

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY
SPECIAL SESSION
TUESDAY MAY 18, 2021

At 2:14 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.

Executive Secretary Kimberly Lopez was also in attendance.

Closed Session Summary Report for May 18, 2021

On May 18, 2021, from 2:35 p.m. until 2:48 p.m., at 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird (carried on a vote in favor by Commissioner Willing) 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.

Present for the Closed Session Meeting were President Craig N. Mathies, Sr., Vice President Charles Laird, Commissioner Randy Laird, and Commissioner Eldon Willing. Commissioner Rex Simpkins was not present. Also present were Executive Secretary Kimberly Lopez, Mr. Clint Sterling, Mr. Gary Pusey, and Ms. Morena Corbin. Topics discussed were: (1) Personnel; Actions taken: Hiring; (2) Personnel; Actions take: Extension of probation.

Ms. Sharon Muir, Internal Auditor, came before the Board to present the resolution for the transfer of the Somerset County Sheriff's Office to the Law Enforcement Officer's Pension System (LEOPS). Copies of the resolution were provided to the Board for their review, and made available for members of the audience.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Willing to adopt Resolution 1165, authorizing the transfer of the Somerset County Sheriff's Office to the Law Enforcement Officer's Pension System (LEOPS). Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

In addition to this, Ms. Muir presented a “pick-up resolution” for the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System of the Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County, Maryland. This will allow contributions to go in at a pre-tax format.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Willing to adopt Resolution 1166, Pick-Up Resolution for the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System of the Board of County Commissioners for Somerset County, Maryland. Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Ms. Muir left the meeting.

Mr. Gary Pusey, Director of Technical and Community Services, was now before the Board (joined by Ms. Ashley Bedsworth and Ms. Donna Laird) for the bid awarding of the Smith Island Drainage Construction Project. Mr. Pusey advised that a review committee (consisting of himself, Mr. Woody Barnes, Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Ms. Tracy Gordy, and Ms. Donna Laird) reviewed both of the submitted bids and have determined that both contractors are well qualified. Based on that determination, Mr. Pusey advised it was the recommendation of the committee to award the bid to Steven’s Marine Construction, Inc. for the submitted amount of \$219,480.00.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Charles Laird to award the bid to Steven’s Marine Construction, Inc. for the submitted amount of \$219,480.00 for the Smith Island Drainage Construction Project. Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Next, Mr. Pusey advised that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the County has received three rounds of Emergency Rental Assistance funding to assist renters who have been adversely affected by COVID and have had difficulty paying their rent. These three rounds of funding total \$360,000.00, and only \$135,000.00 has been utilized. Mr. Pusey further advised that a fourth round has just been approved in the amount of \$1,184,274.00 that must be spent before 9/30/2022. Because of this approved fourth round, the MD Department of Housing & Community Services (DHCD) is allowing the County to reprogram the remaining funds from the first three rounds to other eligible activities; which would include reallocating \$191,196.77 to the Somerset County Commission on Aging to provide meals to seniors and \$24,000.00 to Shore Up to provide housing counseling services to Somerset residents.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Willing to approve the requested reallocations (\$191,196.77 to the Somerset County Commission

on Aging to provide meals to seniors and \$24,000.00 to Shore Up to provide housing counseling services to Somerset residents). Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Mr. Pusey, Ms. Bedsworth, and Ms. Laird left the meeting.

Mr. John Redden, County Engineer, was now before the Board to present an update on the American Rescue Plan, advising that \$5 million has been earmarked to the County. The program is administered through the Treasury Department, and the funds are requested the County and distributed directly to the county in two payments (half now and half next year). These funds must be spent within the time frame of March 3, 2021 to December 31, 2024, and all projects must be completed by December 31, 2026. Mr. Redden continued by advising of the permitted uses (pandemic related, including: compliance and audit costs, lost revenue, health response, capital projects, broadband projects, negative economic impacts, payroll support, and co-investing with the Town or City) as well as the non-permitted uses (non-pandemic related, including: no property tax relief, no pension funds, no rainy-day funds, no debt service payments, no road or bridge projects).

Mr. Redden then presented a letter to Mr. Mike Thomas, Legislative Assistant in the Office of Senator Ben Cardin, regarding Somerset County's federal priorities with regards to Congressionally Directed Spending, and advised of the following:

1. USACOE funding for dredging projects such as the Pocomoke River and County Waterway Facilities
2. FAA funding for airport projects such as the Crisfield-Somerset County Airport ACIP list including the proposed hangar project
3. DOT funding for alternative transportation projects such as the remaining phases of our bike path project from Crisfield to Princess Anne
4. FHWA funding for road resurfacing such as hot mix and chip seal
5. USACOE funding for shoreline protection such as Smith Island, Deal Island, Rumbley, Frenchtown, and Crisfield.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird to authorize President Mathies' signature on the letter stated above. Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

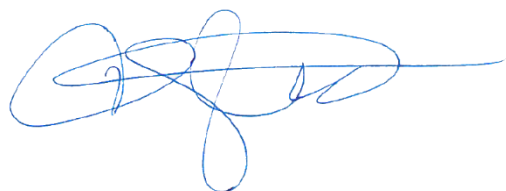
Mr. Redden left the meeting.

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 on a vote in favor by Commissioner Willing), 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 at 2:35 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" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kimberly Lopez
Executive Secretary