

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
SPECIAL SESSION
TUESDAY JULY 8, 2014

At 2:00 p.m., the Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County met in Special Session. Present for the meeting were Commissioner President Rex Simpkins, Commissioner Vice President Charles F. Fisher, Commissioner Jerry S. Boston, Commissioner Randy Laird and Commissioner Craig N. Mathies Sr.

County Administrator-Clerk Ralph D. Taylor and Executive Secretary Lory E. Ebron were also present.

Commissioner Mathies lead those attending the meeting in repeating the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, second by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to dispense with the reading of the Special Session and Closed Session Meeting minutes held Tuesday, June 10, 2014 and approve the minutes as presented.

At this time, President Simpkins opened the sealed bid received regarding the Crisfield Airport Snow Removal Equipment Acquisition.

<u>Bidder</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
Atlantic Tractor	\$43,938.85

As it was the only bid received, it was Mr. Taylor's recommendation to award the bid to Atlantic Tractor contingent on the review and approval by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA).

Therefore, a motion was made by Commissioner Fisher and seconded by Commissioner Boston to award the bid for the Crisfield Airport Snow Removal Equipment to Atlantic Tractor in the amount of \$43, 938.85, contingent on approval by the FAA and MAA. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Adam Cohen and Mr. Paul Harris of Great Bay Wind Energy Center were invited to come forward. Mr. Taylor noted that it has been 21 months since the last discussion held regarding the wind project, and correspondence received relating to the project recently received was given to the Board. Mr. Cohen and Mr. Harris provided a presentation that reviewed the history of the project as it has progressed, Governor O'Malley's veto of HB1168, the long term positive benefits the project can provide to the county and lastly, a request of the Commissioners to provide their support of the project. In closing, Mr. Cohen stated that Great Bay Wind Energy is in the final stretch, having submitted their

CPCN application before the PSC, and are looking to start construction next year. He also stated that instead of working as separate bodies, he wants to work together with the county regarding this 4 year, \$4 million dollar project. Mr. Cohen thanked the Board for their time, and asked if there were any questions they could answer that the Board may have.

Commissioner Mathies questioned the accuracy of their statement relating to the reduction in the amount of pollutants that would occur in the county with the addition of wind energy. Mr. Cohen stated that they feel the addition of wind energy megawatts will replace megawatts being created by less "green" energy sources, thereby reducing the amount of pollutants to the county.

Commissioner Laird noted that there is much concern relating to how close the turbines will be to our public schools, specifically noting the two turbines located on the map near Westover. Mr. Cohen said that they would be following all required and appropriate setbacks mandated by the state.

Commissioner Fisher questioned the agreement not yet received regarding PAX River, as has been previously mentioned, noting that the Board agreed to table the draft ordinance until an agreement is achieved between PAX River and Great Bay Wind Energy. Mr. Cohen explained that all signatures have been obtained from the various entities, with the exception of the Department of Defense, also referred to as "Big-Navy". He stated they continue to work with them, and are experiencing "Big Navy Bureaucracy". Mr. Harris added that he believes that they will receive a signed agreement, and that is why they continue to move the project forward.

Commissioner Boston stated that the largest complaint he is hearing is relating to the setbacks, and questioned if the issue will need to be re-evaluated with the proposal of taller turbines being presented. He also asked what setbacks will be acceptable to Pioneer Green Energy.

Mr. Cohen explained that that the original setbacks presented were based on turbine size and already accounted for. He also said that they are looking at the best available technology, however a turbine has not been selected as of yet, so a firm setback number is not available.

President Simpkins questioned the number of signatures on the agreement with PAX River, asking if it was accurate to say that HB1168 stalled the process. Mr. Cohen explained that the delay was actually caused by Congressman Hoyer in his testimony requesting that a hold be put on the agreement until the session was over.

Mr. Taylor asked if the proposed turbine height increased since the last public hearing was held, and questioned if the fewer number of turbines will decrease revenue. Mr. Cohen stated they are being

proposed to be taller (with increased megawatt output). The revenue is taxed on a per megawatt basis and not the number of turbines so therefore the revenue numbers won't change.

With the close of the presentation, Mr. Taylor noted that there have been significant changes to the previously drafted ordinance, and after having consulted with the County Attorney, the County will at a minimum, have to go through another public hearing process. Mr. Taylor also made the recommendation to the Board advising that the ordinance not be adopted as is. He advised the Board to consider sending the current ordinance back to the either the Planning and Zoning Department or the Planning Commission for review; or perhaps have the Planning Commission assign a board to review all needed revisions. Lastly, Mr. Taylor noted that the current ordinance does not address height restrictions, which is of concern. He questioned if "line of sight" studies have been performed. Mr. Cohen replied yes, absolutely.

President Simpkins thanked all of those attending, stating that no decisions will be made today. The proposed ordinance will not be moving forward without another public hearing being held, at which time anyone wishing to speak will have the opportunity to do so. Mr. Cohen and Mr. Harris were thanked for their presentation, and excused from the meeting at this time.

Ms. Carolyn Marquis was now present before the board.

Ms. Marquis thanked the Board for having her today. She distributed a handout and explained that she has a new business in Crisfield, and sees no increases in traffic to keep her new business sustainable. Additionally, Ms. Marquis suggested the county develop a 5 year plan to track performance, milestones, challenges and ownership with timelines. Also, she shared her thoughts with regard to changing the organizational structure for the county that would include the creation of a promotions and marketing branch. Ms. Marquis suggested the use of interns to aid in the county marketing efforts. It would be her recommendation for Somerset County to learn from what other counties have implemented.

The Board suggested that Ms. Marquis contact the local chambers, and advised that current budget restraints limit the county's ability to offer any assistance at this time. A discussion was held regarding the structure of members serving on the EDC Board (3 people are from the Crisfield municipality). Ms. Marquis was thanked for her presentation, and excused from the meeting.

Mr. Taylor reviewed correspondence received since the last meeting.

A letter of support request was received from Ms. Chanelle White, Chairperson, John Wesley Community Association. John Wesley United Methodist Church is a historic church located in Deal

Island, Maryland. They are applying for the African American Heritage Preservation Grant for a restoration project, and a letter of support is a requirement for submission of the grant.

Therefore, on a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to authorize the President's signature on the letter of support for John Wesley United Methodist Church.

Mr. Taylor presented a letter drafted to Ms. Irene M. Padilla, Assistant State Superintendent of Libraries with regard to the additional \$634,000 from the statewide contingency fund being reallocated to Phase 1B of the Crisfield Library Project, thanking her for her generosity and support. He then requested the Board's approval for the President's signature on the letter.

On a motion made by Commissioner Laird, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 authorizing the President's signature on the letter to Ms. Padilla.

With no further business, Mr. Taylor advised the Board of a 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.

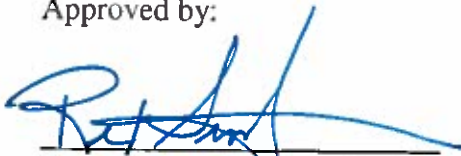
Therefore, at 3:04 p.m. a motion was made by Commissioner Boston, and seconded by Commissioner Laird to adjourn the Special Session meeting and enter into Closed Session. The motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted:



Lory E. Ebron
Executive Secretary

Approved by:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County