

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2015

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

Also present were Ralph D. Taylor, County Administrator-Clerk and Lory E. Ebron, Administrative Aide.

President Laird 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.

Minutes were approved at the conclusion of today's meeting.

Mr. Taylor called Mr. Gary Pusey, Department of Technical and Community Services (DTCS) and Ms. Liz Zucker, Nature Conservancy forward to present the FY16 Grant Agreement for the Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Program. Ms. Zucker explained the partners involved with the program include Somerset County, Worcester County, The Nature Conservancy and Lower Shore Land Trust. She advised that Worcester County has requested an expansion for FY16 in order to gain landowners who will be eligible to participate in the program. She also explained that the grant agreement presented today will provide \$550,000 in program funding, if approved.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Boston, and seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried 4-0 to authorize President Laird to sign the grant agreement as presented.

Mr. Mark Konapelsky, DTCS was now present before the Board to make the recommendation regarding the furnace room and transformer/raised pads bids, presented during the September 29, 2015 meeting. He explained that after review of all bids received, he requested the Boards approval to place both the Two Double Furnace Rooms & Two Single Furnace Rooms and the Ten Transformers and Ten Raised Transformer Pads out for rebid, as cost proposals for both projects exceeded the 10% margin allowance as mandated by the State.

Therefore, upon a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, and seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to authorize Mr. Konapelsky to re-advertise requests for bids regarding the Two Double Furnace Rooms & Two Single Furnace Rooms and the Ten Transformers and Ten Raised Transformer Pads proposals.

Mr. Taylor continued the meeting with correspondence items at this time.

A letter was received from Ms. Cindy Stone, Director, Office of Community Programs which discussed the progress of the CDGB Disaster Recovery Grant Program, and her request to receive a written narrative which includes a discussion of progress and the anticipated schedule of activities and requests for payment.

Maryland Department of Natural Resources advised that the Board of Public Works approved the request for Program Open Space funding regarding Upper Hill Park Improvements in the amount of \$4,500. The funding will be used to resurface the basketball court, and replace an aging storage shed and entrance gate.

A letter was received from the Maryland Department of Agriculture discussing the High Pathogenic Avian Influenza, while as no threat to human health, has been devastating to poultry flocks in the far West and the mid United States. It was noted that the disease has not yet spread to the Eastern Flyway (which includes Maryland). Mr. Taylor noted that a conference call has been scheduled for Wednesday, October 7, 2015 with Secretary Bartenfelder. The Board was invited to attend the call.

A letter was received from Charter Communications advising of an increase in price adjustments for various tiers and packages.

The Board was advised that Mr. Piet deWitt has resigned as a member of the Somerset County Ethics Commission as he is in the process of moving to South Carolina.

Correspondence was received from Mr. Gary Pusey, Planning Director regarding the appointments, re-appointments and vacancies on the following boards and commissions:

The Agricultural Reconciliation Board

The recommendation was made to re-appoint Ms. Mary Ann Peterman, who has indicated she would like to continue serving. A motion was made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher to re-appoint Ms. Peterman to serve four year term, expiring January 2019. The motion carried 4-0.

Building and Plumbing Code Appeals Board

The recommendation was made to re-appoint Mr. John Webster, Mr. Dick Ward and Mr. Bruce Wooster another three year term, expiring June 2018. A motion was made by Commissioner Fisher and seconded by Commissioner Boston to re-appoint Mr. Webster, Mr. Ward and Mr. Wooster to the Building and Plumbing Code Appeals Board as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

Housing Board of Review

The recommendation was made to re-appoint Mr. Eugene Borden to serve on the Housing Board of Review. If re-appointed, his term will expire in September 2018. A motion was made by Commissioner Boston and seconded by Commissioner Fisher to re-appoint Mr. Borden to serve on the Housing Board of Review. The motion carried 4-0.

Three additional members were needed to complete membership on this Board. Ms. Annette Cottman recognized the difficulties experienced to find qualified members to serve on this Board, and therefore made the following recommendations for the Board's consideration: Ms. Rosalie White, Ms. Alice Gardner, and Ms. Jacqueline Collins. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to appoint Ms. White, Ms. Gardner and Ms. Collins to serve on the Housing Board of Review.

Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence sent at this time. At the conclusion of the review of sent correspondence, Commissioner Mathies stated his disapproval of the letter sent to a member he had appointed from his district regarding notification that his services were no longer required on the Citizens Review/Grievance Committee. Commissioner Mathies noted that in comparison to another letter sent to a member resigning from the same committee, the first letter seemed less courteous. Mr. Taylor explained that he made decision regarding the wording of the letter based on the member's attendance record, as provided from HR Director Ms. Ruiz, which was poor. Commissioner Mathies noted that he had not been made aware of the member's lack of participation on the committee at any time, by any one, which Mr. Taylor refuted, stating the entire Board had been made aware.

Mr. Taylor next discussed the matter of Somerset County Sanitary Districts request for an Ordinance that would allow plan changes (from Front Foot to EDU) on how sewer and water debts are billed to customers. Previous meetings and public hearings have been held, and it was noted that questions regarding the plan change still exist. Although some of the questions were noted during today's meeting, Mr. Taylor requested the Board provide him with a list of questions and items that they would like to have addressed. The Board was also in agreement that the matter be placed on the agenda for discussion once the additional information has been received.

A request was received from Ms. Vicki Ford, DTCS, requesting the Board's approval regarding two grant releases. The first was against the property of Viola Allen, of 13828 Frank

Cornish Road, Princess Anne, Maryland. The second was against the property of Delores and Preston Cottman of 31105 Perry Ranking Road, Princess Anne, Maryland. Ms. Ford advised that both of these grant mortgages have expired after the original filing date and can be released.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, and seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to authorize President Laird to sign the grant release against the property of Viola Allen, of 13828 Frank Cornish Road, Princess Anne, Maryland.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Fisher, seconded by Commissioner Boston, it carried 4-0 to authorize President Laird to sign the grant release against the property of Delores and Preston Cottman of 31105 Perry Ranking Road, Princess Anne, Maryland.

Mr. Taylor next discussed the vacancy's which exist with regard to the VSAP Oversight Committee.

Commissioner Fisher made the motion to appoint Ms. Annette Cottman to serve as the Member at Large from the Community. Commissioner Boston seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

Commissioner Fisher then made the motion to appoint Mr. Bobby Wells to serve as Member at Large of EMS, pending approval of his acceptance. Commissioner Boston seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

Commissioner Boston made the motion to nominate Ms. Donna Messick to serve on the Social Services Board. Commissioner Fisher seconded the motion, which carried 4-0.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried 4-0 to approve the minutes as written from the Open and Closed Session Meetings held Tuesday, September 22, 2015 and the Special Session meeting held on September 29, 2015.

With no further business, Mr. Taylor advised the Board of the need to enter into closed session. Therefore, at 2:40 p.m. the Board entered 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 10-508 (2) protect the privacy or reputation of individuals with respect to a matter that is not related to public business.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried unanimously to adjourn the Open and Closed Sessions at 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lory E. Ebron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lory E. Ebron
Administrative Aide

Approved By:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Randy Laine". The signature is cursive and written in a slightly slanted, upward orientation.

Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County