

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 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, Commissioner Rex Simpkins and Commissioner Craig Mathies, Sr.

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.

The minutes from the Special Session meeting held on November 10, 2015 and the Commissioner and Closed Session meetings held on November 17, 2015 were presented for approval.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Boston, and seconded by Commissioner Fisher, the minutes of the November 10, 2015 were approved as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

Minutes from the Commissioner and Closed Session meetings held on November 17, 2015 were presented as well within the same motion as noted above. Commissioner Mathies abstained from both meetings, therefore the motion for the Commissioner meeting carried 4-0-1. Commissioner Simpkins abstained from the Closed Session meeting, therefore the motion for the Closed Session meeting carried 3-0-2.

Mr. Harold Frock Jr., coach for the Crisfield High School Boys Soccer Team, was asked to come forward to accept a Proclamation on behalf of the team, who were also in attendance at today's meeting. Commissioner President Laird personally congratulated the team for advancing to the State Finals this year, and read the Proclamation aloud which recognized the team for this distinguished accomplishment.

Mr. Gary Pusey was now before the Board. Mr. Taylor read into record the Notice of Public Hearing regarding the CDBG Disaster Recovery Status Report 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 three Hurricane Sandy Disaster Recover Grants at the above referenced time and location.

The County Commissioners entered into three grant agreements with the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) to use Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds for Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts in July 2013 for (1) Housing and Economic Recovery; (2) in February of 2015 for a Housing Study and Repair Assistance to

the Crisfield Housing Authority; and (3) in September of 2014 for remaining unmet needs, with a focus on infrastructure projects.

Housing and Economic Recovery funding totals \$4.2 million. 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. An update on progress being made on these two activities will be provided at the Public Hearing.

The Housing Study and Repair Assistance to the Crisfield Housing Authority funding total \$1.1 million. An update on the progress being made on these two activities will be provided.

Infrastructure funding totals \$5,004,410. A total of 16 projects have been identified for funding and an update of progress being made on these projects will be provided.

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. Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County. Randy Laird, President.”

Mr. Pusey began by first explaining the two basic grants. The first, in the amount of \$8.6 for housing and economic recovery efforts; and the second in the amount of \$16.7 million for infrastructure projects. Noting that both grants are being completed in phases, he explained that two phases of the first \$8.6 grant (MD-14-DR) have been started, and the third phase is about to begin. The first phase is underway for the \$16.7 million grant (MD-15-DR-1) with the second phase about to start. Mr. Pusey thanked contractual personnel hired as well as county staff who worked so diligently on this project. They included Mr. Mark Konapelsky, Ms. Annette Cottman, Mr. Brooks Crowell, Ms. Cathy Landon and Ms. Carlene Wells. He also thanked his in house staff as well as Mr. Danny Thompson, Ms. Dee Savarese and Mr. Doug Taylor who have all contributed to the project. Special mention was also given to Ms. Sharon Muir.

Mr. Pusey then provided the following summary for both grants as follows:

Housing and Economic Recovery Grant - \$4.2 million (MD-14-DR)

This grants first phase began in July 2013 with the hiring of contractual employees. The grant's ending date is December 9, 2015. Mr. Pusey noted that as Phase 3 of this grant starts next month and there will be continuation of many of the activities into Phase 3. Since the last Public Hearing in June 2015, work has continued on new home replacement, with five new homes being started or continuing.

Housing activity was summarized as follows:

- 1 rehabilitation job completed - \$25,140
- 15 new home rebuilds completed - \$2,468,981.46
- 3 new homes under construction - \$532,080
- 1 new home with application pending - \$140,000

Combined, these 20 applications will total an estimated \$3,166,200.

Economic Development activities to date are as follows:

- 59 Watermen's grants approved - \$146,934
- 2 Façade Improvement grants approved - \$10,000
- 11 Business Loans approved - \$800,000
- 1 Business Loan pending - \$40,000

Combined, Economic Development activities total \$996,934.

Mr. Pusey stated that in total combination, housing and economic development activities total \$4,163,134. Also to be included are administrative costs, and the purchases of three homes by the County, totaling approximately \$700,000. Therefore, total actual and anticipated expenditures is \$4.8 million. Mr. Pusey advised that \$200,000 of excess funds spent within Phase 1 will be reimbursed in Phase 3 of this grant.

Housing and Economic Recovery- \$1.1 Million (MD-14-DR Phase 2)

Phase 2 of the original \$8.6 million grant includes repairs to the Crisfield Housing Authority and a housing study for the entire county (including the municipalities). The start date for this phase was February 2, 2015. The projects must be completed by December 31, 2016. Mr. Pusey discussed current unmet needs remaining at the Crisfield Housing Authority, as well as describing the current progress of the housing study. It is anticipated that the housing and economic recovery phase will be completed long before the deadline date in December 2016.

