

County Council of Dorchester County
Open Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2024

The County Council of Dorchester County convened into Open Session on December 3, 2024, 2024 at 5:21 p.m., in Room 110 of the County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, Maryland 21613. Present in Room 110 were: George L. Pfeffer, Jr., President; Mike Detmer, Vice President; Rob Kramer, Jr.; and, Ricky C. Travers. Also present in Room 110 were: Jerry Jones, County Manager; and, Irene Barnes, Executive Administrative Specialist. William V. Nichols; and, Charles MacLeod, County Attorney joined the meeting late.

Upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council adjourned into Closed Session at 5:22 p.m., pursuant to the following sections of Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, §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; §3-305(b)(13) to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter; and, §3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice. The Written Statement for Closing a Meeting under the Open Meetings Act is attached hereto.

OPEN SESSION

The County Council of Dorchester County convened into Open Session on December 3, 2024 at 6:08 p.m., in Room 110 of the County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, Maryland 21613. Present in Room 110 were: George L. Pfeffer, Jr., President; Mike Detmer, Vice President; Rob Kramer, Jr.; William V. Nichols; and, Ricky C. Travers. Also present in Room 110 were: Jerry Jones, County Manager; Charles MacLeod, County Attorney; and, Irene Barnes, Executive Administrative Specialist.

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 items *Commendation – Retirement – Gary Blades* was removed and *County Property Disposition – Asphalt Plant* was added.

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Nichols, the Council unanimously approved the amended agenda.

FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Councilman Pfeffer reported total cash and investments as \$42,957,319.30.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY

The Council convened into a Closed Session at 5:22 p.m. on December 3, 2024 to discuss the

following items pursuant to Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code §3-305(b)(1), (13), (7) & (3):

1. Notifications of recent personnel changes within the County were provided;
2. Personnel matters relating to specific individuals and positions;
3. Received legal advice from the County Attorney regarding the following:
 - a. Potential disposition of County owned properties;
 - b. Local funding to a specific organization; and,
4. Potential acquisition of real property.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council approved the Consent Agenda, with Councilman Nichols abstaining from only the County Council Open Session Minutes – November 19, 2024.

- County Council Open Session Minutes – November 19, 2024
- Accounts Payable Disbursement Report – Week Ending November 27, 2024
- Council Meeting Schedule – Third & Fourth Quarter
- Request to Advertise for Proposals – Family Advocacy Clinic Legal Services – Circuit Court
 - Request of Mary O'Donnell, Magistrate, Circuit Court, to advertise a request for proposals to procure the contract services of an attorney or several attorneys, licensed in the State of Maryland, to serve as legal counsel and Director of the new Dorchester County Family Advocacy Clinic.
- Letter of Support – Request for Funding – Hyatt Resort Re-Decking Project – Economic Development
 - Request of Susan Banks, Economic Development Director, to provide a letter of support of a \$2,836,000 Capital Grant request submitted by the Maryland Economic Development Corporation, the Hyatt Chesapeake Bay Resort, the Residences at River Marsh Homeowners Association, Inc., Fairchild Properties LLC, and Tides at River Marsh LLC for infrastructure projects within the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Resort.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS - COUNCIL PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

The Council elected the following Officers by majority: George L. Pfeffer, Jr., President
Mike Detmer, Vice President

OPEN SESSION

ACTION ITEMS

FY2026 BUDGET GOALS & PRIORITIES

The Council discussed its goals and priorities for the FY2026 Budget and agreed to be very conservative.

AMENDED FY2026 BUDGET ADOPTION SCHEDULE

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously approved the Amended FY2026 Budget Adoption Schedule which aligns the introduction and adoption of the budget closer to the new dates according to the County Budget Preparation and Adoption Dates Charter Amendment.

POLL CONFIRMATIONS

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously confirmed its decision in the interim of meetings, via poll, to:

- Lift the Dorchester County Burn Ban, by a 5 to 0 vote; and,
- Approve the request of Mary O'Donnell, Magistrate, Circuit Court, to accept a \$125,000.00 FFY25 Foster Care Court Improvement Program/Child Welfare Grant Award through the Administrative Office of the Courts Administration for Children and Families to fund the creation and support of the Dorchester County Preventative Family Advocacy Clinic, with no match requirement and a performance period of November 1, 2024 to October 31, 2025, by a 4 to 0 vote (no response).

Councilman Pfeffer welcomed Judge William Jones, Circuit Court, and Ms. O'Donnell. Judge Jones introduced Ms. O'Donnell who provided an overview of the grant and thanked the Council for its support. Councilman Pfeffer thanked them for all their hard work. Judge Jones thanked David Dierks, Facilities Manager, and Jimmy Travers, Foreman, Public Works, for completing work at the Circuit Court and acknowledged that they saved the County time and money.

