

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY  
SPECIAL SESSION  
TUESDAY OCTOBER 20, 2020

At 2:20 p.m., the Board of Somerset County Commissioners met in Special Session with Commissioner President Craig Mathies, Sr., Commissioner Vice President Charles Laird, Commissioner Randy Laird, and Commissioner Eldon Willing. Commissioner Rex Simpkins was not present for today's meeting.

Also in attendance were County Administrator-Clerk Ralph D. Taylor and Executive Secretary Kimberly Lopez.

**Closed Session Summary Report for October 20, 2020**

On October 20, 2020, from 2:50 p.m. until 4:01 p.m., at 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird, it carried 5-0 to enter into Closed Session by Authority of State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, 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; (7) consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

Present for the Closed Session Meeting were President Craig N. Mathies, Sr., Vice President Charles Laird, Commissioner Randy Laird, Commissioner Rex Simpkins, and Commissioner Eldon Willing. Also present were County Administrator Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Secretary Kimberly Lopez, Attorney Robin Cockey, County Attorney Kirk Simpkins, Director of Technical and Community Services Gary Pusey, Director of Solid Waste and Maintenance Charles Cavanaugh, and Director of Human Resources Morena Corbin. Topics discussed were: (1) Personnel; Actions taken: Hire Zoning Specialist and MEO I, Probation and (2) Legal; Actions taken: Confidential.

---

With the meeting ahead of schedule, Mr. Taylor presented received correspondence. A letter was received from Ms. Kelly Schultz, Secretary of Maryland Department of Commerce, advising the approval of the Princess Anne Enterprise Zone Expansion.

A letter was received from Judge Daniel Powell clarifying that the requested jury compensation pay increase (approved by the Commissioners) is only temporary to compensate the jurors for their service during the COVID-19 State of Emergency. However, Judge Powell advised

that, per communications with the State, the State will only reimburse fifteen dollars. Therefore, the County is responsible for the additional compensation, of which can be covered through the CARES Act monies allotted to the County for COVID-19.

Under discussion, Mr. Taylor advised that Mr. Don Bibb, Director of the Crisfield Housing Authority, has put in a request for the acquisition of blighted properties located in Crisfield, to include:

- 308 West Chesapeake Ave
- 329 Tyler Street
- 201 N Third Street
- 131 Maple Street
- 9 N First Street

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Charles Laird to approve the sale of the above mentioned properties to HUD (pending their grant approval for funds). This motion carried 5-0.

Next, Mr. Taylor advised a request from Clear Channel regarding their billboard lease for the Board to consider lowering their dues from \$1,250.00 to \$750 for a two year period, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Simpkins to deny Clear Channel's request to lower their billboard lease dues from \$1,250.00 to \$750 for a two year period. This motion carried 5-0.

President Mathies stepped out of the meeting room for a brief moment and then returned.

Mr. John Redden and Mr. Clint Sterling were now before the Board to request the approval of Resolution ## for the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan for Pedestrian Facilities. Mr. Redden advised that no public comments were received following the public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Willing to approve Resolution ## for the Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan for Pedestrian Facilities. This motion carried 5-0.

Next, Mr. Redden requested a change order (#7) approval for the Hiker/Biker Path, advising that plants planned for the wetland/stormwater areas have been removed from the plans due to the amount of water settling in those areas and a zero change for survival for the plants. This change order will bring a cost savings of \$14,804.00 for the project.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Willing to approve change order #7 for the Hiker/Biker Path. This motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Sterling left the meeting.

Mr. Charles Cavanaugh joined Mr. Redden.

The Board discussed the request from the Health Department for a storage shed (to house PPE Supplies) in the amount of \$13,875.00. This would be funded through the CARES Act.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Laird to approve the purchase of a storage shed for the Health Department using CARES Act funds. This motion carried 5-0.

Next, Mr. Cavanaugh requested the approval for change order #2 for the Burgess Museum, advising that due to a drain field discovered beneath the building, the gutters would need to be rerouted off of the building. The cost for this, per the contractor, is \$10,960.90; which completes the contingency money and the built-in additional funds in the contract (bringing the project \$588 over in change orders).

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird to approve change order #2 for the Burgess Museum Project. This motion carried 5-0.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Heron Boyce approached the podium and addressed the Board regarding regulations enforced by the County that are requiring him to remove artwork and quotes from the fence in his yard. Mr. Boyce further stated that he is feeling pressured and would like to reach a common ground with his neighbors and the County as to what is permissible in order to avoid having his artwork destroyed.

President Mathies advised that the Board will look into Mr. Boyce's concerns and search for a solution that will satisfy all parties.

The Board was advised for the need of a Closed Session.

Therefore, on a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird that carried 5-0, the Board entered into Closed Session by Authority of State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, 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 (7) consult with counsel to obtain legal advice at 2:50 p.m.

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly Lopez' in a cursive style.

Kimberly Lopez  
Executive Secretary