

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FOR SOMERSET COUNTY

NOVEMBER 18, 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 Jerry S. Boston and Commissioner Randy Laird. Executive Aide Cynthia R. Ward and Executive Secretary Lory E. Ebron were also present.

Commissioner Craig N. Mathies, Sr., and County Administrator-Clerk Ralph D. Taylor were absent from today's meeting.

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

Meeting minutes were approved at the conclusion of today's meeting.

Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Director of Maintenance and Solid Waste was now present before the Board.

President Simpkins proceeded to open the sealed bids received for the following projects:

Drainage Projects

Bidder	Mennonite Church Road	McIntyre Road Phase VI
Doug Vann	\$9,600.00	\$3,150.00
Mark Bozman	\$10,500.00	\$2,650.00
Paul Jones	\$3,895.00	\$2,295.00

Because of the disparity of the bids received for the Mennonite Church Road project, Mr. Cavanaugh requested to review the submissions and report back to the board at a later time.

On a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, and seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 3-0 to award the McIntyre Road Phase VI project to Paul Jones, the low bidder at \$2,295.00.

Tourism Center (Route 13) and Maintenance Building Roof Replacement

Bidder	Tourism Center	Maintenance Building
David Jones		\$7,800.00
Ken Build LLC	\$4,480.00	\$9,400.00
RAD Construction	\$6,450.00	
Vernan Esham	\$4,840.00	

There was uncertainty regarding the bid submitted by David Jones. Mr. Cavanaugh requested to review the bid submissions, and return with a recommendation at a later time.

Commissioner Laird requested that Marion East be added to the ditch list, and that a letter be sent out notifying him that he was added to the list. Mr. Cavanaugh acknowledged the request and was excused from the meeting at this time.

Mr. Gary Pusey, Director of Community and Technical Services (DCTS) was now present before the Board. President Simpkins declared the Public Hearing open regarding CDBG Recovery Progress. Ms. Ward read the Notice of Public Hearing/CDBG Disaster Recovery into the record as follows:

“Somerset County will conduct a Public Hearing to provide citizens with a status report of activities undertaken by the County through its implementation of the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Recovery grant at the above-referenced time and location.

The County Commissioners entered into a grant agreement with the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) to use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts in July 2013. The total amount of funds awarded was \$8.6 million, with an initial partial allocation of \$4.2 million to be spent by July 31, 2015. These efforts include a Housing Recovery Program to rehabilitate houses damaged by the Hurricane and to construct new homes to replace those damaged extensively by the storm; and an Economic Recovery Program to assist small businesses with unmet needs related to the Hurricane.

In accordance with the grant agreement, the County is required to hold public hearings twice annually to provide an update of progress being made on the recovery efforts.

Efforts will be made to accommodate the disabled and non-English speaking residents with five days advance notice to Gary Pusey at 410-651-1424.”

Mr. Pusey began by explaining that the County’s Grant Agreement for the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Recovery efforts requires that a public hearing be held every six months to provide an update of completed and anticipated grant activities. It was noted that the first hearing was held on April 22, 2014. The total grant amount is \$8,640,000 and the initial allocation in the amount of \$4,200,000 includes a Housing Recovery Program and an Economic Recovery Program, with approved activities to be completed by July 31, 2015. A summary of the housing activity projects is as follows:

- 1 rehabilitation job completed - \$25,140
- 5 new home rebuilds - \$877,049.63
- 8 new homes under construction - \$1,205,256
- 11 new homes with applications pending - \$1,925,000

Mr. Pusey noted that to date about \$2 million has been spent on housing. Combined, these 25 applications will total an estimated \$4.0 million.

The summary provided for the Economic Development portion of the grant was as follows:

- 49 Watermen’s grants approved - \$121,934
- 2 Façade Improvement grants approved - \$10,000
- 4 Business Loans approved - \$240,000
- 1 Business Loan pending - \$60,000

Combined, this activity totals \$431,934.

Mr. Pusey stated that early progress was slow, and it has taken some time, but efforts to publicize the availability of funds via a mass mailing to all County property owners resulted in a number of inquiries, and brought much interest to the program. With the number of applications that have been submitted, and some additional spending expenses, it is clear that the initial grant installment of \$4.2 million will be spent, and the amount remaining (\$4,040,000) will be used to complete all applications in the pipeline, thereby spending the \$8.6 million by August 2016. Commissioner Laird questioned that if there were to be Economic Development grant funding remaining, could it be applied to housing. Mr. Pusey replied that it could, however it is his understanding that Economic Development funding is anticipated to be entirely spent.

President Simpkins asked if there were any proponents present to testify.

Mr. Dan Kuebler, 5010 Canal Drive, Crisfield asked to speak. Mr. Kuebler stated that he meant no disrespect to Mr. Pusey, however he doesn't agree that it has taken a long time to get where they are, and actually feels that much has been accomplished in 16 months. Mr. Pusey thanked Mr. Kuebler, noting that the contractual employees have done a very good job. Mr. Kuebler also questioned if there has been any traffic out of Crisfield for storefronts. Mr. Pusey suggested he contact Mr. Thompson in the Economic Development Office for more information.

President Simpkins asked if there were any opponents wishing to speak. There were none.

In closing, Mr. Pusey congratulated his staff and Mr. Mark Konapelksi who have worked very hard overseeing this project. Initially there was concern about spending the grant money, however it now appears that will not be the case.

President Simpkins declared the public hearing closed, advising that comments will be taken for a period of ten days ending Friday November 28, 2014.

