

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2014

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 motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried 4-0 to approve the Minutes from the Open and Closed Sessions held October 7, 2014.

President Simpkins opened sealed bids for the construction of one (1) replacement house under the CDBG – Disaster Recovery Program (26250 Plum Street, Crisfield). Bid information is as follows:

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
1. RAD Construction	\$135,000
2. Top Notch Drywall	\$146,645
3. Vernon Esham	\$145,735
4. Ken Build	\$138,640

All bids were accompanied by a bid bond as required. The contracts will be awarded at a later date.

Representatives from the City of Crisfield, including Mayor Kim Lawson; Council Members: Laverne Johnson; Mark Konapelsky; and Charlotte Scott, were present to revisit the issue of a funding request for "It Takes a Village to Help Our Children", under the CDBG – Disaster Recovery Program. Ms. Darlene Taylor, Director of the program, was also present for the discussion. Representing Shore Up! Inc. was Executive Director, Freddie Mitchell; Superintendent of Somerset County Public Schools, Dr. John Gaddis, and Cindy Stone from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development were also present.

Mayor Lawson began with a brief history of the issue and the City Council's response to Ms. Taylor's funding request, which was to divide the funds \$3 Million equally between "It Takes a Village and Headstart". In response to an inquiry directed to Ms. Stone regarding the sharing of these funds between the two organizations, Ms. Stone stated that we need to consider the current usage of the building and asked if there were other buildings in the City that could be rehabilitated and used, such as the old MAC Center or the Community Center. In a discussion regarding the division of grant funding, Ms. Stone reminded everyone of the costs involved in the construction of a new building, in addition to architect fees, such as Davis Bacon wage rates; elevation costs; and fees related to bidding out the project. Ms. Taylor provided cost estimates for new construction, based upon \$125 per square foot. The Architect, which was present at today's meeting, stated that the estimate may be closer to \$150 per square foot. Mr. Mitchell has estimated the cost of a new Headstart building at \$2.2, based upon a similar Headstart facility in Easton. He also stated that Shore Up! Inc. is hoping to build their facility on the campus of Crisfield High School. Ms. Stone advised that school construction requirements must be adhered to in this case. Dr. Gaddis reported that \$268 per square foot was considered to be a historic figure in determining new school construction, and has included the Headstart facility in their capital improvement plan as a cooperative use. The Board inquired if the County is liable if either organization is dissolved. Ms. Stone replied – yes, the organization must provide proof of sustainability for twenty years or the City/County must provide the services or pay the money back. In addition, the children utilizing the services must meet the eligibility guidelines. Ms. Taylor advised that her program was totally grant funded. Ms. Taylor, Ms. Johnson and Ms. Scott expressed their support for the program ("It Takes A Village") and its eight year success. Commissioner Mathies stated that his concern is for the children and for any programs that assist children, but we cannot lose sight of our responsibility. The County cannot afford to sustain these services if Ms. Taylor loses her program funding. Mr. Mitchell reported that Headstart has been in business for 45 years in this county, as well as other counties, and have not asked for any funding assistance during this time. Commissioner Fisher advised that a compromise would be inevitable and reiterated that Somerset County cannot fund this project. Everyone agreed that "time is an issue" and a resolution is needed very soon. Commissioner Laird advised that financial documents are needed from both organizations before a final decision can be made. The Commissioners concluded by thanking everyone for attending today's meeting.

In other business, the County Administrator reviewed correspondence and discussion items with the Board.

A letter from Gail Sheldon, Library Director, was reviewed, advising of the Library Board of Trustees' nominee for an existing vacancy on their Board. The Library Board nominated Keisha Evans to serve in the position, formerly held by Donnie Price.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, it carried 4-0 to appoint Keisha Evans as member of the Somerset County Library Board of Trustees.

A letter was received from Freddy Mitchell, Executive Director, Shore Up! Inc., regarding their plan to vacate the Whittington School in Crisfield, and their future plan to build a new facility on the Crisfield High School campus for Headstart (as discussed earlier today). Since Ms. Taylor's program ("It Takes A Village") was a sub-lessee under Shore Up! Inc., the County Administrator recommended the Commissioners enter into a short term lease with "It Takes a Village" for the Whittington School facility. The Board concurred to move forward with authorizing the County Attorney to prepare a lease agreement for a term of six months, with a month-to-month provision at the end of the six month term. Action to approve the lease will be taken at a later date.

Mr. Taylor presented the Board with loan settlement documents and a loan resolution for approval and signature. The two loans, through Hebron Savings Bank, were approved by the Board during their meeting of July 15, 2014.

- 1) \$1,000,000 – Interim financing for the local portion of the cost of construction of the Crisfield Library and for the Treasurer's Office improvements to be made at the County Office Complex. This loan is for a term of 18 months at .99%.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried 4-0 to adopt the loan resolution and authorize the signature of all documents related to the loan settlement.

- 2) \$2,000,000 – Interim financing for Board of Education construction projects to include a new HVAC system and roof at Greenwood Elementary School and other minor school improvement projects. This loan is for a term of 24 months at .99%.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried 4-0 to adopt the loan resolution and authorize the signature of all documents related to the loan settlement.

The Board was presented with a Grant Mortgage Release for approval and signature. The grant mortgage was filed on June 27, 2008 in the amount of \$14,715.00 between Virginia Horsey and Barry Barkley of 4493 Jacksonville Road in Crisfield and the Board of Commissioners for

Somerset County for housing rehabilitation. Under the terms of the grant, the debt has been satisfied.

A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, to authorize President Simpkins to sign the Grant Mortgage Release as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

With no further agenda items, President Simpkins called on the audience members for any questions or comments.

Mr. Phil Riffin, of Crisfield, thanked Commissioner Mathies for attending the Candidate's Forum. He then expressed his concern that all of the CDBG – Disaster Recovery funding be spent in Somerset County and he hopes to see some of those funds reprogrammed for economic development. He concluded with an update on a proposed project of the Lutheran group.

With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Charles Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Jerry Boston, to go into Closed Session by 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; and Section 10-508 (a) (7) consult with legal counsel to obtain legal advice. The motion carried 4-0. Also present for the Closed Session were Commissioner President Rex Simpkins, Commissioner Randy Laird, Commissioner Craig Mathies, County Administrator, Ralph D. Taylor; and Executive Aide, Cynthia R. Ward.

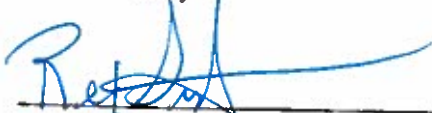
Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Laird, it carried 4-0 to adjourn the Open and Closed Sessions.

Respectfully Submitted:



Cynthia R. Ward
Executive Aide

Approved By:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County