

**County Council of Dorchester County**  
**Open Meeting Minutes**  
**March 18, 2025**

The County Council of Dorchester County convened into Open Session on March 18, 2025 at 5:03 p.m., in Room 110 of the County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, Maryland 21613. A roll call of the members was conducted. 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; and, Charles MacLeod, County Attorney; Irene Barnes, Executive Operations Specialist.

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously adjourned into Closed Session at 5:04 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 March 18, 2025 at 6:07 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 Operations Specialist.

**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:

- Change Order Request – Coastal Community Resiliency Study– Planning & Zoning
- Legislative Session – Introduction – 911 Fee Increase

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

**FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS**

Councilman Pfeffer reported total cash and investments as \$34,605,884.41.

## **CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY**

The Council convened into a Closed Session at 5:04 p.m. on March 18, 2025 to discuss the following items pursuant to Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code §3-305(b)(1), (13) and (7):

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 specific items:
  - a. a County fee;
  - b. an agreement related to County taxes;
  - c. a request regarding a State mandate;
  - d. a Maryland law related to taxes; and,
  - e. an amendment to an agreement.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

- County Council Open Session Minutes – March 4, 2025
- Accounts Payable Disbursement Report – Week Ending March 14, 2025
- Intradepartmental Budget Transfer Requests – Recreation & Parks – Public Works
  - Request of Duc Trieu, Recreation & Parks Director, to complete a FY25 budget transfer within Recreation & Parks
  - Request of Public Works to complete a FY25 budget transfer within Public Works
- Grant Submission Requests – Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) – Airport
  - Requests of Steve Nuwer, Airport Director, to submit two grant applications through the FAA to rehabilitate the airport runway 16-34 and connector taxiways: 1) \$660,956.00 Airport Improvement Program (AIP) at 95% Federal share and 5% County share (\$33,048.00), contingent on budget approvals; and, 2) \$190,000.000 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) at 95% Federal share and 5% County share (\$9,500.00), contingent on budget approvals
- Contract Renewal – LexisNexis – Council's Office
  - Request of the Council's Office to renew a contract with LexisNexis for a two year term beginning July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2027 at \$5,076.00, funded by its Operating Budget for the respective fiscal years
- Grant Submission Request – FY25 Community Programming for Youth – Recreation & Parks
  - Request of Marilyn Williams, Grants Writer, Finance, on behalf of Mr. Trieu, to submit a \$5,000.00 FY25 Community Programming for Youth grant application through the Dorchester County Health Department to fund an inaugural Spring Youth Soccer Program at Christ Rock Park for youth ages 5 through 13 from May 5, 2025 through June 9, 2025

- Letter of Support – National Trust for Historic Preservation Grant Application - Applegarth Tubman Medicine Hill Preservation and Education (ATMHPE)
  - Request of Paul Applegarth, President, ATMHPE, for a letter of support of its \$15,000,000 Cynthia Woods Mitchell Fund for Historic Interiors grant application through the National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Letter of Support – Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund – Mid-Shore Regional Council
  - Request of Scott Warner, Mid-Shore Regional Council, for letters of support of the Rural Maryland Council and the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund
- Annual Housing Bond Allocation – Department of Housing & Community Development
  - Request of Denine Messersmith, SF Programs Documentation / Compliance Specialist, Community Development Administration, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, to transfer Dorchester County's 2025 tax-exempt housing bond allocation of \$1,508,780 to the Community Development Administration (CDA) for the CDA Maryland Mortgage Program.

## **PROCLAMATIONS**

### **ENDOMETRIOSIS AWARENESS MONTH – MARCH**

The Council presented a Proclamation declaring March 2025 as Endometriosis Awareness Month.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### **BUDGET UPDATE – BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Dr. Jymil Thompson, Superintendent, Dorchester County Public Schools (DCPS) and Chris Wheedleton, Board Member, Board of Education (BOE), provided an update on its DCPS FY26 budget.

The Council expressed several concerns related to unfunded mandates, budget increases and budget shortfalls.

Dr. Thompson and Talibah Chickwendu, Board Member, BOE, answered questions posed by the Council during the presentation.

