

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/](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**  
**August 18, 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. – Ms. Nicole Sterling, Local Management Board
  - Community Partnership Agreement
- \* 2:10 p.m. - Ms. Julie Widdowson, Tourism
  - Maryland Office of Tourism Grant
- \* 2:15 p.m. - Mr. Tony Stockus, Ms. Starr Mister, Sanitary District
  - USDA Resolution for Grant Funding/Smith Island Clean Water Project
- 2:20 p.m. - Mr. Don Bibb, Housing Authority of Crisfield

**Correspondence:**

**Sent**

Mr. Gary Pusey, DTCS re: Board of Zoning Appeals Reappointments (2)  
Ms. Elsie Robinson re: Surplus Property Purchase  
Mr. Lee Brown re: Surplus Property Purchase

**Discussion:**

- \* 1. Surplus Property Offer (1)

**Public Comments: Five Minute Time Limit**

- \* **3:00 p.m. - Closed Session-** Mr. Ralph Taylor, Ms. Yvette Cross, Ms. Morena Corbin, Mr. Gene Adkins, Mr. Scott Sturgis, Mr. Charles Cavanaugh

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  
August 18, 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 August 18, 2020, from 2:39 p.m. (following a brief recess) until 3:16 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 unanimously 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 Mr. Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Aide Ms. Lory Ebron, HR Director, Ms. Morena Corbin, Emergency Services Director Ms. Yvette Cross, Finance Director Mr. Gene Adkins, Tax Supervisor Mr. Will Dryden, Dog Control Supervisor Mr. Scott Sturgis and Director of Solid Waste and Maintenance Mr. Charles Cavanaugh. Topics discussed: (1) Probationary to Permanent employee status' (2) Permission to allow employee to work remotely (3) Hiring for Dog Control Officer I, Tax Collection Clerk I. Actions taken during closed session: (1) Approval to move employees from probationary to permanent employee status (2) Approval to allow employee to work remotely (3) Approval to hire Dog Control Officer I and Tax Collection Clerk I.

---

Minutes from the Commissioner Special Session and Closed Session meetings held on August 11, 2020, were approved as presented upon a motion made by Commissioner Rex Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Eldon Willing. The motion carried 5-0.

Ms. Nicole Sterling, Somerset County Local Management Board came forward to present the FY19-20 Community Partnership Agreement (CPA). Ms. Sterling explained that the grant award, for \$339,755.00 will be used as follows:

- SCOAP - \$102,890 (Tri-Community Mediation, FACES, Crisfield Police, Princess Anne Police, Sheriff, Maryland State Police, ECI, Somerset County Public Schools
- CARES- \$35,000 (Maryland State Police, Princess Anne Police, Natural Resources Police
- PARENTING - \$32,680 (Healthy Families)
- SUSTAINABLE SOMERSET - \$29,200 (FACES, Somerset County Public Schools, Maryland State Police, Natural Resource Police)
- BOARD SUPPORT - \$88,505
- LCT COORDINATOR - \$51,480 (Salary)

Ms. Sterling then requested the approval for the Presidents signature on the grant submitted.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to authorize President Mathies to sign the CPA as presented. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

Next, Ms. Julie Widdowson, Tourism Director, came forward to present the FY21 Destination Marketing Organization Grant Agreement. The grant, for \$29,377, is slightly higher than last year, and is used for advertising tourism in Somerset County.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Charles Laird to approve the Presidents signature on the FY21 Destination Marketing Organization Grant Agreement. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Tony Stockus, Somerset County Sanitary District came forward to present a \$83,000 loan requirement, via resolution, to get a \$3 Million USDA grant. This loan will be used towards the pump stations relating to the Smith Island Clean Water Project. The resolution is a USDA loan requirement. Mr. Stockus noted that the Waste Water Plant should be in place in early 2021.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to proceed with the resolution authorizing the bond issuance and sale in the amount of \$83,000. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0. Mr. Taylor added that Finance Director Gene Adkins has reviewed the resolution and advised the amount is within borrowing limitations.

