

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**  
**January 19, 2021**  
**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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**Appointments:**

- \* 2:00 p.m. – Mr. Gary Pusey, Department of Technical and Community Services Director
  - FY 2022 Rural Legacy Area Application Approval
  - Bid Award- Blight Removal
  - MALPF Local Matching Program – Commitment of Funds for FY 2021
  - Rezoning Request/Map 32, Grid 4, Parcel 149, Lots B and C from I-1 Light Industrial to AR Agricultural Residential- Preliminary Decision
  
- \* 2:15 p.m. - Mr. John Redden, County Engineer
  - DP&L'S revised Right of Way Agreement/County Complex

**Correspondence:**

**Received**

- \* Nelson Sheppard, Inspector, City of Crisfield re: Waiver of Tipping Fee Request  
Main Street America re: Princess Anne Main Street National Accreditation

**Discussion:**

- \* 1. Surplus Property Purchase (3)

**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.

- \* **2:30 p.m. - Closed Session-** Mr. Ralph Taylor, Ms. Morena Corbin, Mr. Gene Adkins  
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  
January 19, 2021

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 Randy Laird and Commissioner Rex Simpkins. Commissioner Eldon Willing was absent from today's meeting.

County Administrator-Clerk Ralph D. Taylor and Executive Aide Lory E. Ebron were also present.

President Mathies asked Commissioner Randy Laird to lead those present in Devotion and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Closed Session Summary Report**

On January 19, 2021, from 2:21 p.m. until 3:22 p.m., at 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins, and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird, it carried 4-0 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 Randy Laird and Commissioner Rex Simpkins. Commissioner Eldon Willing was absent from today's meeting.

Also present were County Administrator Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Aide Lory Ebron, HR Director Morena Corbin, Warden Louis Hickman, and Finance Director Gene Adkins.

Topics discussed: (1) Probationary Extension (2) COLA (3) LOS (4) Acquisition of Property (5) Correctional Officer Hiring. Actions taken during closed session: (1) Approval to extend probationary period (2) COLA Approval (3) Approval to hire Correctional Officer (4) Approval for property acquisition.

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Minutes from the Commissioner Closed Session meetings held on January 5, 2021, were approved as presented upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird. Vice President Charles Laird abstained; therefore, the motion carried 3-0-1.

Mr. Gary Pusey and Mr. Adam Gibson, Department of Technical and Community Services (DTCS) came forward to first present the FY22 Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Area Grant Application.

Mr. Pusey explained that on behalf of Somerset and Worcester Counties, Jared Parks of the Lower Shore Land Trust has prepared the FY22 Grant Application for the Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Area. Established in 2008, Somerset and Worcester counties have agreed to partner to pursue funding sources for easement purchases. Lower Shore Land Trust administers the program which covers almost 68,000 acres in both counties. It was noted that both counties alternate years for funding, with Somerset receiving about \$640,000 last year. This year, Worcester County will be requesting funding for three properties totaling 828 acres for \$1,780,000. Board approval is required before being sent to the Department of Natural Resources; however, it was noted that signature by Somerset County are not needed at this time as the grant application is being presented today to the Worcester County Board for their signature.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to support the submission of the FY22 Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Area Grant Application to Department of Natural Resources. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Next, Mr. Pusey presented bid award recommendations regarding demolition for three dilapidated structures in the county. For all three properties, the recommendation was made to award the bids to the low bidder for each structure. Therefore, the following bids were awarded as follows:

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to award demolition of **6024 Crisfield Highway** to Ken Build for \$5,670.00. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to award demolition of **4060 Back Shelltown Road** to Swift's Seasonal for \$4,895.00. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins to award demolition of **8424 Greenhill Lane** to Miller Land Services for \$6,142.50. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Adam Gibson next explained that every year Somerset County participates in the State's Agricultural Land Preservation Program, funded through dedicated revenues from the State's Agricultural Transfer Tax. One-third of the tax collected is kept locally for agricultural

