

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FOR SOMERSET COUNTY

OCTOBER 9, 2012

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

County Administrator-Clerk, Ralph D. Taylor and Executive Secretary Lory E. Ebron were also present.

President Rex Simpkins called the meeting to order, and asked Commissioner Mathies to lead those attending the meeting in repeating the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, second by Commissioner Boston, it was carried to dispense with the reading of the Board of County Commissioner Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday, September 25, 2012, and the Closed Meeting Minutes held August 28, 2012, September 11, 2012, September 18, 2012, September 27, 2012 and September 25, 2012, and approve the minutes as presented. The motion was unanimous.

Ms. Kim Widdowson, Administrative Aide/Benefits Coordinator, was asked to come forward to accept the Employee of the Quarter Award for July-September 2012. Mr. Taylor congratulated Ms. Widdowson on demonstrating excellence in her job performance by going above and beyond expectations. Mr. Taylor noted that Ms. Widdowson is a vital member of the Human Resources team, demonstrating excellent work ethic and high morals. Mr. Taylor also commended the other nominees; Mr. Arthur Maddox, Roads Department, Mr. Wessmann Garner, State Attorney's Office, and Ms. Audrey Cornelius, Community and Technical Services. Ms. Widdowson was also thanked for her services by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Taylor began review of correspondence received since the last meeting.

Correspondence was received from Funk & Bolton, Attorneys at Law, who are representing Dorchester County with respect to Dorchester County's concerns with the Phase II WIP process. The letter advised the Board that Dorchester County has requested Funk and Bolton to enlist other counties and municipalities operating wastewater treatment plants to consider a collective engagement for the purpose of coordinating and undertaking a list of

initiatives which was outlined within the correspondence. The letter was for informational purposes and required no action at this time.

The Commissioners Office was notified that the Rural Development application submitted for the HVAC Renovations at the Princess Anne Library had been approved in the amount of \$50,000.

A letter was sent to Dr. Marjorie E. Miles, Superintendent of Somerset County Public Schools with regard to the transfer of funds among major categories for fiscal year 2013. The letter advised Dr. Miles that the Board of Commissioners for Somerset County approved the request to transfer funds as indicated in the letter.

A letter was sent to Mr. Darryl Webster, Eastern Correctional Institution, approving the request of the Rehobeth Presbyterian Church to use ECI Annex inmates to assist with renovation work and landscaping.

Notice of Public Hearing will be advertised in accordance with Section VII.G of the Somerset County Subdivision Ordinance to consider amending the Subdivision Ordinance to revise the definition of a "minor subdivision." The date of the public hearing is set for Tuesday, October 23, 2012 at 2:00 p.m.

As there was a few moments delay with the start of discussion items planned on today's agenda, Mr. Dan Kuebler, present at today's meeting, questioned if the Commissioners had received answers to the questions posed to Mr. Blye, Financial Officer for Somerset County Public Schools, presented at the last meeting. Mr. Taylor advised Mr. Kuebler that his office had not received any communication to date from Mr. Blye.

Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Gene Adkins, now present at the meeting to come forward to discuss the Somerset County Treasurer's position with the Board. Noting that the time of year was approaching when consideration is given to possible legislative requests for the upcoming General Assembly, Mr. Taylor asked the Board to consider the abolishment of the "Treasurer" position for Somerset County. Mr. Taylor outlined his reason for the consideration as follows; first, that the "Treasurer" position as we know it is an elected position, whereby an individual is not required to have any qualifications. Mr. Taylor explained how treasury type matters have become more complicated and complex, and it would be his opinion that it would be beneficial for an individual in that position to have expertise in such a field (such as a CPA or Accounting Business Degree), noting that there are no safeguards in place that could prevent someone with

no such type of qualifications from taking office. Secondly, Mr. Taylor advised that the re-organization would be a cost saving move in that there would be no new "net" positions and no disruption in service to the public. He estimates the cost savings to be approximately \$40,000 to \$90,000 per year. Mr. Taylor continued, noting that he would envision the office to be called a "Tax Collection Unit", managed by a supervisor who would report to the Somerset County Finance Director. Additional key points that Mr. Taylor highlighted were:

- Of the 23 counties in Maryland, there are only 5 that have an elected Treasurer. They are Calvert, Cecil, St. Mary's, Somerset and Washington. Mr. Taylor noted that Cecil County will be going to Home Rule effective December 3, 2012, leaving only 4 counties in the state with an elected Treasurer.
- The current Treasurer and Finance Director support this plan.
- The timing is right for this change as we are in the middle of an election cycle.
- We would become a "one-stop shop" as the MAC Center will be vacating their location here at the Complex building, and this would allow for the existing treasurer's office to move to the vacated space within the next year. Mr. Taylor gave several viable reasons to have all of the accounting departments of the county in one central location that included better communication, stronger internal controls, ability to cross train personnel, cost savings in salaries and benefits, consistent accounting policies and procedures, and assurance that management will be aware of all financial issues throughout the county and not just those associated with a particular office.