COUNTY PROPERTY DISPOSITION – ASPHALT PLANT

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously approved the sale of the County asphalt plant, located at 3960 Red Hill Road, Linkwood, Maryland to Russell Paving Co. Inc. at \$300,000.00 with in-house financing over a 20 year term at 5%. The Council acknowledged that: 1) the lease contract included a first right of refusal clause within one year of the expired lease, which the County is within that window; and, 2) the next steps is to hold a public hearing.

COUNCIL'S COMMENTS

Councilman Nichols acknowledged Judge Jones and relayed that the Circuit Court staff is happy under his leadership.

Councilman Detmer: 1) announced the Vienna Christmas parade was held on November 30, 2024; 2) said he is looking for every opportunity to learn more about solar and get a sense of smart next steps at the Maryland Association of Counties Winter Conference; 3) thanked Roger Harrell, Health Officer, for assisting a constituent; and 4) stated it was a privilege to attend the 71st heavenly birthday celebration of Dr. Theresa Stafford at the Dr. Theresa Stafford's New Beginnings Learning Academy, which was renamed in her honor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Terri Robbins, resident, provided an overview of a tennis tournament held on November 30, 2024 by the James G. Busick Tennis Foundation.

Ryan Shay, resident, expressed concerns regarding the process of building in Dorchester County. Councilman Pfeffer directed Mr. Jones and Peter McElroy, Water and Wastewater Services Director, to work with Mr. Shay.

ADJOURNMENT

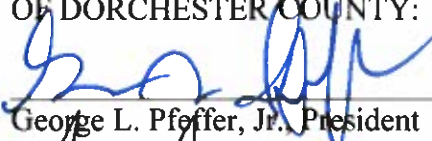
With no further business to discuss, and upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Detmer, the Council unanimously adjourned the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

ATTEST:




Jerry Jones
County Manager

THE COUNTY COUNCIL
OF DORCHESTER COUNTY:



George L. Pfeffer, Jr., President



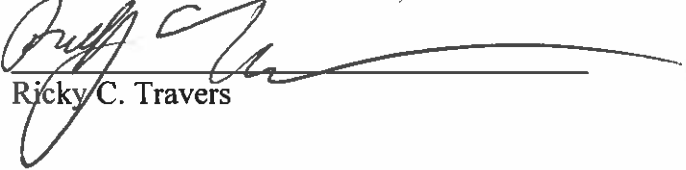
Mike Detmer, Vice President



Rob Kramer, Jr.



William V. Nichols



Ricky C. Travers

Approved the 17th day of December, 2024.

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING
("CLOSING STATEMENT") UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General
Provisions Article § 3-305)**

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. Recorded vote to close the meeting: Date: 12/3/24; Time: 5:21 p.m.; Location: Room 110, County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, Maryland; Motion to close meeting made by: Travers Seconded by Kramer; Members in favor: Pfeffer, Detmer, Kramer, Travers, Nichols Opposed: _____; Abstaining: _____; Absent: _____.

2. Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(1) "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals"; (2) _____ "To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business"; (3) "To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto"; (4) _____ "To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State"; (5) _____ "To consider the investment of public funds"; (6) _____ "To consider the marketing of public securities"; (7) "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice"; (8) _____ "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"; (9) _____ "To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations"; (10) _____ "To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans"; (11) _____ "To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination"; (12) _____ "To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct"; (13) "To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter"; (14) _____ "Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process." (15) _____ "To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to: (i) security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology; (ii) network security information . . . or (iii) deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices."

Continued →

3. For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b)(1)	To discuss the following: a) Notifications of recent personnel changes within the County; and, b) Personnel matters relating to specific individuals and positions.	Public Discussion of applicant's names and job info could discourage people from applying for County jobs
§3-305(b)(13)	Same topics as above	Public Information Act, GP Section 4-310 and 311 requires us to shield recommendation letters and job applications
§3-305(b)(7)	To receive legal advice from the County Attorney regarding the following: a) The potential disposition of County owned properties; and, b) Local funding to a specific organization.	Council does not want to waive the attorney-client privilege. See page 101, August 17, 2021, OMCB ruling (15 OMCB 99)
§3-305(b)(3)	Potential acquisition of real property.	To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto

4. This statement is made by , Presiding Officer.

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

➤ **For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:**

Time of closed session: _____

Place: _____

Purpose(s): _____

Members who voted to meet in closed session: _____

Persons attending closed session: _____

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: _____

Topics actually discussed: _____

Actions taken: _____

Each recorded vote: _____

➤ **For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104):** Time: _____

Place: _____

Persons present: _____

Subjects discussed: _____

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