

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2013

At 2:00 P.M., The Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County met in regular session with Commissioner Vice-President Charles F. Fisher, Commissioner Craig N. Mathies, Sr., Commissioner Jerry S. Boston and Commissioner Randy Laird. Commissioner President Simpkins was absent from today's meeting.

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

Vice-President Fisher 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 motion made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried 4-0 to approve the Minutes of the meetings held September 24, 2013 (Open and Closed Sessions) as presented.

Today's meeting began with the County Administrator announcing the nomination of the Employee of the Quarter, Mr. Mark Konapelsky, Code Enforcement Officer for the Somerset County Department of Technical and Community Services. Mr. Konapelsky's accomplishments and outstanding work performance was shared with the Board. On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, Mr. Konapelsky was presented with a Certificate of Recognition and a gift card.

Dr. John Gaddis, Interim Superintendent, Somerset County Public Schools, appeared before the Board to request approval for the transfer of funds among categories in the FY14 budget, as required to meet the requirements of the State of Maryland. The transfers, which total \$1,049,693, were approved by the Board of Education during their September 17, 2013 meeting. Dr. Gaddis stated that the category transfers do not affect nor change the "bottom line" of the total budget. Commissioner Laird inquired about the reason for the request. Dr. Gaddis advised that it was most likely an oversight; however, this was before his appointment. The category transfer details have been made available to the public.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, it carried unanimously by all present to approve the request to transfer the funds among categories in the FY14 budget, as presented.

In other business, Dr. Gaddis reported that Ms. Wendy Harrison has been hired as the new Chief Financial Officer for the Board of Education. He was also happy to report that the Board of Education will end the year "in the black" financially. A two-week verbal waiver was granted by the State Department of Education for the late submittal, due to staffing changes. He will forward the final report to the County Administrator as soon as it becomes available.

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

A letter from Ms. Jennifer Roser, Homeless Services Supervisor for the Department of Social Services, was reviewed by the Board. In her letter, Ms. Roser submitted the names of fourteen (14) individuals and requested they be appointed to serve as members of the Somerset County Board on Homelessness.

A motion was made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to appoint the following nominees, as submitted, to serve as members on the Somerset County Board on Homelessness: Brandi Horner, James H. Porter, Jr., Esq., L. Jennifer Roser, Kathy Maloney, Charles Fisher, Shannon Frey, Nicole Griffin, Susanna Henson, Julie Parsons, Charlotte Jones, Renee McLaughlin, Chenita Reddick, Tomese Elliott, Linda L. Stuckey. The motion carried 3-0 with Commissioner Fisher abstaining.

The Board reviewed a letter from Cecil County inviting Somerset to join the Clean Chesapeake Coalition to give local counties a stronger voice in government. Mr. Taylor will obtain further information, such as any costs associated with joining the Coalition, and report back at a later date.

The Board also discussed correspondence received from Secretary Joe Gill, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, regarding the designation of certain state owned land as "Wildlands". These properties are described as areas that have retained their wilderness character or have rare or vanishing species of plant or animal life. In Somerset County, 3,210 acres of marshland located across from Janes Island State Park are considered by state officials to receive the Wildlands designation. Mr. Taylor reported that Mayor Purnell is expressing his opposition to this designation, since it would hinder a project that is currently being proposed by the City of Crisfield. The Board tabled the issue until further information is received from The City of Crisfield.

A letter was received from Sam and Cathy Shea of Crisfield advising that they have relinquished Hangar #3 at the Crisfield Airport due to the size of the structure. The Shea's were previously permitted to lease Hangar #3, which is owned by The City of Crisfield and Somerset County.

The Board was reminded of a request to provide a letter of support for Metompkin Seafood, Inc. for their submittal of a MIPS Innovate Tech Fund Application. Due to the urgency of the application, the letter was signed by President Simpkins last week. Vice-President Fisher called for a motion to authorize the signature. Upon motion made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried unanimously by all present to authorize the President's signature and the submittal of the letter of support for Metompkin Seafood.

While reviewing outgoing correspondence, Mr. Taylor reported that Mr. Kirkwood Cottman has declined his nomination for appointment on the Somerset County Tax Assessment Appeal Board. The Board will attempt to find a replacement nominee.

Mr. Taylor advised the Board of an e-mail message received today's date from Charter Communications confirming the meeting date of Thursday, November 21, 2013 with the Board of County Commissioners.