Dr. John Gaddis and staff were asked to come forward. Dr. Gaddis introduced Ms. Danielle Haley, Supervisor of Facilities and Capital Planning and Mr. Ed Barber, Consultant. Dr. Gaddis and his staff were present today to submit the Somerset County FY16 Capital Improvement Plan, as required by the State. Ms. Haley summarized the plan by reviewing the following four projects:

- Greenwood Elementary School HVAC Replacement Funding
- J.M.Tawes Technology & Career Center Replacement or Renovation Planning
- Princess Anne Elementary School Roof Replacement Funding
- Crisfield High School- Head Start Renovation Planning

The Board of Education is requesting the Board's consideration to authorize the President's signature on a letter that would acknowledge their receipt and review of the FY16, and provide the county's support of the projects listed within the plan. A discussion was held with regard to the

J.M.Tawes Technology & Career Center project. Ms. Haley stated that based on the feasibility study, it would be more cost effective to replace the school rather than renovate the old building. Commissioner Fisher questioned what the cost and years of commitment for the project would be to the county if the project were to be approved today. Noting that the feasibility study costs are estimates, she distributed a timeline of cost estimates for fiscal years 2014-2020 totaling approximately \$7.8 million. Commissioner Laird expressed his concern of the county's ability to commit to that amount of funding at this time. Ms. Haley and Mr. Gaddis assured the Board that the Board of Education has pledged to get additional funding to cover the local cost share expenses in order to get this project completed. Dr. Gaddis also noted that half of their carryover amount will be applied to the Tawes project. It was explained that the letter will not obligate the county to the project, but only state their support of the plan/projects.

At the conclusion of the discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Fisher, and seconded by Commissioner Boston to authorize the President's signature on a letter that will acknowledge the Boards receipt/review of the Somerset County FY16 Capital Improvement Plan. Additionally, the letter will state the Boards support of the projects within the plan, approving the Board of Education to proceed in obtaining a plan regarding the J.M.Tawes Center. The motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Clint Sterling, Director of Recreation and Parks, Mr. Harry Romano, Rail Program and Policy Manager/Office of Freight and Multimodalism and County Attorney Mr. Kirk Simpkins were now present before the Board. Mr. Sterling introduced Mr. Romano, and advised that they were here to obtain the President's signature with regard to a "Statement of Willingness to Assume Financial Responsibility (SWAFR) with regard to the Bike Trail project. Mr. Sterling explained that this document is the next step in order to continue with the Bike Trail project and would be a statement from the County to assume the financial responsibility to remove the trail, should the railroad ever want to re-establish the railroad line to Crisfield. Mr. Simpkins advised the Board that he has reviewed the agreement, and essentially this agreement would be as Mr. Sterling described.

On a motion made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 3-0 to authorize President Simpkins to sign the SWAFR as presented. Messers. Sterling, Romano and Simpkins were excused from the meeting at this time.

Ms. Ward continued the meeting with a review of correspondence and discussion items with the Board.

A request has been received from the Somerset County Long Term Recovery Committee, Inc., to request the waiver of landfill tipping fees for the following homes that were significantly damaged by Hurricane Sandy, and will be replaced:

- 333 Broadway, Crisfield, Md
- 2739 Calvary Road, Crisfield, MD
- 4056 Back Shelltown Road, Marion Station, MD

On a motion made by Commissioner Laird, and seconded by Commissioner Boston, the motion carried 3-0 to approve the request to waive landfill tipping fees for the 3 homes noted, as requested by the Somerset County Long Term Recovery Committee, Inc.,

Ms. Ward advised the Board of a letter received from the Office of the Secretary, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development that announced the opening of the National Disaster Resilience Competition in the amount of \$1 Billion that is intended to fund innovative, permanent resilience projects that will reduce risk to people and property from future disasters. The County was asked to complete a questionnaire to determine if there are eligible areas that would qualify for this funding.

A sublease request for slip # 5 at Deal Island Harbor has been received from Mr. Gary Webster. Mr. Webster has sold his boat to Mr. Jeff Brown, and has requested the Boards permission to sublease the slip for the remainder of this fiscal year.

On a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, and seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 3-0 to approve Mr. Webster's request to sublease Slip #5 at Deal Island to Mr. Jeff Brown for the remainder of this fiscal year.

Next, Commissioner Fisher requested to amend a motion made at the previous meeting held November 5, 2014. During that meeting, the motion was made to recommend the Somerset County Board of Education(and Shore Up! Inc.) receive \$2 Million for the construction of a new Head Start facility on the Crisfield High School Campus; and "It Takes a Village to Help Our Children" receive \$1 Million of the CDBG-Disaster Recovery Funds, and attempt to secure additional funding to cover the costs of the demolition of the Whittington Building.

Commissioner Fisher made a motion to amend the previous motion to include that "approval of \$1 Million of the CDBG-Disaster Recovery Funds to It Takes a Village to Help Our Children be pending the approval from DHCD and HUD". The motion was seconded by Commissioner Boston, and carried 3-0.


Upon a motion made by Commissioner Boston, second by Commissioner Laird, it carried 3-0 to dispense with the reading of the Board of County Commissioner and Closed Session Meeting Minutes held Tuesday, November 5, 2014 and approve the minutes as presented.

President Simpkins then asked if there was anyone present wishing to speak.

Mr. Dan Kuebler asked to address the Board. He expressed his support of the Board Of Education's FY16 Capital Improvement Plan, as well as expressing his dis-satisfaction of the requirements that they must comply with from Annapolis that are driving up costs. He also stated his appreciation to Ms. Haley with regard to her efforts relating to maintenance, noting the previous management in past years never provided proper maintenance efforts to Tawes which has caused it to be in the condition it is in currently today. He thanked the Board for their support of the plan, and thanked them for approving the request for the support letter which he feels will aid them in obtaining additional funding to go towards the Tawes project.

Ms. Ward advised the Board of the need 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 counsel to obtain legal advice. With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 3-0 and the regular session meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Lory E. Ebron
Executive Secretary

Approved By:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County