

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
DECEMBER 2, 2014

At 2:00 P.M., in the Meeting Room of the Board of County Commissioners, Charles Horner, Clerk of the Circuit Court for Somerset County, swore in Craig N. Mathies, Sr., Rex Simpkins, Charles F. Fisher, Jerry S. Boston, and Randy Laird as County Commissioners for Somerset County.

Commissioner Simpkins, now serving as Interim President, called the meeting to order and asked Commissioner Mathies to lead everyone in the Lord's Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner President Simpkins advised that the first order of business today was to elect a president of the Board of County Commissioners. At this time, he called for nominations for the Office of President.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mathies, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to nominate Randy Laird for County Commissioner President. The motion carried unanimously.

At this time, President Laird expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Simpkins for four years of good leadership. He then called for nominations for Vice-President.

A motion was then made by Commissioner Simpkins, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to nominate Charles Fisher for Vice-President. The motion carried 4-0 with Commissioner Fisher abstaining.

President Laird then called for motions for the appointment of a County Administrator-Clerk and County Attorney.

A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, to re-appoint Ralph Douglas Taylor as County Administrator - Clerk. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was then made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to re-appoint Kirk Simpkins as County Attorney. Commissioner Simpkins abstained from the vote. The motion carried 4-0 with one abstention.

President Laird concluded by administering the oath to Mr. Taylor for his appointment as Clerk.

At this time, the Board of County Commissioners proceeded with their regular session.

Mr. Gary Pusey, Director of Technical and Community Services, presented a Subrecipient Grant Agreement between the City of Crisfield and Somerset County, for funding received from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, under the CDBG – Disaster Grant. Under this Subrecipient Agreement, \$350,000, will be used to fund a feasibility study for the “Great Point Jetty Restoration Project”. The total project, estimated at \$7.8 Million, is intended to protect the City of Crisfield from flooding due to storm surge and high waves. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will provide \$5 Million towards the project and the County will provide \$2.8 Million through Hurricane Sandy Disaster Recovery funding.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried unanimously to authorize President Laird to sign the Subrecipient Grant Agreement.

The County Administrator reviewed correspondence and discussion items.

A project notification was received from the Maryland Department of Planning, State Clearinghouse, regarding the abandonment of approximately 14.57 miles of railroad in Somerset County, as proposed by Maryland Transit Administration. Mr. Taylor recommended the Board respond with a C-5 designation, indicating the project is consistent with our plans, programs and objectives.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Simpkins, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried unanimously to authorize the County Administrator respond with a C-5 designation.

The Board reviewed a letter from the Crisfield Heritage Foundation, Inc. regarding a request for a tax exemption for the following properties owned by the Foundation:

Account # 07-125259 J. Millard Tawes Library	\$2141.10
Account # 12-10230 J. Millard Tawes Library/Lot	\$61.31
Account # 12-9100 Ida Ward Linton	\$319.34
Account # 12-5741 Calvary Road	\$98.82

Additionally, Chairman Terry Pehan advised that the County taxes were paid in error, and has asked for those taxes to be refunded.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried unanimously to approve the request for an exemption for the properties described above, and also refund the county taxes that have already been paid.

A letter from Charter Communications was reviewed by the Board, advising of the upcoming price adjustments for their customers. Mr. Taylor suggested the County respond to

Charter by submitting a letter expressing our opposition to the notice, based upon their performance. A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, to submit a letter to Charter, as recommended by Mr. Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board was advised by the Del-Mar-Va Council of Boy Scouts, that John P. Tawes IV has advanced to the rank of "Eagle". A motion was made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, to submit a congratulatory letter to Mr. Tawes. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Director of Maintenance and Solid Waste, was now before the Board to revisit the bids received and read aloud during the November 18, 2014 meeting. During that meeting, the contract for the Mennonite Church Road Drainage Project was not awarded. Since that date, Mr. Cavanaugh advised that he has contacted the low bidder, Rick Jones, and requested he look at the Mennonite Church Road property. Since a response has not been received back from Mr. Jones, Mr. Cavanaugh recommended he be awarded the contract based upon his bid of \$3,895.00.

A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, to award the Mennonite Church Road Drainage Project to the low bidder, Rick Jones, for his bid of \$3,895.00. The motion carried 3-1 with Commissioner Simpkins in opposition.

Mr. Cavanaugh also discussed the bids received for the two roofing projects: Maintenance Building and Tourism Center. Since both bids were significantly higher than anticipated, Mr. Cavanaugh recommended the Commissioners reject all bids. As an alternative plan, Mr. Cavanaugh advised that his department will perform the Tourism roof work (in-house). He will re-evaluate the Maintenance Building roof project in the Spring.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Simpkins, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried unanimously to reject all bids received for the two roofing projects.

The Board was presented with an easement from Verizon to access the tower site, adjacent to the County Office Complex. Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried unanimously to authorize President Laird to sign the Easement.

Mr. Taylor reminded the Board of a public hearing held on November 18, 2014, regarding the status report of the activities undertaken by the County through its implementation of the Hurricane Sandy Disaster Recovery grant. The Board was provided with a copy of written

comments as provided by Phil Riffin, of Crisfield. A copy will be retained for the record, and a copy will be provided to Gary Pusey, DTCS.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Simpkins, it carried unanimously to approve the Minutes of the meetings held Tuesday, November 18, 2014, both open and closed sessions.

Commissioner Fisher left the meeting on other business.

With no further agenda items, President Laird called for any comments from the audience.


Mr. Phil Riffin congratulated the County Commissioners and County Administrator and acknowledged their good work.

Mr. Terry Pehan expressed his appreciation to the Board for the action taken on the request submitted by the Crisfield Heritage Foundation. Mr. Pehan also provided the Board with a written log of entries related to internet service in the Crisfield area (Charter).

With no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins, seconded by Commissioner 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 unanimously. Also present for the Closed Session were Commissioner President Laird, Commissioner Mathies, County Administrator, Ralph D. Taylor; Executive Aide, Cynthia R. Ward; County Attorney, Kirk Simpkins; Director of Maintenance, Charles Cavanaugh; Library Director, Gail Sheldon; and Library Board President Deborah Parker.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried unanimously to adjourn the Open and Closed Sessions at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:


Cynthia R. Ward
Executive Aide

Approved By:


Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County