Vice-President Fisher was presented with an agreement between the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the Somerset County Commissioners on behalf of the State's Attorney's Office with regard to the Child Support Enforcement Administration/Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement which assists in funding the cost (salaries, equipment, supplies, genetic testing) of the Child Support Program in the amount of \$227,762, less the administrative fee of \$8,604 that is retained by the State. Mr. Taylor noted that Somerset County's local share of the operating costs is \$77,439.

A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, to authorize the signature of the Child Support Enforcement Administration/Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement. The motion carried unanimously by all present.

The County Administrator updated the Board on the Crisfield Library Project. According to Interim Director, Tom Hehman, the bids came in higher than projected; however, the Library Board Members are still hoping for a Fall groundbreaking. They are also hopeful that the Governor's Budget or Supplemental Budget may provide the necessary funds to complete the project. Downsizing the project is still a possibility that is being considered. Mr.

Taylor was also advised that several calls have been placed to our legislative officials seeking their support.

Mr. Taylor reminded the Board of a request received during their September 10, 2013 meeting from Dr. Karl Binns from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Hotel/Restaurant Management Department, for sponsorship of the 6th Annual Facilities Design Project Business Plan Competition and cash award; and to designate an official to serve as a judge on the panel; and evaluator for the mid-term evaluation grade. The Board was advised that The Town of Princess Anne has agreed to contribute \$500 towards the cash award. Commissioner Mathies noted that UMES is the largest employer in the County and it would be a positive gesture towards public relations with the College to make a contribution. Additionally, we should show our support, just as the Town of Princess Anne has.

A motion was made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to match The Town of Princess Anne's contribution, by donating \$500 towards the competition and cash award for the winning team. The motion carried unanimously by all present.

Mr. Taylor reported that Daniel Thompson, EDC Director, has agreed to serve as panel judge in the selection of the winning team and mid-term review.

The Board was advised of a vacancy on the Commission on Aging and a nomination has been submitted by Director, Sherree Marshall. Ms. Elva Burns has been nominated to serve as member of the Commission on Aging. A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, to appoint Ms. Elva Burns to serve as member of the Commission on Aging. The motion carried unanimously by all present.

The County Administrator reported that letters (and Right Of Entry Agreements) have been sent to twenty-seven (27) property owners near the Crisfield-Somerset County Airport in regard to the Environmental Assessment that is being performed by URS (Airport Consultant) whereby they will be conducting wetland/survey delineation and/or forest stand delineation.

At the conclusion of the agenda items for today's meeting, Vice-President Fisher asked for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Laird inquired about the status of the CDBG Hurricane Sandy Recovery Funding and stated that he had received a report that it may be another two weeks before receiving the funding. Mr. Taylor confirmed the funding has not been received. A projected date for the arrival of the funding is not available at this time.

Commissioner Fisher inquired if the County was still waiving the landfill tipping fees for demolition debris from houses damaged by Hurricane Sandy. It was reported that tipping fees for uninsured homes that are being demolished by church volunteer groups are being handled on a case-by-case basis. Once the CDBG funding arrives, houses that are repaired or replaced under that program, will not require a waiver since the funding will cover the tipping fees.

Mr. Dan Kuebler, of Crisfield, stated that he will be encouraging Crisfield residents to attend the meeting with Charter Communications on November 21st. He acknowledged the new equipment that has been installed in the lower end of Crisfield, but they are still using microwaves to operate their system. Fiber optic lines have been installed by Maryland Broadband in The City of Crisfield and the schools are now connected. However, residents located outside of the city limits are subjected to dial-up speed for internet usage. In addition, Charter customers still do not have the option of high definition cable. In closing, Mr. Kuebler stated that government should make internet available to rural areas.

At 2:35 p.m., the County Administrator advised the Board of the need for a Closed Session. A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, to go into Closed Session authority of State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 10-508 (a) (1) (i) the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction. The motion carried unanimously by all present. Also present for the Closed Session were Commissioner Vice-President Charles Fisher; Commissioner Craig Mathies, County Administrator-Clerk, Ralph D. Taylor; Executive Aide, Cynthia R. Ward; Human Resources Director, Erica Quillen; and Maintenance, Solid Waste & Drainage Director, Charles Cavanaugh.

At 3:15 p.m., upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, it was carried unanimously by all present to adjourn the Closed and Open Sessions.

Approved By:


Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:


Cynthia R. Ward
Executive Aide