Dorchester County Sheriff's Office and the Board of Education of Dorchester County.

FY22 DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATION GRANT-TOURISM

The Council accepted a FY22 Destination Marketing Organization Grant for Tourism from the Department of Commerce, acting through the Maryland Tourism Department Board, an agency of the Department, for funds of \$61,269 for the period of July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT AMENDMENT-CORONAVIRUS FUNDS-LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Council approved the request of Nancy Shockley, Local Management Board Director, to amend the Community Development Block Grant award for the use of coronavirus funds by Delmarva Community Services of \$100,000 by redistributing them to other categories as a result of the rigidity of the use of the funds and the need to address senior services.

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APPLICATION APPROVAL REQUEST-LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Based on a request from Ms. Shockley the Council approved the following Emergency Rental Assistance Program applications:

Brian Ivers \$5,800
Cambridge Property Management, LLC \$33,345
Cherokee Rentals, \$6,000
Choptank Property Management \$18,978
Hudson Town Homes \$9,217
Jones Estates, Bay Country LLC \$5,374

Marty Mullaney \$8,852
Otter LLC \$3,190
Woods Road Meadows \$7,386

POLL CONFIRMATIONS

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

- agreed to send a letter of support to the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, for a grant application for the Chesapeake Bay Ferry project undertaken regionally by a coalition led by Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County and Queen Anne's County Maryland with no county commitment by a 4 to 1 (no response) vote;
- approved the request of Dr. Patricia Johnson, President, Dorchester Skipjack Committee, to dock the Nathan of Dorchester at the County Office Building from November 1 to November 15, 2021 for periods of time due to larger cruise ships obstructing their access during this time period and its use of electric by a 5 to 0 vote; and
- based on the request of Nancy Shockley, Local Management Board Director, to approve the following Emergency Rental Assistance Program Applications by a 5 to 0 vote:
 - o Charles Callahan \$3,150
 - o Choptank Property Management \$6,132.50
 - o Douglas Wasitis \$4,500
 - o JKL Holding, LLC \$5,250
 - o Laura Smith \$4,725
 - o Marty Mullaney \$4,300
 - o Rambler Associates \$2,166
 - o RIG Holding, LLC \$1,415
- agreed to declare a local state of emergency based on significant to major flooding forecasted for parts for Dorchester County starting the evening of October 28, 2021 and lasting through early November 1, 2021 by a 5 to 0 vote.

BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION APPROVAL REQUEST-SOIL CONSERVATION

The Council approved the request of Karen Houtman, Soil Conservation Manager, for the execution of the building permit for roof and siding repair for the Soil Conservation shed at the Health Department by the Council President.

REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMISSION REQUEST-TEXT AMENDMENT-PLANNING AND ZONING

The Council approved request of Herve Hamon, Planning and Zoning Director, to refer a text amendment to the Planning Commission to allow personal storage to be an authorized use in I-1 (Light Industrial) area for its review and recommendation to the Council.

CORRESPONDENCE TO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES-DREDGING PRIORITIES

The Council agreed to send a letter to Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, Department of Natural Resources, seeking funding for Slaughter Creek-Honga River and other dredging priorities.

OTHER

Councilman Newcomb announced that the Council signed a Proclamation declaring November 2021 as Family Court Awareness Month. Terri Robbins, resident, thanked the Council for providing a congratulatory letter to Ducks Unlimited for its 50 years.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the Council adjourned.

ATTEST:

THE COUNTY COUNCIL
OF DORCHESTER COUNTY:



Donna F. Lane, Acting County Manager



Jay L. Newcomb, President



Libby Handley Nagel, Vice President



William V. Nichols



George L. Pfeffer, Jr.



Ricky C. Travers

Approved the 18th day of January 2022.