Infrastructure - \$5,004,410 (MD-15-DR 1)

This first phase of the Infrastructure grant totals \$5,004, 410 (out of the total grant award of \$16.7 million). This funding must be spent by July 3, 2016. Mr. Pusey reported that one project is completed, and work is steadily progressing on the remaining projects. It is felt that the majority of the work will be completed in the spring of 2016, well before the July deadline. A detailed spreadsheet of the 16 Infrastructure projects was also included in Mr. Pusey's report.

Commissioner President Laird commended and thanked Mr. Pusey and all staff involved for their non-tiring efforts with the Hurricane Sandy Grant projects. A short discussion was held regarding the three homes the county owns for use as temporary housing. Currently, only one of the houses is being used. Mr. Pusey advised the Board that he would be coming back to the Board soon to discuss the available options, and determine how the county would like to proceed.

Being there was no one present wishing to speak President Laird declared the public hearing closed at 2:21 p.m.

While still present, Mr. Taylor and Mr. Pusey advised the Board that new information has recently been received regarding the Rhodes Point Project; therefore they requested to postpone the discussion on this project until next week.

Mr. Mark Konapelsky, Department of Technical and Community Services (DTCS) was asked to come forward to provide his recommendation for the Board's consideration regarding the sealed bids submitted for two Crisfield Housing Authority projects as follows; 10 Transformers & 10 Transformer Pads and 19 Double Furnace Rooms & 19 Single Furnace Rooms.

Regarding the 10 Transformers/Pads submission, it was recommended to award the bid to the lowest bidder East Coast Underground, in the amount of \$72,016.66. Therefore a motion was made by Commissioner Fisher and seconded by Commissioner Boston to award the bid as recommended to East Coast Underground for \$72,016.66. The motion carried unanimously.

Next, Mr. Konapelsky advised the Board of a change that was made regarding the furnace room bid proposal. The bid submitted by Delmarva Veteran Builders, the lowest bidder, was submitted for \$986,700; \$80,000 over budget. Due to cost coverage constraints, 9 single units were removed from the bid submission which lowered the bid amount to \$906,700. The amendment was approved by the state, and all other parties involved, including the contractor. Mr. Konapelsky explained that the units removed from the project that are not being replaced still function, and can be replaced at a later date if grant funding is available.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Fisher, it carried unanimously to award the bid regarding the 39 Double Furnace Rooms and 10 Single Furnace Rooms to Delmarva Veteran Builders in the amount of \$906,700 as recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Taylor reviewed correspondence and discussion items with the Board at this time.

Letters from Ms. Cindy Stone, DHCD relating to the Tidal Dike Study and Rhodes Point Jetty Project were reviewed. The first letter stated that DHCD will allow the county to pre-incur costs for the Tidal Dike Study, and the second explained the process that will need to be completed in order to request an exception to sole source the engineers and construction management firms relating to the Rhodes Point project.

Maryland Department of Planning requested a State Clearinghouse Review comment relating to the Tidal Dike Study regarding the southeast area of Crisfield. It was Mr. Taylor's recommendation to file a C-5 (it is consistent with our plans, programs, and objectives) response.

Therefore, upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins, and seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried unanimously to submit a C-5 response as recommended.

A letter was received from Maryland Department of Natural Resources advising that they agree that maintenance of the Pocomoke River Channel is essential to our region, and therefore they are commencing with an internal review of the county's request to use Maryland Marine Properties DNR lands as a dredged spoil placement site.

Mr. Taylor discussed the matter of a lease drafted regarding the Local Management Board (LMB) use of the premises at 8928 Sign Post Road. The non-profit organization has been on the premises since 2009, and it had been brought to the county's attention that a current lease for use of the space was not in place, as the previous agreement expired in October 2014.

After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins, and seconded by Commissioner Boston to approve a 5 year lease agreement between Somerset County and LMB, that will be considered as an 'In-Kind' payment to the LMB, as presented. Commissioner Mathies abstained; therefore the motion carried 4-0-1.

The Proclamation provided to the Crisfield High School Boys Soccer team, presented earlier in the meeting today was approved on a motion made by Commissioner Mathies, and seconded by Commissioner Boston. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jason Walsh of Wellness Farms, Chicago Illinois, requested to address the Board. Mr. Walsh officially thanked the Board for their support of his firm's application relating to medical marijuana facility they submitted recently. He noted the warm welcome that he has been receiving, and explained what the facility will bring to Somerset County if approved by the State. He also invited the Board to contact him personally with any questions or concerns they may have.

With no further business, Mr. Taylor advised the Board of the need to enter into closed session. Therefore, at 2:44 p.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins, and seconded by Commissioner Mathies, it carried unanimously 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) (3) consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto.

Upon motion made by Commissioner Boston, seconded by Commissioner Simpkins, it carried unanimously to adjourn the Open and Closed Sessions at 3:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Lory E. Ebron
Administrative Aide

Approved By:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County