

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY  
JUNE 28, 2011

At 2:00 P.M., the Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County met in Special Session with President Rex Simpkins, Commissioner Vice-President Charles F. Fisher, Commissioner Craig N. Mathies Sr., Commissioner Jerry S. Boston and Commissioner Randy Laird.

Also present was Cynthia R. Ward, County Administrator-Clerk, and Lory E. Ebron, Executive Secretary.

President Rex Simpkins called the meeting to order. Commissioner Mathies led those in attendance in the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Charles L. Muir, Somerset County Treasurer, appeared before the Board to present a list of uncollectible taxes, in accordance with Tax Property Article – Title 4-401 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Mr. Muir presented a list of sixty-two accounts, ranging from 1992 to 2007, totaling \$17,700.30 in uncollectible personal property taxes. In 2007, the previous Board of County Commissioners voted against writing off the uncollectible taxes. That action has carried through until today. Mr. Muir explained the process involved and that upon consultation with the County Attorney, it would not be cost effective to pursue the collection of the personal property taxes through the court system.

After a review of the list, a motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, to authorize President Simpkins to write off the list of uncollectible personal property taxes. The motion carried 3-1, with Commissioner President Simpkins in opposition.

At this time, Commissioner President Simpkins requested the Boards consideration to re-appoint Ms. Cynthia R. Ward as Interim County Administrator-Clerk until the new County Administrator-Clerk position is filled.

On a motion by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried 4-0 to re-appoint Ms. Ward as Interim County Administrator-Clerk until the position is filled.

Next, Commissioner President Simpkins asked the Boards consideration to re-appoint Mr. Kirk Simpkins as Interim County Attorney until review can be made of any possible applicants submitting resume's for the position. Commissioner Boston noted that the posting of the position will close on July 15, 2011.

Therefore, on a motion by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, it carried 3-0 to appoint Mr. Kirk Simpkins Interim County Attorney until review of submissions for the position can be performed. Commissioner President Simpkins abstained.

Being that there was time available, Commissioner President Simpkins asked if there was anyone present wishing to speak. Mr. Kirkwood Cottman addressed the board, noting that he was very pleased about the new placement of Rosa Parks Drive by the Haywood Center, noting that the Town of Princess Anne intends to also have a park area designated at the end of the road. He asked if the county could donate anything, such as trees or picnic benches.

Commissioner President Simpkins said that he would contact the Recreation and Parks Department to follow up. Commissioner President Simpkins asked when the road would be named. Mr. Cottman stated it was planned for the fall of 2011, assuming the road is paved in time. It was also noted that consideration continues to be given with regard to re-naming the former Rosa Parks Boulevard. Commissioner Boston said that John Turkle Road has been suggested.

Commissioner Fisher temporarily left the meeting to attend to other business.

Mr. Ken Ulman, President of Maryland Association of Counties (MACo), and Mr. Michael Sanderson, Executive Director of MACo, was now present before the Board to discuss the results of the recent General Assembly session. Mr. Ulman stated that the only positive outcome of the session was the decision to not pass the cost of teacher pensions onto the county level. The Highway User Revenues were reduced, as expected. However, MACo officials worked diligently to send a message that county governments were taking a "big hit" on the revenue reduction. The Septic Commission which was created by an Executive Order addressed the Governor's initiative to pass legislation to reduce individual septic systems. The bill was defeated, but only temporarily. A special session, planned for mid-October may revisit those initiatives, as well as, TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) reductions. The Governor will be expecting the submittal of a plan by the Maryland Department of Planning with the Environmental Protection Agency serving as the regulatory agency and Maryland Department of Environment assigning the target areas and limitations for TMDL. MACo is currently working on a strategy to address the devastating affect this legislation could have on Maryland Counties. Commissioner President Simpkins questioned the method in which TMDL numbers are

measured in the Wicomico River. Commissioner Laird stated that our poultry farmers are also suffering from these regulations.

Commissioner Boston inquired if Highway User Revenues were expected to return to more normal levels. Mr. Ulman stated that if a funding increase is passed, counties may see it returned. Otherwise, funding levels may remain the same for a few more years. Commissioner Boston also inquired about the proposal to increase bridge tolls. Mr. Ulman stated that the debt from the ICC contributed to the debt that already existed, in part by tolls that were too low for too long. Mr. Sanderson advised that the tolls are projected to double initially – then increase to \$8.

The Board concluded with a discussion regarding the state pension system and the increase in employee contributions. Initially, a share of the increase goes back into the pension system. It is proposed that all of the increase would eventually go back into the system.

Members of the Somerset County Liquor Control Board were now present before the County Commissioners to present the year-end audit results. Liquor Control Board Members present for today's meeting included: Paul Benton; Marian Patterson; and Ken Ballard, Chair. Also present was Scott Tawes, Auditor; and Edward "Bunky" Price, Manager. For the year ending April 30, 2011, the Somerset County's three liquor dispensaries made a profit of \$92,933. Of that amount, \$81,217 will go to Somerset County. The City of Crisfield and the Town of Princess Anne will receive \$5,858 each, according to Board Chair, Ken Ballard. A comparison of sales and net profits for all three stores is as follows:

<u>Sales</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Crisfield	\$523,458	\$528,659
Princess Anne	\$747,967	\$733,391
Hi-Way	<u>\$548,180</u>	<u>\$552,317</u>
TOTAL	\$1,819,605	\$1,814,367

<u>Net Profit</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Crisfield	\$3,097	\$1,927
Princess Anne	\$43,769	\$32,748
Hi-Way	\$46,067	\$45,058
TOTAL	\$92,933	\$79,733

At this time, Mr. Tawes reviewed the following sections of the Audit Report:


- Independent Auditors Report
- Significant Events (page 7)
- Statements of Net Assets (page 10)
- Statements of Revenues & Expenses (page 11)
- Deposits with Financial Institutions & Risk Management (page 18)
- Schedule of Revenues & Expenses By Store (page 22 & 23)

Commissioner Boston inquired as to pricing comparisons between Somerset and other nearby counties. Mr. Price and Mr. Tawes advised that occasionally certain items have been purchased at a lower price and then sold at a sale price. Typically, items are priced 40% over invoice and 30% over invoice for gallons.

Mr. Price concluded with a request for assistance from the County Maintenance Office with the removal of an interior wall in order to increase storage room.

With no further business in Open Session, a motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, to adjourn the meeting and return to Closed Session.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
Cynthia R. Ward  
County Administrator-Clerk

Approved By:

  
Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County