The Council directed staff to obtain additional information on a Maintenance of Effort waiver.

Councilman Pfeffer applauded Dr. Thompson, and expressed that Dr. Thompson will reach his goal of “23 No More.”

Councilman Nichols and Councilman Travers congratulated Shawn Tucker, Coach, Cambridge South Dorchester High School Boys Basketball Team for winning the State Championship.

Councilman Nichols thanked Mr. Trieu for his performance as the Recreation and Parks Director, noting a positive impact on the youth of the county and joint efforts with the BOE to keep kids off of the streets and in extracurricular activities.

Councilman Pfeffer: 1) explained that the County's portion of the maintenance of effort has increased by \$10 million since the 2022 projection; 2) the County cannot afford the unfunded mandates; and, 3) the County has a great relationship with the BOE.

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously adjourned into Legislative Session.

## **LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

### **INTRODUCTION – 911 FEE INCREASE**

Councilman Detmer said legislation is being introduced to amend Chapter 85 – Emergency Telephone Charge, § 85-1 of the Dorchester County Code by increasing the 911 fee for Dorchester County, Maryland to \$4.25. He said this will increase the 911 Fee revenue to \$1.8 million, which will cover the majority of the Communications Division's expenses.

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Travers, the Council unanimously agreed to proceed with the publication of a public hearing.

Upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Detmer, the Council unanimously adjourned into Open Session.

## **RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **REQUEST TO ADVERTISE FOR PROPOSALS – CLOSURE CONSTRUCTION NEW BEULAH MUNICIPAL LANDFILL – GEOSYNTEC CONSULTANTS – LANDFILL**

Upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Detmer, the Council unanimously approved the request of Sean O'Donnell, Geosyntec Consultants, to advertise a request for proposals for the closure construction of the New Beulah Municipal Landfill.

#### **REQUEST FOR APPROVAL – FFY2025-2030 AIRPORT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN – AIRPORT**

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Travers, the Council unanimously approved the request of Steve Nuwer, Director, Airport, to submit the FY2025-2030 Airport Capital Improvement Plan (ACIP) in preparation for submittal to the Federal

Aviation Administration, which is consistent with the Airport's pursuit of continuous improvement and previous plans. The Council acknowledged that local funding requests for upcoming fiscal years will be contingent on budget approvals.

#### GRINDER PUMP PURCHASE SOLE SOURCE REQUEST – WATER & WASTEWATER

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Travers, the Council unanimously approved the request of Peter McElroy, Water & Wastewater Services (W&WS) Director, to sole source with Freemire & Associates, Inc. to purchase three Environment One Corporation brand "Extreme" model grinder pump cores at a total of \$11,553.00, which will be funded by the FY25 W&WS Operating Budget. The Council acknowledged that the sole source is being requested because Freemire & Associates is currently the only authorized representative of E-One Sewer Systems Products in the surrounding areas.

#### JAMES G. BUSICK FOUNDATION FUNDRAISING REQUEST – RECREATION & PARKS

Upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Nichols, the Council unanimously approved the request of Mr. Trieu on behalf of Eddie Wozny, Treasurer, James G. Busick Foundation, to place a maximum of three 3' x 6' advertising banners at the tennis courts on Glasgow Street to support the Cambridge South Dorchester High School Tennis Team due to budget cuts to sports programs. The Council acknowledged that the signs will be removed in May.

#### REQUEST TO ADVERTISE FOR PROPOSALS – HURLOCK PICKLEBALL COURTS – RECREATION & PARKS

Upon motion by Councilman Detmer, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously approved the request of Mr. Trieu to advertise a request for proposals for the repair, resurfacing, and conversion of the existing tennis courts into dedicated pickleball courts in Hurlock, Maryland.

