

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**  
**September 15, 2020**  
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**FOR SOMERSET COUNTY**  
**11916 Somerset Avenue**  
**Room 111/Meeting Room**  
**Princess Anne, MD 21853**  
**2:00 p.m.**

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**Service Award Appreciations:**

- Patti S. Renshaw – 30 Years
- John L. Somers – 25 Years
- Josette Grangier – 20 Years

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**Appointments:**

2:00 p.m. - **Public Hearing**/Community Development Block Grant Program/COVID Funding Round 2

2:20 p.m. – Mr. James Riley, Mr. Jerry Boston, Board of Elections  
- Election Update

2:30 p.m. - Mr. Clint Sterling, Director  
- Recreation and Parks COVID-19 Plan

\* 2:40 p.m. - Mr. Woody Barnes, Roads Director  
- Crisfield County Dock Improvement- Contract Award

\* 2:50 p.m. - Mr. John Redden, County Engineer  
- Storm Management Plan/Ordinance Approval  
- CARES Grant Funding

**Correspondence:**

**Sent**

The Honorable Daniel W. Powell re: Jury Duty Compensation Pay Increase

Mayor Barry Dize re: Waiver of Somerset County Landfill Tipping Fees

Dr. John B. Gaddis re: Final Inter-Category Budget Transfers FY20

Mr. Gary Pusey re: Housing Review Board Reappointment

- \* Housing Board of Review Vacancies (2)

**Discussion:**

- \* 1. Request for Proclamation

**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.

- \* **3:15 p.m. - Closed Session-** Mr. Ralph Taylor, Kirk Simpkins

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 (8) consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

- \* Denotes Action Item

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY  
September 15, 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 September 15, 2020, from 2:53 p.m. (following a brief recess) until 3:30 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; and (8) consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation.

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, Attorney Kirk Simpkins, HR Director, Ms. Morena Corbin, Emergency Services Director Ms. Yvette Cross. Topics discussed: (1) Pending Litigation (2) Consult with Counsel (3) Probationary to Permanent Employee status (4) Personnel Matters (5) Hiring of PT GIS Coordinator. Actions taken during closed session: (1) Approval to move probationary employee to permanent status.

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

upon a motion made by Commissioner Rex Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Eldon Willing. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Taylor first asked three employees to come forward in recognition of their many years of service to the County; Ms. Josette Grangier, for 20 years of service, Mr. John L. Somers for 25 years of service and Ms. Patti Renshaw, for 30 years of service. The Board expressed their appreciation for their years of dedicated service.

Mr. Gary Pusey, Ms. Ashley Bedsworth, and Mr. Marcus Murray, Department of Technical and Community Services, came forward.

At 2:06 p.m., President Mathies declared a public hearing open to obtain the views of citizens on community development and housing needs being considered regarding funds to be awarded under the CARES Act. Mr. Taylor read the notice of public hearing into record as follows:

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR SOMERSET COUNTY  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM – COVID FUNDING

Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 2 P.M.  
County Commissioners' Meeting Room, Room 111, 11916 Somerset Avenue  
Princess Anne, Maryland

The Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County will conduct a Public Hearing to obtain the views of citizens on community development and housing needs to be considered for submission of an application to the Maryland Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) for funds awarded through the federal CARES Act. Funds must be used to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus.

Citizens will have the opportunity to discuss proposed projects and to provide input on other needs to be considered. The hearing will be held at 2 p.m. in the County Commissioners Meeting Room (Room 111), 11916 Somerset Avenue in Princess Anne, on Tuesday, September 15, 2020. The draft application will be available for the public to review from September 10, 2020 to September 15, 2020 at the Dept. of Technical & Community Services office at 11916 Somerset Ave., Room 211, Princess Anne, MD 21853 during normal business hours.

Citizens will be furnished with information including but not limited to:

- The amount of CDBG funds available;
- The range of activities that may be undertaken with CDBG funds; and
- The proposed projects under consideration by Somerset County.

The Maryland CDBG Program is a federally funded program designed to assist governments with activities directed toward neighborhood and housing revitalization, economic development, and improved community facilities and services. It is administered by the MD Department of Housing and Community Development.

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.

For further information, please contact the Department of Technical & Community Services at 410-651-1424.

Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County  
Ralph D. Taylor, County Administrator

Mr. Pusey explained that under the Federal CARES Act, Congress has provided a total of \$5 Billion to the CDBG Program nationwide, to be distributed in three rounds. In Maryland, these funds will be distributed through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). He explained the first round awarded totaled \$200,000; with \$100,000 provided to the County for Emergency Rental Assistance, and \$100,000 awarded to Catholic Charities for a Food Program for needy families. Mr. Pusey stated that there is \$15 million available state-wide for this second round of COVID CDBG funding. The MD DHCD has determined that the only eligible activity for this round of funding will be for emergency rental assistance, and County Staff is recommending that the County apply for funding for this activity, to supplement \$100,000 that was received in the first round of COVID funding. The need for this emergency rental assistance was discussed and it was noted that there have been 55 calls to date inquiring to receive assistance. Four requests have been approved to date for \$2,500 per person. Due to the emergency nature of the Coronavirus, the grant application process is being expedited. Mr. Pusey also advised that \$10,000 is being requested for county staff administration (no administrative funds were approved for the first round of rental assistance funding that was received), as staff time spent on assisting applicants has been steadily increasing. In closing, it was noted that need will far exceed the amount of funding that will be received.

President Mathies asked if there were any proponents present to speak. There were none.

President Mathies asked if there were any opponents present to speak. There were none.

Written comment will be taken for 10 days, until September 25, 2020. The Public Hearing was declared closed at 2:13 p.m. Mr. Pusey, Ms. Bedsworth and Mr. Murray left the meeting at this time.

Mr. James Riley and Mr. Jerry Boston, Board of Elections, came forward to provide an update regarding the matter of in-person voting on Smith Island. Mr. Riley explained that after researching the request, and receiving input and recommendation from the State Board, a voting center will be held on Smith Island, at the school, so that people can vote in person if they want to. No electrical equipment will be taken to the island however, and Mr. Riley explained how the provisional ballot system will work. The two judges on the island will be trained regarding this

provisional ballot system and oversee the election there; and it was felt that this was a good compromise to the request to provide in person voting. Commissioner Randy Laird commented about not having a machine for in-person voting, as he had been told that the local office would be checking connectivity on Smith Island for voting machines last week. Mr. Riley explained that there are connectivity issues in addition to other COVID related issues regarding this year's election, and with time running out, and per State recommendation, having a voting machine available on the island is not possible. Commissioner Laird questioned the lack of connectivity on the island for the voting machines, feeling that islanders should be given the opportunity to vote in person; noting the elderly who don't want to travel in a boat should be able to vote by machine. Commissioner Laird stated he is being told that the people on the island feel it is not fair that they won't be able to vote by machine. Mr. Boston added that he has been told that there has been a connectivity problem with Smith Island in the past. He explained how the voting process will work with COVID, and the County was mandated to have two voting locations by the State, and will actually be having three locations; Crisfield High School, VoTech in Westover and Washington High School. Mr. Boston then advised of the number of registered voters on the island, and of those who have already requested mail in ballots. Commissioner Simpkins asked how tallying of votes was going to be handled (by precinct or county wide). A discussion was held, explaining how the process will work, and Mr. Boston noted that ballots will have to be sorted by precinct, because of school board voting he would think, and Mr. Riley added he has heard it would be by precinct. Additionally, concerns regarding multiple voting and safeguards that are in place were discussed as well as when final vote tallies will be available. Mr. Boston said he would check into the question regarding the scanner and connectivity for the island to Annapolis and get back to the Board on that question.

Commissioner Simpkins, Mr. Boston and Mr. Riley left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Clint Sterling, Recreation and Parks Director, came forward to discuss COVID-19 Guidelines for returning to play, designed to help keep everyone safe. With guidance from our health department, he explained how games will be staggered, and all participants received, and must sign off on a liability release, which has been reviewed and approved by the county attorney. He advised that this first session held this past weekend went very well, and participants seemed happy to see sport events happening, and he explained how the events were handled regarding social distancing. The concession stand remained closed, and activity was monitored as there was only one way in and out. He stated that safety was and is paramount.