preservation purposes. When funds are not used for six years, it must be returned to the State, unless it is committed to a Local Matching Program to purchase easements in the County. The County has \$36,452.53 of funds that are within the six-year funding cycle. The recommendation was made for the County to commit the \$36,452.53 to the Local Matching Program for the FY22 easement offer cycle, with Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) matching on a 40% County and 60% State basis.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to approve \$36,452.53 to the Local Matching Program for the FY22 easement offer cycle. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Next, Mr. Pusey addressed the matter of the preliminary decision regarding the rezoning request received from Mr. Mitchell Bonneville regarding Map 32, Grid 4, Parcel 149 Lots B and C from I-1 Light Industrial to AR Agricultural Residential. He explained the County Commissioner's held a Public Hearing on January 5, 2021. The Planning Commission Public Hearing was held on November 5, 2020, resulting in a favorable recommendation to rezone the property to AR. During the Public Hearing held on January 5, 2021, testimony was provided by proponents, with no opponents present to testify. The applicant and one supporter are present today should there be any questions. Mr. Pusey also restated the two circumstances allowable by State Law to rezone: First, if there has been a substantial change in the character of the neighborhood since the last comprehensive rezoning (February 5, 2001); or second, if it is found that the current zoning is a mistake. He noted that the applicant's argument is that the zoning change made to Industrial was a mistake. Mr. Pusey closed his comments by asking the Board for a preliminary decision today, to allow staff time to prepare the findings of facts; after which he will return for Board approval to adopt the rezoning request.

Commissioner Randy Laird asked if the full board should be present. Mr. Taylor advised that Commissioner Willing has expressed his decision to him, and additionally is available by phone. Commissioner Randy Laird questioned if a proxy vote has been previously done. It was noted that today's vote will only be a preliminary vote, and the final vote to adopt the rezoning request will be made at an upcoming meeting; therefore, if the vote at time of adoption is different, staff can return at a later date based on that decision.

Vice President Charles Laird made a motion to approve a preliminary decision to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation to change the zoning back to AG. There was no second motion; therefore, the motion died due to a lack of second.

Mr. Pusey and Mr. Gibson left the meeting at this time.

Mr. John Redden, County Engineer, came forward to present Delmarva Power & Light's (DP&L) Supplemental Right of Way Agreement to amend the location of the charging station facilities for the County Complex location. Mr. Redden advised the revision is minor as shown on the drawing provided. He advised that work is scheduled to begin next week in Crisfield, with Westover and Princess Anne to follow.

A motion was made by Vice President Charles Laird to authorize President Mathies to sign the Supplemental Right of Way Agreement as presented. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence and discussion items.

A landfill tipping fee waiver request was received from Mr. Nelson Sheppard, City of Crisfield to demolish houses located at 104,106,108, and 110 Fourth Street, Crisfield, Maryland that are uninhabitable and considered a safety risk and fire hazard.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to waive the landfill tipping fee as requested to demolish houses located at 104,106,108, and 110 Fourth Street, Crisfield, Maryland. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

Correspondence was received from Main Street America, designating Main Street Princess Anne as a 2020 Accredited Main Street America Program. This recognition signifies Princess Anne has demonstrated commitment to commercial district revitalization and a proven track record of successfully applying the Main Street Approach.

Next, Mr. Taylor presented offers received to purchase surplus properties. It was noted that the 10% required, non-refundable deposits were received on all offers. The following offers were approved as follows:

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to sell Account # 03-048462 (4070 Back Shelltown Road) for \$2,091.00 plus closing costs to Jennifer McShane. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

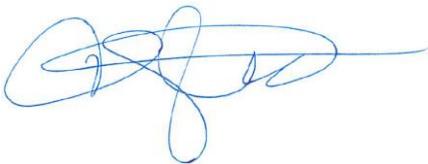
A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird to sell Account # 12-003439 (3615 Freedomtown Road) for \$2,647.00 plus closing costs to James W. Ball Jr. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins to sell Account # 12-003536 (3480 State Street) to Jon Robertson for \$7,054.00 plus closing costs. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0.

With no further business, at 2:21 p.m., the Board was advised of the need to enter into Closed Session. Therefore, upon a motion made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Randy 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 4-0.

The Commissioner and Closed Session meetings were adjourned at 3:24 p.m., upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Randy Laird. The motion carried 4-0.

Approved by:



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Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:



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Lory E. Ebron  
Executive Aide