Mr. Don Bibb, Crisfield Housing Authority came forward at this time. Joining him in the audience was Deputy Director Carlene Phoenix. Mr. Bibb appreciated the opportunity to speak

with the Board today, noting that Talbot County is his home base, but he is also involved with the Wicomico Housing Authority, and beginning a year ago, the Crisfield Housing Authority. He explained that HUD is considering the “repositioning of assets” at the current Crisfield location (involving 50 units initially) due to flood plain and rezoning which has occurred. He discussed the meeting held with City officials last week and described similar successful projects performed in Salisbury whereby blighted homes were replaced with new ones. His purpose for this meeting is to talk, and he noted the importance of partnerships to accomplish these goals. He said the repositioning of assets creates a better community for our residents, and gives residents pride. He explained that these first 50 units will be the test point to see if the program will work for the remaining units. He explained that if the county has land that would be good for the relocation effort, granting it would be ideal, noting that the properties will be added back into the tax base. He also discussed working with the City regarding blighted properties to build new homes for first time homebuyers that are extremely affordable and will bring up the statute in the neighborhoods. He added that this may be the county’s solution to blighted properties; but partnerships will be needed to get it accomplished.

Commissioner Randy Laird questioned a statement he had heard in that some of the current residents are paying as much as \$900 rent at the current Crisfield facility; probably higher than some mortgage payments. Mr. Bibb explained that the statement is true, and explained how the rent payment is based on salary income. He also noted that the residents stay, as they become comfortable and feel safer knowing they have the protection of rent being paid if they lose their job or have a loss of income because their rent will be adjusted. Commissioner Laird also asked for an explanation of how this program will increase the tax base. Mr. Bibb explained the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) agreement. He also felt that the cleaning up of these neighborhoods will clean up some of the crime as well. Hurricane Sandy funding that was allotted to the Housing Authority was also discussed; and it was noted that the damaged units were only repaired and not raised.

President Mathies questioned relocation, and the lack of transportation available in some of our county’s remote locations which would be a hardship for the residents. Mr. Bibb advised that transportation availability is considered when looking for relocation areas. President Mathies complimented Mr. Bibb on the fantastic job being done in Wicomico County, noting he has seen

the transformation in the mind set of individuals with the rebuilding of those blighted properties, and the pride they have with the new homes.

Mr. Bibb stated that he is here to partner with Somerset County and he closed his comments by noting that land is a big part of the acquisition, and that this could be a win-win for everybody.

Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence and discussion items. Commissioner Simpkins briefly left the meeting.

Letters were sent to Mr. Gary Pusey advising of the reappointment of Mr. Brian Laird and Mr. Isaac Ballard to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Ms. Elsie Robinson and Mr. Lee Brown were sent letters advising of the Boards approval to approve their requests to purchase surplus properties.

Mr. Taylor next presented a request to purchase surplus property from Ms. Shelley Johnson regarding Account No. 02-022141 (27700 Oriole Road) for \$1,258.00 plus closing costs. The 10% deposit was made.

A motion was made by Commissioner Willing to approve the sale of Account No. 02-022141 for \$1,258.00. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Commissioner Simpkins returned to the meeting at this time.

President Mathies then proceeded with public comment. Mr. Taylor advised that Mr. Robert McIntyre phoned in a public comment for today's meeting, as he was unable to attend in person. Mr. Taylor read his questions for the Somerset County Sanitary District into record as follows:

- In regards to the Smith Island Clean Water Project, he would like to know if the State and Federal Funding has been guaranteed through the COVID-19 pandemic
- In regards to the Fairmount Wastewater Project, he would like to know how that project is coming along and is the funding okay
- He would like to know how/if the COVID-19 pandemic has affected either of these projects, and if there is any projected cost overrun due to the effects of the pandemic

Mr. Taylor advised that he had forwarded Mr. McIntyre's questions to Ms. Starr Mister, Sanitary District for a response at 12:15 pm on 8-18-20.

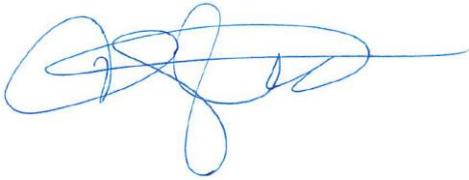
With no further business, at 2:36 p.m., the Board was advised of the need to enter into Closed Session. Therefore, upon a motion made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Charles Laird, the Board entered into Closed Session by Authority of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated 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 3:16 p.m., upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird 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