

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY  
TUESDAY, JULY 17, 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.

Also present was Ralph D. Taylor, County Administrator-Clerk; and Cynthia R. Ward, Executive Aide.

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

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried 4-0 to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the meetings (open session and closed sessions) held on June 26, 2012 and July 3, 2012 and approve them as corrected (with name correction on last page of July 3<sup>rd</sup> Minutes).

President Simpkins opened sealed bids for the following two projects:

- 1) Architectural and Engineering Services for the MAC Senior Center Project
- 2) Drainage Project – Old State Road – Phase VII

Bid information is as follows:

**Architectural and Engineering Services – MAC Senior Center:**

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
MAD Engineering, Inc.	\$43,817
Design Atlantic	\$64,195
Davis, Bowen, Friedel	\$71,800
George, Miles & Buhr	\$69,355
Becker Morgan Group	\$74,000
Sanders Design	\$73,700
Colimore Architects	\$91,588

**Drainage Project – Old State Road – Phase VII:**

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Doug Vann	\$2,695
Mark Bozman	\$3,150
Rick Jones	\$4,395

Upon motion made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried unanimously to award the contract for the drainage project to the low bidder, Doug Vann, for his bid of \$2,695.

Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Director of Maintenance and Solid Waste, will review the bids received for the architectural and engineering services for the MAC Senior Center Project and return with a recommendation for awarding the contract at a later date.

Mr. Paige Hurley, Director of Recreation and Parks, was now present before the Board, accompanied by Mr. Tim Brittingham, Golf Pro at Great Hope Golf Course, to discuss the renewal of the golf cart lease. Mr. Brittingham reported that we are in the last year of the current lease and have an opportunity for a savings if we accept delivery of the new fleet before October 2012. If accepted in October, there would be no interest or payments until May 2013 for the fifty car fleet. The Board will consider the lease renewal offer and take action during one of their upcoming meetings.

At this time, the County Administrator reviewed correspondence with the Board.

In reviewing two letters from the Maryland State Department of Education regarding the Somerset County Board of Education's submittal of budget and other certification statements, Commissioner Fisher noted that the budget submitted to the County Commissioners by the Board of Education was not properly executed.

The Board reviewed two written requests for the release of grant mortgages:

- 1) Mrs. Gertrude Maddox received a grant in 2006 in the amount of \$12,805 to rehabilitate her house through the CDBG Program. A previous grant mortgage release in the amount of \$13,827, was previously approved by the Board. Since the five-year requirement has been met, the debt is thereby considered satisfied, and the lien may be released.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it was carried 4-0 to authorize President Simpkins to sign the Grant Mortgage Release for Mrs. Gertrude Maddox in the amount of \$12,805.

- 2) Mr. George L. Steward and Mrs. Magnolia Steward received a grant in 2002 in the amount of \$7,990 to rehabilitate their home through the CDBG Program. Since the five-year requirement has been met, the debt is thereby considered satisfied, and the lien may be released.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Mathies, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it was carried 4-0 to authorize President Simpkins to sign the Grant Mortgage Release for Mr. George L. Steward and Mrs. Magnolia Steward in the amount of \$7,990.

The County Administrator presented a letter to the Board for their approval and signature regarding regulations proposed by the Maryland Department of Environment. The letter

addresses the County's concern for the requirement of BAT septic systems for all new construction and the costs associated with the installation as well as the ongoing costs that traditional systems don't have, such as electricity and maintenance that the State estimates to be \$180 to \$540 annually. Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Laird, it was carried unanimously to authorize President Simpkins to sign the letter.

A copy of the Grand Jury Report was made available to the Board for their review. The Grand Jury conducted an inspection of county buildings on July 13, 2012 and submitted their findings in the report, which consisted mostly of recommendations for minor repairs.

Mr. Blaine Young, Frederick County Commissioner President, and Mr. Mike McKay, Allegany County Commissioner President, was now present before the Board to discuss the Maryland Rural Counties Coalition. The Coalition was formed last year as the result of impending legislation such as septic and stormwater regulations, teacher's pension, and the creation of PlanMaryland. The intent of Rural Counties Coalition, according to Commissioner Young, was to have a bigger voice in Annapolis and to help balance the decision-making process so rural Maryland's interests are equated to the interests of non-rural Maryland. The five counties of the Coalition (Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Cecil and Washington) represents nearly three quarters of a million Maryland residents. The four original member jurisdictions each contributed \$5,000 for an operating budget of \$20,000. This funding was utilized to retain two consultants who advocated on behalf of the Coalition; and to host a breakfast reception before and after the 2012 Session. The Coalition, which is a bi-partisan organization, strives to build alliances and address issues that affect all rural counties, as reported by Commissioner McKay. Commissioner President Simpkins questioned how the Coalition would handle an issue that only affected two or three counties, versus the entire membership of the Coalition. Commissioner McKay advised that the affected county would be kept "in the loop" on the progression of a particular legislative issue. Commissioner Fisher inquired if the Coalition intends to increase their budget. Commissioner Young advised there are no current plans to increase their budget, but maybe divide the cost. Commissioner McKay added that it was more important to join and work together as a team to focus on the legislative issues coming out of Annapolis. However, they will not replace, or compete with Maryland Association of Counties. Commissioner President Simpkins also questioned a potential scenario in which a conflict of

interest may occur between the Coalition's Consultant and other parties they represent.

