



AGENDA
January 8, 2019
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
11916 Somerset Avenue
Room 111/Meeting Room
Princess Anne, MD 21853
2:00 p.m.

Appointments:

- 2:00 p.m. - Proclamation Presentation/National Mentoring Month/Robert McClure, Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- * 2:05 p.m. - Mr. Gene Adkins, Ms. Yvette Cross
 - Proposals Received/Award-Emergency Services Radio Equipment Services Upgrade
- 2:15 p.m. – Mr. Gene Adkins, Finance Director
 - Departmental Budget Letters
- * 2:25 p.m. - Mr. John Redden, Public Works Director, Eric Armbruster, Enterprise Fleet
 - Fleet Management
- * 2:55 p.m. - Mr. Gary Pusey, Planning Director
 - FEMA Application Approval/Smith Island Drainage Ditch Study
 - County Owned Temporary Hurricane Sandy Homes- Selling Process

Correspondence:

Received

- * MD Department of Planning re: State Clearing House Review/PA WWTP
- * Somerset County Local Management Board re: Appointment Request
- * Somerset County Sanitary District re: Sanitary Commission Appointments (2)

Sent

The Honorable Mary Beth Carozza and The Honorable Charles Otto re: FY19 Proposed Legislation
Mr. Joel D. Berger, Esq. re: Request for Assistance for Fees Assessed
Ms. Mary Anne Peterman re: Agricultural Reconciliation Board Reappointment

Discussion:

- * 1. Surplus Property Request to purchase (4)
- * 2. Pauper Burial Assistance Request

- * **3:15 p.m. – Closed Session, Mr. Ralph Taylor, Mr. John Redden**
Authority of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland § 3-305 (b)(3) consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related to the acquisition; and (b)(1)the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction.

- * **3:45 p.m. Re-enter Open Session- Approval needed to enter into Roads Board Special Session – Need for Closed Session, Ralph D. Taylor, Woody Barnes**
Authority of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland § 3-305 (b)(1)the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction.

- * Denotes Action Item

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
January 8, 2019

At 2:00 p.m., President Mathies called the Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County to open in Regular Session. Present for the meeting were Commissioner President Craig N. Mathies, Sr., Commissioner Vice President Charles Laird, Commissioner Rex Simpkins, Commissioner Randy Laird and Commissioner Eldon Willing.

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

President Mathies asked Commissioner Willing to lead those present in repeating the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Willing first read a passage from the Bible; after which the Lord's Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Closed Session Summary Report January 8, 2019

On January 8, 2019, at 2:43 p.m. until 3:59 p.m., at 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird, it carried 5-0 to enter into Closed Session by Authority of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland §3-305 (b)(1) the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction; and (3) consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related to the acquisition.

Present for the Closed Session Meeting were President Craig N. Mathies Sr., Vice President Charles Laird, Commissioner Rex Simpkins, Commissioner Randy Laird, and Commissioner Eldon Willing.

Also present were County Administrator Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Aide Lory Ebron, Public Works Director John Redden, and Director of Maintenance and Solid Waste Charles Cavanaugh. Topics discussed were: (1) Two probationary to permanent employee status changes (2) Landfill Expansion Update/Options. Actions taken during closed session: (1) Moved two employees from probationary to permanent employee status (2) Approval to obtain quote for wetland delineation.

Meeting minutes were presented for approval regarding the Commissioner Special Session and Closed Session meetings held on December 18, 2018. Commissioner Simpkins made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Robert McClure, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, came forward at this time to accept a proclamation declaring January 2019 as “National Mentoring Month”.

Mr. Gene Adkins, Finance Director and Ms. Yvette Cross, Emergency Services Director came forward to present financing proposals received regarding the Emergency Services Radio Equipment Services Upgrade Project. Mr. Adkins first reviewed the process as it has occurred to date, which included a public hearing that was held on November 27, 2018. No comments were received following the public hearing. Six banks were provided with a Request for Proposal and were asked to provide two options (1) periodic draws until completion then converted to a permanent loan and (2) borrow the entire amount upfront (placed into an escrow account) at a fixed rate. Mr. Adkins advised he received proposals from three banks (Bank of America, Signature Bank and M & T Bank) and provided a spreadsheet containing all proposals for comparison purposes. The best proposal (lowest rate) received was from Bank of America who offered the following options:

Option 1: Variable rate (currently 2.68% - 2.75%) locked for 1 year/fixed rate unknown until completion of project in 1 year.

Option 2: (1) 2.6958% for a 7 year loan fixed rate/quarterly payment \$157,239.25
(2) 2.7661% for a 10 year loan fixed rate/quarterly payment \$114,810.48

Mr. Adkins made the recommendation to award the proposal to Bank of America, at the 10 year fixed rate of 2.7661%. He noted that the payment schedule would be easier on the budget, and extra payments can be made if so desired.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to award the bid to Bank of America, Option 2, for the 10-year term option at 2.7661%. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Ms. Cross left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Adkins then presented the State of Maryland Triennial Property Assessment report. He noted that the assessment performed for the central area of the county resulted in a positive increase of 0.9%, however it was well below the state average of 9.1%.