In closing, Mr. Taylor noted that there was no need for a decision today, he is just questioning if this is a matter the Board wishes to pursue.

Commissioner Fisher advised the Board that it is his understanding that Delegate Otto has reservations about the position becoming a non-elected position. Mr. Taylor offered to contact both Delegate Otto and Senator Mathias to discuss the matter, and asked if there was a consensus of the Board to move forward. Commissioners Boston and Fisher advised that they would like confirmation from Delegate Otto and Senator Mathias that they would support the request before continuing. Commissioner Laird noted that he would like to know what his constituents opinion would be before it would be formally sent as proposed legislation.

Therefore, after discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to move forward with the matter of proposing legislation to remove the Somerset County Treasurer as an elected position, if Delegate Otto and Senator Mathias were to be in favor of the request.

Next, while still present, Mr. Gene Adkins, Finance Director, presented the Maryland Judiciary Administrative Office of the Courts Courthouse Security Grants – FY 2013 Grant Application in the amount of \$24,795.32. Mr. Adkins noted that Mr. Taylor had already signed the application for Court House security equipment upgrades, however the application required Board approval.

Therefore, on a motion by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to approve the grant application for the Maryland Judiciary Administrative Office of the Courts in the amount of \$24, 795.32.

Mr. Taylor asked the Board of Commissioners if they had a nominee and alternate to serve on the MACo Legislative Committee.

After a short discussion, Commissioner Boston motioned to nominate Commissioner Fisher to serve on the MACo Legislative Committee, and Commissioner President Simpkins to serve as the alternate. Commissioner Laird seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

A short discussion was held regarding fuel cards for the county vehicle. It was decided that office personnel would maintain the fuel cards for the County Commissioners vehicle.

Next, Mr. Robin Street, Manager Sanitary District, and Ms. Barbara Outten, Administrative Aide, and Mr. Gene Adkins, who was still present, came forward to request the Boards endorsement and guarantee for permanent financing with Hebron Savings Bank for cost overruns incurred with regard to the Princess Anne Water and Sewer Improvements Project. Additionally, the Board was asked to adopt Resolution No. 1047, a Resolution to endorse and guarantee permanent financing with Hebron Savings Bank for cost overruns. Mr. Adkins explained that the amount of the guarantee is \$30,000 at an interest rate of 4.19% for 10 years. The payment amount for principle and interest would be \$922.43.


Therefore, on a motion by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to adopt Resolution 1047, as presented to endorse and guarantee permanent financing with Hebron Savings Bank for cost overruns and to authorize Commissioner President Simpkins to sign the Hebron Savings Bank Loan Guarantee number 1705660 for the account of the Somerset County Sanitary District.

Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Director of Solid Waste and Maintenance was now present before the Board to discuss Electronic Recycling. Mr. Cavanaugh reminded the Board that the previous arrangement made for electronic recycling with Creative Recycling had been terminated because of the increase of charges, and all items were now going to the Landfill. Mr. Cavanaugh advised the Board that Mr. Jeff Carmine of Crisfield has approached him and offered to pick up electronic items for disposal from a centralized location at no charge. It is unknown how long Mr. Carmine will offer this service. Commissioner Laird expressed his concern that this may only be a temporary solution. Mr. Cavanaugh agreed, reminding the Board that the service was offered at no charge to the county, and he would like to allow Mr. Carmine the opportunity. Commissioner Boston inquired as to approximately how many pounds were disposed of previously. Mr. Cavanaugh stated approximately 2000 to 3000 pounds every couple of months. Mr. Cavanaugh noted that it was mostly old style televisions that were being left at the locations for disposal.

Therefore, on a motion by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, Mr. Cavanaugh was authorized to proceed with the arrangement to have Mr. Jeff Carmine pick up the electronic recycling items that will be collected at the transfer stations and brought to the county landfill for disposal at no charge to the county. The motion carried 4-0.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

  
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Lory E. Ebron  
Executive Secretary

Approved By:

  
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Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County