Commissioner McKay advised that both Consultants provide full disclosure of all interests.

Commissioner Mathies inquired if the Coalition "agrees to disagree" in some cases before taking a position. Commissioner McKay confirmed that the Coalition will work together as a team and not become divided on an issue. In conclusion, Commissioners Young and McKay advised they are also meeting with Dorchester County Commissioners today to also welcome their participation in the Coalition. The Somerset County Commissioners thanked their Allegany and Frederick counterparts for presenting this information and assured them they would consider the offer to become a member of the Maryland Rural Counties Coalition.

Ms. Suzanna Henson, Executive Director of the Local Management Board, was now present before the Board to present the annual Community Partnership Agreement for approval and signature. If approved, the Agreement provides funding through the Governor's Office on Children, totaling \$288,000, for programming and administration costs. This amount was reduced from previous funding years. Additionally, funding previously received through the Governor's Office on Crime, Control and Prevention has now been completely eliminated.

A motion was made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to authorize President Simpkins to sign the Community Partnership Agreement between the Somerset County Local Management Board and the Governor's Office on Children. The motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Mathies abstained due to his membership on the Board.

At this time, the County Administrator reviewed discussion items.

The Board discussed a request received from Ms. Jenny Roser, of the Somerset County Department of Social Services, for the County to cover the cost of grant writing, estimated at \$500 (total of both grants). The grant funding, if received, would be utilized to expand their homeless services. The estimate for the grant writing services was provided by Paul Associates.

A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, to approve the expenditure of county funds for the grant writing services, totaling \$500 for both grants, as submitted by Jack Paul, of Paul Associates. The motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Fisher abstained due to his membership on the Board.

Mr. Taylor reminded the Board of a term expiration for a member on the Citizens Review/Grievance Committee. Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by

Commissioner Boston, it was carried 4-0 to appoint Jim Koons to serve as member of the Citizens Review/Grievance Committee.

Mr. James Henderson, Somerset County Dog Control, was now present before the Board to discuss a proposed cat sanctuary for the Somerset County Humane Society. Two sites are being proposed for the Board's consideration:

- a) 7922 Crisfield Highway – 1.35 acres of woodland owned by the Board of Education and located between the Health Department, Tawes Vo-Tech, Westover Intermediate School, and connects to the existing Dog Control property.
- b) 29551 Fairmount Road – 2.7 acres of woodland owned by the County and located on the old Messick Farm just off Fairmount Road. An existing 60x25 ft. metal building would be included in the sanctuary for the Humane Society's use.

Estimates for fencing, site preparation, utilities, portable buildings and roadwork were provided for both sites for comparison by the Board. All costs associated with the cat sanctuary would be paid by the Humane Society. Questions addressing the fencing issues were presented, as well as parking and security issues. Mr. Henderson expressed his support for the Fairmount Road location as being the preferred option.

Mr. Henderson also reminded the Board there is still a need for a cat ordinance due to the risk of rabies and pursuant to §18-318 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Health General Article, which requires all owners of dogs, cats, and ferrets (four months or older) to be vaccinated against rabies. A newly revised version of a cat ordinance was presented to the Commissioners for their review. The revised version of the ordinance was drafted with the cooperation of the Humane Society. Another public hearing would be required if the Board wishes to pursue a cat ordinance. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Board agreed to meet with the Humane Society representatives at their next work session.

In other business, Commissioner Boston advised the Board of information received regarding the bleachers at Washington High School. The bleachers have apparently not been condemned and Board of Education Officials may move forward with repairing them.

Commissioner Boston also inquired about the Board's plan for the Webster house in Wenona. The house, which is now county-owned property, is dilapidated and presents a liability to the County.

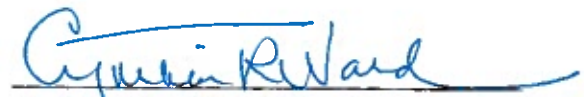
A motion was made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to demolish the house utilizing county personnel. The motion carried unanimously.

At the conclusion of the agenda, President Simpkins asked if there was anyone wishing to speak.

Mr. Richard Crumbacker, of The Crisfield-Somerset County Times, advised that no reports or notices have been received recently from the Health Department in regard to rabies cases in the County. President Simpkins advised that the County Health Officer will be contacted by this office.

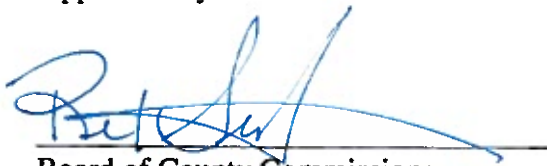
With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Cynthia R. Ward  
Executive Aide

Approved By:



Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County