President Mathies expressed concern with the large number of people he saw at the event on Saturday, with many appearing to not be social distancing or wearing masks, advising he would like us to be proactive not reactive. He asked if there are people are in place watching for non-compliance. Mr. Sterling explained that families could sit together, separated from others, and were asked to leave when their game was over. He also said that extra signage and vigilance will be added, and they will strictly monitor to the point that they can. It was noted that law enforcement was there, and if anyone refused to comply, they would be asked to leave. Commissioner Willing noted that he attended the Friday event, advising there was a good crowd there, with everyone he saw being compliant. Mr. Sterling left the meeting at this time.

Mr. Woody Barnes, Roads Director, came forward at this time to present the recommendation determined regarding the Crisfield County Dock Improvement project (Contract No LG-1937C21). Two sealed bids were received during the Roads Board meeting held on September 8, 2020 and were reviewed. Both bids were consistent with requirements, and after consulting with Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the recommendation was made to award the bid to the low bidder, Stevens Marine Construction Inc., for \$41,300.00.

Commissioner Randy Laird made a motion to award the Crisfield County Dock Improvement project to Stevens Marine Construction Inc., for \$41,300.00. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0 (Commissioner Simpkins was absent from the meeting).

Mr. Barnes then presented the contract for services regarding the project, which has been reviewed by the county attorney, asking for approval of the President's signature on the contract.

Vice President Charles Laird made a motion to authorize President Mathies to sign the contract for services regarding the Crisfield County Dock Improvement project. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Next, Mr. John Redden came forward to present the amended Stormwater Management Ordinance for Board approval. A public hearing was held on September 1, 2020. No comments have been received. The amended items within the ordinance were reviewed and included clarification that the program is administered by the County Engineer, elimination to waive the surety bond, increasing the surety bond from 110% to 150% and extending the expiration of the surety bond from 2 years to 3 years.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to approve the Stormwater Management Ordinance (#1157) as amended. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. John Redden, being joined by Ms. Yvette Cross, Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, and Mr. Gene Adkins, next presented the CARES Act Funding recommendation for the Boards approval. He explained that a committee consisting of Mr. Taylor, Ms. Cross, Mr. Woodward, Mr. Cavanaugh, Mr. Adkins, Ms. Muir and himself, to submit the following funding suggestions totaling \$323,721 (a handout was presented to the Board and is attached to these minutes), noting the grant award totals \$325,000:

- County Complex Improvements to include added building security access, system upgrades, employee social distancing and touchless sanitation (\$134,500)
- Circuit Court/Annex Improvements/Security system upgrades (\$17,721)
- Health Department/PPE Storage (Storage building \$21,000)
- Emergency Services Improvements/Portable generators, CAD Server (\$65,000)
- Roads Complex Improvements/Traffic Control (Portable message boards, cones, roll-up signs, barriers, sign materials, rain suits) (\$84,000)
- Other County Facility Improvements/Sanitation lighting motion sensors (\$1,500)

Mr. Redden added that the improvements are well needed, and felt to be qualified.

Vice President Charles Laird made a motion to proceed with the CARES Act Grant Funding request as submitted. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Taylor thanked those serving on the committee for their hard work and assistance with deriving the plan.

Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence and discussion items.

Correspondence sent to Judge Powell, Mayor Dize, Dr. Gaddis and Mr. Pusey was reviewed. Additionally, it was noted that there are currently two vacancies regarding the Housing Board of Review.

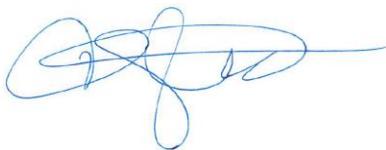
Mr. Taylor presented a request for a proclamation recognizing World Rivers Day, held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in September. It was noted that the Somerset County's Original Trail Mix will be participating, encouraging people to hike or bike the Route 413 Hiker-Biker Trail and paddle our local waterways.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to approve the proclamation recognizing World Rivers Day. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

With no further business, at 2:53 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; and (8) consult staff, consultants or other individuals about pending or potential litigation. The motion carried 4-0.

The Commissioner and Closed Session meetings were adjourned at 3:30 p.m., upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird. The motion carried 5-0.

Approved by:



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Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:



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Lory E. Ebron  
Executive Aide