Next, he discussed the budgetary process as it has been handled in the past, noting that for the past three years, Department Directors have been requested to “hold the line”, and study their budgets to look for ways to decrease spending. Mr. Adkins complimented Department Heads for their diligence in meeting the request. Following the discussion, the Board was in consensus to once again, ask all Department Directors to maintain their current budget allowance and find ways to reduce their budgeted balance.

Before leaving, Mr. Adkins advised the Board that the annual audit has been completed, and will be presented at the next scheduled Commissioner's meeting to be held in two weeks.

Public Works Director John Redden and Mr. Eric Armbruster, Enterprise Fleet Management came forward at this time.

Mr. Redden explained that Mr. Armbruster, Account Executive, Enterprise Fleet Management, has come to the meeting today to provide more accurate information regarding the county's vehicle fleet. He noted the age of the county's fleet of vehicles, and the fact that employees don't trust many of the county vehicles to use for longer trips.

Mr. Armbruster thanked the Board for the appointment today. He first discussed the age of the county's fleet, noting that older vehicles have higher fuel and maintenance costs and can be unreliable. He discussed other counties that have just recently obtained Fleet Services. He explained how their Fleet Services would work, and the cost savings of approximately \$870,941 over the 10-year period for the County and Sheriff's Office fleets using a Fleet Service program. The length of time the other county references have been in the program, changes that can be made to the plan if needed, warranties, wear and tear to the vehicles, early termination penalties and non-compete clauses were also discussed. Mr. Redden and Mr. Armbruster left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Gary Pusey, Department of Technical and Community Services Director, came forward to request approval to submit a grant application for the Smith Island Implementation of a Drainage Study (as funding was previously awarded to perform the study). He explained that the Smith Island Vision Plan, adopted by the County Commissioners on May 31, 2016 included a recommendation to improve Smith Island's drainage system to minimize local flooding. This study identified seven projects that it felt would improve drainage on Smith Island, totaling more than \$900,000. A small DNR grant was applied for recently in the amount of \$75,000 to cover the least expensive project; but was not approved. Another grant opportunity through FEMA, with a larger pool of funding, was found by Smith Island United representatives who approached the county via Mr. Pusey to inquire if the county would be interested in applying for these funds. Mr. Pusey noted that the only cost to the county would be staff time utilized to administer the grant, if it is approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to approve the request to apply for a FEMA grant regarding the Implementation of the Smith Island Drainage Study performed. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Dee Savarese was asked to come forward at this time to present the process developed in joint effort with the State regarding the sale of the homes purchased as temporary housing to assist with Disaster Recovery. Mr. Pusey explained that the three homes were purchased using Sandy funding to house displaced families while their homes were being replaced. Twenty-five new homes have been constructed and all projects are completed; therefore there is no longer a need for temporary housing. During a previous meeting, the decision was made to develop the process and move forward with selling the three homes.

Commissioner Randy Laird left the meeting at this time.

Appraisals have been performed, and the amounts were discussed. It was noted that any homebuyer must be low-moderate income and any monies collected through the sale will be recycled back into the county for programs such as the CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program to assist other low-income homeowners. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Board was in consensus to accept the process as presented, and move forward with the selling of the three temporary housing homes.

Commissioner Randy Laird returned to the meeting at this time.

Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence and discussion items.

The Maryland Department of Planning has requested a clearinghouse review of the Princess Anne Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade (MD20181212-0954). This project will upgrade the existing submersible mixers at the equalization basins for the Princess Anne Wastewater Treatment Plant and will reduce energy consumption by providing more efficient equipment. Mr. Taylor recommended a C-5 response code (the project is consistent with plans, programs and objectives).

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins to designate a C-5 response code for Princess Anne Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade/Clearinghouse Review Project MD20181212-0954. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

A request was received from Ms. Sheila Warner, Chairman Somerset County Local Management Board, Inc. (LMB), to appoint Ms. Donna Coulbourne to the LMB Board of Directors.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to appoint Ms. Coulbourne to serve on the LMB Board of Directors. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. President Mathies abstained; therefore the motion carried 4-0-1.

Mr. Taylor advised that effective January 1, 2019, the Somerset County Sanitary District for the Westover area became a stand-alone district. Approval is needed to appoint the Reverend Charles Bagley to serve the Westover District.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins to appoint Reverend Bagley to serve as a member of the Somerset County Sanitary District/Westover District for a 6-year term. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion. President Mathies abstained; therefore the motion carried 4-0-1.