#### POLL CONFIRMATIONS

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

- Provide a letter of support for a FY26 Community Project Funding grant application to fund a proposed East New Market Pump Station Replacement Project, by a 5 to 0 vote, with the understanding that this does not obligate the County to provide monetary support.
- Approve a license agreement between the Maryland Transit Administration and Dorchester County, which grants the County a license to use the Rail Trail Corridor solely to construct, operate, and maintain a non-motorized public recreational trail, if it chooses, which should not be construed as the conveyance of real property but a banking of the rail line, to move forward with the second phase of the rail project that includes a

trail from Washington Street to Woods Road and an Airport runway expansion plan, by a 3 to 2 vote, Councilman Kramer and Councilman Nichols opposed.

- Approve an amended Forest Protection Agreement for the Pine Top Subdivision, to remove the street tree component and place additional forest under easement on the property, by a 5 to 0 vote; and,
- Place an open air burn ban into effect, beginning March 13, 2025 at 8:00 a.m., by a 4 to 0 vote, no response.

#### **CHANGE ORDER REQUEST – COASTAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCY STUDY– PLANNING & ZONING**

Upon motion by Councilman Travers seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously approved the request of Susan Webb, Planning & Zoning Director, to accept a change order for the completion of a Coastal Community Resiliency Study for Twin Point Cove with Versar, Inc. to waive the community engagement and extend the project completion date to May 14, 2025.

#### **COUNCIL’S COMMENTS**

Councilman Detmer: 1) celebrated the wins of an ad hoc committee, where stakeholders gathered to review the planning process to increase efficiencies; 2) thanked Shameira Jenkins, Permit Technician, Planning & Zoning; and, Susan Webb, Planning & Zoning Director, for making planning more proficient; and, 3) House Bill 1124 (cross-filed with Senate Bill 964) entitled, “Dorchester County - Well and On-Site Sewage Disposal Activities - Privatization Program” has been referred to the committees by both houses.

Councilman Pfeffer announced that the next Budget Work Session will be held on March 27, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

In response to a question posed by Sharon Smith, resident, Councilman Pfeffer said the budget is very dynamic and changes every day. Mr. Jones added that once the meeting slides are finalized, they will be posted on the County website.

In response to an inquiry posed by Chuck McFadden, President, Cambridge Association of Neighbors, Councilman Pfeffer said information related to vendors and costs are announced at the meetings.

Sputty Cephas, City of Cambridge Commissioner expressed that: 1) education is important; 2) federal funding should be used with intention; 3) the County needs help and support; and 4) programs should not be cut. He extended an invitation to a meeting with Senator Angela Alsobrooks on March 19, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

In response to a query by Alison Kennedy, resident, it was said that admission is charged for sports events and fundraisers are held to assist with the cost of uniforms.

Lajan Cephas City of Cambridge Mayor, said she has a meeting on March 19, 2025 with Governor Wes Moore to discuss the BOE.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, and upon motion by Councilman Travers, seconded by Councilman Kramer, the Council unanimously adjourned the meeting at 7:14 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 15<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2025.

**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: 3/18/25; Time: 5:03 p.m.; Location: 501 Court Lane, Room 110,  
Cambridge, MD 21613; Motion to close meeting made by: Detmer Seconded by: Kramer  
Members in favor: Pfeffer, Kramer, Nichols, Detmer, Travers  
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) x "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) x "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) x "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, <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• personnel changes within the County</li><li>• personnel matters relating to specific employees and positions</li></ul>	Public Discussion of applicant's names and job info could discourage people from applying for County jobs
§3-305(b)(13)	Same topic 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, <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a specific County fee;</li><li>• a specific agreement related to County taxes;</li><li>• a specific request regarding a State mandate;</li><li>• a specific Maryland law related to taxes; and,</li><li>• an amendment to an agreement.</li></ul>	Council does not want to waive the attorney-client privilege. See page 101, August 17, 2021, OMCB ruling (15 OMCB 99)

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: \_\_\_\_\_

**CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY**  
**March 18, 2025**

The Council convened into a Closed Session at 5:04 p.m. on March 18, 2025 to discuss the following items pursuant to Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code §3-305(b)(1), (13) and (7):

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 specific items:
  - a. a County fee;
  - b. an agreement related to County taxes;
  - c. a request regarding a State mandate;
  - d. a Maryland law related to taxes; and,
  - e. an amendment to an agreement.