

Due to State regulations with COVID-19, social distancing will be observed during the meeting and members of the public in attendance must wear a face mask. Live audio of the meeting will be available by clicking on the link provided on the County's website, or by entering this web address in your internet address bar: http://mixlr.com/somerset_county_commissioners/ Minutes will be made available to the public via the County's website upon approval. We thank you for your cooperation during this time.



AGENDA
December 22, 2020
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. – Public Hearing- Kari's Law/Proposed Ordinance
 - Ms. Yvette Cross, Emergency Services
- * 2:10 p.m. – Bid Opening – Blight Removal
 - Mr. Gary Pusey, DTCS
- * 2:20 p.m. – CDBG Emergency Rental Assistance Grant
 - Mr. Gary Pusey, DTCS
- * 2:25 p.m. - Sanitary District Loan Resolution/\$170,000 & \$22,618
 - Mr. Tony Stockus, Ms. Jennie Marshall
- * 2:35 p.m. – Somerset County Hotel Relief Grant/\$68,316
 - Mr. John Redden, County Engineer, and Mr. Danny Thompson, EDC
- * 2:40 p.m. - Re-allocation of Operating Expenses/IT Department
 - Mr. Chris Woodward

Correspondence:

Received

- * Fire Chiefs of Somerset County re: LOSAP Points for Year 2020
- Comcast re: Changes to Xfinity Lineup
- Senator Johnny Ray Salling, re: Tax Exemption for Veterans

Sent

Mr. Kevin Baynes, Director re: Letter of Support/Smith Island Community Legacy Grant

Discussion:

- * 1. Pauper Burial Assistance Request

Public Comments: Members of the audience who have signed up to address the Board will be permitted to do so at this time and allotted 5 minutes.

- * **2:45 p.m. - Closed Session-** Mr. Ralph Taylor, Ms. Morena Corbin, Mr. John Redden
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
December 22, 2020

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

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 Devotion and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Closed Session Summary Report

On December 22, 2020, from 2:40 p.m. until 2:58 p.m., at 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, upon a motion made by Commissioner Randy Laird, and seconded by Vice President Charles 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.

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

Also present were County Administrator Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Aide Lory Ebron, HR Director Morena Corbin, County Engineer John Redden and Director of Community and Technical Services Gary Pusey

Topics discussed: (1) Office Assistant II Position (2) Zoning Nuisance Enforcement Position (3) Vacation Leave Policy. Actions taken during closed session: (1) Approval to hire Office Assistant II (2) Approval to re-advertise Zoning Nuisance Enforcement Officer if needed (3) Approval to waive handbook regulation.

Minutes from the Commissioner Special and Closed Session meetings held on December 1, 2020, Commissioner and Closed meetings on December 8, 2020 and the Commissioner Special Session and Closed Session meetings held on December 15, 2020, were approved as presented

upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Willing. Commissioner Simpkins abstained regarding the December 1, 2020 meetings; therefore, the motion carried 5-0 for December 15th and 8th, 2020 and 4-0-1 for December 1st, 2020.

Ms. Yvette Cross came forward. President Mathies called the Public Hearing open regarding enforcement of Kari's Law. County Administrator Doug Taylor read the notice of public hearing into record as follows:

“The Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County will hold a Public Hearing on:

Tuesday, December 22, 2020 at 2:00 P.M.
Somerset County Commissioners Meeting Room
Room 111
Somerset County Office Complex
11916 Somerset Avenue
Princess Anne, Maryland

In accordance with Maryland Public Safety Code Section 1-314, effective October 1, 2020 a county or municipality is responsible for enforcing Section 1.314 (b) (Kari's Law).

FAIR SUMMARY

The Somerset County Commissioners are proposing an Ordinance enforcing Kari's Law, that requires direct 911 dialing and notification capabilities in multi-line telephone systems (MLTS), which are typically found in enterprises such as office buildings, campuses, and hotels.

The public is invited to attend and offer comment on the proposed ordinance. For a copy of the proposed ordinance, please contact the Somerset County Commissioners Office, 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, Princess Anne, Maryland 21853 (410-651-0320), during regular business hours, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
Ralph D. Taylor, County Administrator”

Ms. Cross explained that the passage of the ordinance will only apply to multi-line phone systems installed or manufactured after February 2020. Businesses with multi-line phone systems before the February 2020 date do not need to comply; however, Ms. Cross explained that her office will be meeting with those businesses in January, and recommending they provide signage near their phone system that explains how to dial out to 911 on their phone system for customers and employees. Additionally, they will be asked to consider upgrading their phone system to be compliant. Ms. Cross explained that an additional advantage of upgrading the system allows for the caller to be identified where they are when making the call, something that is not available with the old multi-line systems.

President Mathies asked if there were any opponents present to speak. There were none. He then asked if there were any proponents present to speak. There were none. It was noted that public comment would be taken for 10 days, until January 4, 2021 (due to the holiday). The Public Hearing closed at 2:08 p.m.

Mr. Gary Pusey came forward to accept sealed bids received regarding the Blight Removal Project. Bids received for the three (3) projects are as follows:

Contractor	4060 Back Shelltown Road	8424 Greenhill Lane	6024 Crisfield Highway
Miller Landservices	\$6,510.00	\$6,142.50	\$6,772.50
Go Away Acres	No Bid	\$8,950.00	\$8,950.00
Ken Build	\$7,300.00	\$6,225.00	\$5,670.00
Swift's Seasonal	\$4,895.00	\$6,250.00	\$5,850.00
Site Services	\$14,500.00	\$14,500.00	\$18,500.00
RAD Construction	\$13,230.00	\$9,765.00	\$12,075.00

Mr. Pusey requested to review the bids, and return with a recommendation.