A letter was received from Sanitary District Commission Chairman Mr. Adam Riggins to appoint Ms. Drenda Hall as a member of the Sanitary Commission to serve the Princess Anne District, filling the remaining term of Reverend Bagley.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Willing, it carried unanimously to appoint Ms. Drenda Hall to fill the remaining term of Reverend Bagley for the Princess Anne District ending February 28, 2021. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

A request to purchase surplus properties at half-deed price was presented by Mr. Wayne Langston, Coast2Coast Group LLC for the following properties:

- 07-126247 (Map 0101 Parcel 1092) \$200.00 plus closing costs
- 12-002602 (Map 0079 Parcel 0028) \$200.00 plus closing costs
- 12-009011 (Map 0072 Parcel 0708) \$200.00 plus closing costs
- 14-004173 (Map 0028 Parcel 0173) \$200.00 plus closing costs

It was noted that all four offers were slightly below the half-deed price.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to accept the offers as presented. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Pauper burial assistance was requested from the family of Mr. Maurice F. Barnes to assist with a simple cremation service.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird, a payment was approved in the amount of \$250.00 to assist with Mr. Barnes cremation. President Mathies abstained; therefore the motion carried 4-0-1.

Ms. Terry Harman, 30821 Eden Allen Road asked to address the Board. Ms. Harman advised she had recently spoken by phone with Commissioner Simpkins and for the last couple of years the Roads Department crews, regarding trash issues in her community, as well as on various county roads and the bypass. Ms. Harman stated that the lack of cleanup is terrible and the area was better taken care of when she first moved here 13 years ago. She mentioned the discussion held earlier regarding property assessments and questioned if we take better care of our communities and get people involved, property values may go up. She questioned what the next step, or beginning would be. Roads Director Woody Barnes was in the audience and briefly discussed the newly initiated Adopt a Road Program/Keep Somerset Beautiful which has recently kicked off and offered to provide more information if she would like to call him directly. The discussion continued, and briefly discussed were the county crew versus state crews working on the various roads, the amount of rainfall recently, bringing up trash within the ditches, as well as the reduction of the use of inmate labor due to state cutbacks and staffing shortages. It was noted that the use of inmates to clean up roadside trash is being put back into use more recently. In addition, Ms. Harman was asked that if she witnesses littering to contact authorities if possible so that those committing the offense can be held responsible.

Ms. Harman next asked to discuss the issue of abandoned properties, noting that there are nine property's on her road alone that appear to have been abandoned. She discussed the condition of one property in particular that appears to be used as a dump. She has been in contact with Mr. Konapelsky, DTCS for several months, who stated he understands, but has been told the county does not have the funding to clean up these properties. Ms. Harman understands that this particular property on Eden Allen Road has been taken by the county due to non-payment of taxes and was told it will be cleaned up soon, however she asked when the other properties would be addressed. With this being said Ms. Harman was asked to provide a list of the properties she is referring to. It was also noted that the county is limited in its authority as to what actions can be taken.

President Mathies stated his agreement with Ms. Harman, noting he has seen first-hand what she is referring to and agrees that himself and the other commissioners would like to make those adjustments to satisfy not only her, but make the county more attractive. He also respectfully asked in the essence of time, that Ms. Harmon close her comments within five minutes, as there is other additional business that must be attended to. With this request, Ms. Harman stated that Mr. Miller would like to address the Board as well, but she intends on attending future meetings to discuss her concerns further.

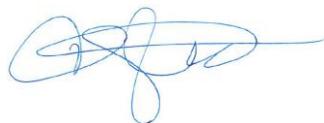
Mr. William Miller, 30897 Eden Allen Road stepped forward. He stated that there are trees in the ditches, and erosion is taking place. The residents pay a ditch tax, but were told that there is no money in the ditch account to address his complaint. Mr. Miller feels that the ditches need to be cleared out so that water can drain out, noting that his back yard is flooded. It was noted that Barkley Branch PDA resides over those ditches; and Mr. Taylor advised that he would follow up with the association to share Mr. Millers concerns/request. Mr. Miller also expressed his concern regarding the burning of plastic by a resident, which happens in the spring and fall. He has been told that it is illegal to burn plastic, and the burning is a violation of the Open Air Act. The resident has been approached about the burning; but say they do not understand English. The Sheriff's Office has been called out while burning was going on as well. Mr. Taylor advised he would follow up on both issues. Mr. Miller stated that the burning issue is his first concern for health reasons.

With no further business, at 2:43 p.m. the Board was advised of the need to enter Closed Session by Authority of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland Section Subtitle 3-305 (b) (1) the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction; and (3) consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related to the acquisition.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird, the Board entered into Closed Session. The motion carried unanimously.

The Commissioner, Roads Board Special Session and Closed Session meetings adjourned at 4:05 p.m. upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird. The motion carried 5-0.

Approved by:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:



Lory E. Ebron
Executive Aide