Next, Mr. Pusey presented the Maryland Community Development Block Grant Program, COVID-Round 2 Grant Agreement. He explained that this is the third round of funding the County has received for emergency rental assistance. A Public Hearing for this grant funding was held on September 15, 2020, and approved in the amount of \$210,00 (includes administrative costs) on September 29, 2020. Previous funding for COVID Emergency Rental Assistance received was noted as \$100,000 and \$50,000. Mr. Pusey then requested approval for the President's signature on the grant agreement as presented.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to authorize President Mathies to sign the COVID – Round 2 Grant Agreement. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Tony Stockus and Ms. Jennie Marshall, Somerset County Sanitary District, came forward to present borrowing resolutions for the Boards consideration and approval. He explained that this routine process will authorize borrowing from Hebron Bank for a vehicle loan in the amount of \$22,618 to purchase a new truck for the plant. Mr. Stockus noted the need to upgrade the fleet from a safety perspective, advising that they are trying to upgrade slowly. Additionally, he explained that \$170,000 will be borrowed to go towards the total cost of \$270,000 to paint the

Princess Anne Water Tower, located at the Industrial Park. He advised that the goal is to paint one tower a year, with the Irving Street and then Fairmount towers to follow next.

Mr. Gene Adkins, Finance Director advised the borrowing cap will not be affected, and that the County will be guaranteeing the loan.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to approve the loan resolutions as presented for the Sanitary District. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. John Redden, County Engineer and Mr. Danny Thompson, Economic Development came forward to present additional funding received from the Governor's Office for COVID-19 Economic Relief, providing direct assistance to local restaurants and hotels. Mr. Redden explained that on December 17, 2020, the Maryland Department of Commerce notified of additional funding of the Restaurant Relief Fund (\$68,316) and new funding of the Hotel Relief Fund (\$33,986). This funding is intended to promote and encourage stabilization within the hospitality and restaurant industries. The county will enter into a modified Recipient Agreement and funds must be disbursed by March 31, 2021.

Commissioner Simpkins stepped out of the meeting at this time.

Mr. Redden continued, explaining that a subrecipient agreement will be prepared and executed by the business owner and the Economic Development Director. Both forms will be reviewed by the County Attorney. As was done with previous funding, an application package will be required that will include a Grantee Agreement, application, demographics form and W-9 and will be available thru the Economic Development office. During the discussion it was decided that the program will be advertised. Applications will be accepted until March 16, 2021. Any unused funds must be returned to the state.

Commissioner Simpkins returned to the meeting at this time.

The Board discussed eligibility for the restaurant funding and the Board was in consensus to have this funding eligibility remain the same as it was handled previously. Mr. Thompson advised that previous restaurant funding resulted in twenty-six (26) county entities who were approved for funding, and disbursement was broken down as 1/3 south county, 1/3 north county and 1/3 distribution in the remaining county areas. President Mathies thanked Mr. Redden and Mr. Thompson for their hard work and diligence.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to authorize the President's signature on the Grant Agreement with the Department of Commerce for restaurant and hotel funding assistance as presented. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Chris Woodward, IT Director and Mr. Gene Adkins, Finance Director, came forward to request approval to re-allocate funds within the current IT Budget to purchase a security product called Crowd Strike. This new security software will make the IT Department aware, via alerts, of any malicious activity on any county device. Cost is \$12,000 per year, and will be included within next year's IT Budget. It was noted that this is the same software used by the Federal Government. Board approval is required as it exceeds the Department Head threshold amount.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to authorize Mr. Woodward to proceed in purchasing Crowd Strike. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence and discussion items.

A request was received from the Fire Chiefs of Somerset County asking approval to add twenty-five (25) LOSAP points to members who had not obtained the required 50 points due to the COVID-19 pandemic slowing the response of members.

Commissioner Simpkins made a motion to add 25 LOSAP points to members as requested. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. Commissioner Randy Laird abstained; therefore, the motion carried 4-0-1.

The Board was advised of letter received from Senator Johnny Ray Salling, advising of a bill passed last session that allows tax credits to veterans that are less than 100% disabled (Ch. 630, 2020). The Board had questions, and requested to review the information in more detail before proceeding.

A pauper burial assistance request was received from the family of Ms. Brenda J. Elmore so that a small funeral can be provided. Ms. Elmore, a Somerset County resident, did not have life insurance.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to approve assistance in the amount of \$250.00 to assist Ms. Elmore's family for a small funeral. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

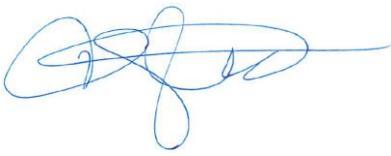
With no further business, at 2:40 p.m., the Board was advised of the need to enter into Closed Session. Therefore, upon a motion made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Charles Laird, the Board entered into Closed Session by Authority of the General

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.

The motion carried 5-0.

The Commissioner and Closed Session meetings were adjourned at 2:58 p.m., upon a motion made by Commissioner Rex Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Eldon Willing. The motion carried 5-0.

Approved by:



Board of County Commissioners
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:



Lory E. Ebron
Executive Aide