

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**  
**March 30, 2021**  
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
**FOR SOMERSET COUNTY**  
**11916 Somerset Avenue**  
**Room 111/Meeting Room**  
**Princess Anne, MD 21853**  
**1:00 p.m.**

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**Appointments:**

- 1:00 p.m. - Public Hearing/Second Amendment Sanctuary Resolution
- \* 1:30 p.m. - Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Director of Solid Waste and Maintenance
  - Landfill and Transfer Station Fees
- \* 1:40 p.m. - Mr. John Redden, County Engineer
  - Formal Approval/ Relief Act Grants (Hotel, Restaurant, Online Sales)
  - Formal Approval/ Maryland Recovery Now Grant
- \* 1:50 p.m. - Mr. Clint Sterling, Director Recreation and Parks/Tourism
  - Approval/Relief Act Grant- Tourism Small Business Advertising Grant
- \* 1:55 p.m. - Mr. Gary Pusey, Director, DTCS
  - Letter of Support/Beach to Bay Heritage Area
  - DHCD Grant Application/Emergency Rental Assistance and Resolution
  - Housing Rehabilitation Lien Release/23355 Osborn Webster Road on Deal Island

**Correspondence:**

**Received**

- \* Mr. Brian Laird re: Allocation Request-Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken League

**Sent**

Mr. Leslie Pruitt, Supervisor of Assessments re: Public Drainage Association Tax Levy Rates- FY22  
Mr. Willis H. Dryden, Jr. re: Public Drainage Association Tax Levy Rates- FY22

**Discussion:**

- \* 1. Formal Approval/FY 21 Community Partnership Agreement/Somerset County LMB
- \* 2. Letter of Support Request/Humane Society of Somerset County

**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.

**2:15 p.m. - Closed Session-** Mr. Ralph Taylor, Mr. Gary Pusey, Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Clint Sterling, Ms. Morena Corbin

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 (2) protect the privacy or reputation of an individual with respect to a matter that is not related to public business.

- \* Denotes Action Item

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY  
March 30, 2021

At 1:00 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, Commissioner Rex Simpkins and Commissioner Eldon Willing.

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

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

**Closed Session Summary Report**

On March 30, 2021, from 2:03 p.m. until 2:54 p.m., at 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, upon a motion made by Commissioner Eldon Willing, and seconded by Rex Simpkins, with Commissioner Randy Laird and Vice President Charles Laird voting in favor, the motion carried 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, Commissioner Eldon Willing and Commissioner Rex Simpkins.

Also present were County Administrator Ralph D. Taylor, Executive Aide Lory Ebron, HR Director Morena Corbin, Director of Technical and Community Services Gary Pusey, and Director of Recreation and Parks/Tourism Mr. Clint Sterling.

Topics discussed: (1) Assistant Groundskeeper Hiring (2) MEO-I Landfill Hiring (3) Teleworking. Actions taken during closed session: (1) Approval to hire Assistant Groundskeeper (2) Approval to hire MEOI Landfill.

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Minutes from the Commissioner and Closed Session meetings held on March 16, 2021, were approved as presented upon a motion made by Commissioner Eldon Willing and seconded

by Commissioner Rex Simpkins. Vice President Charles Laird and Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

At 1:05 p.m., President Mathies called the public hearing open to receive public comment on a proposed resolution in affirmation of the Second Amendment rights of the citizens of Somerset County. Mr. Taylor read the notice of public hearing into record as follows:

The Board of County Commissioners will conduct a Public Hearing on March 30, 2021, at 1:00 p.m. in the afternoon in the Meeting Room of the Board of County Commissioners, Somerset County Office Complex, 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, Princess Anne, Maryland.

**Fair Summary**

The purpose of the hearing is to receive public comment on a proposed resolution in affirmation of the Second Amendment rights of the citizens of Somerset County, to herein direct that Somerset County Government shall not authorize or appropriate government funds, resources, employees, agencies, contractors, buildings, detention centers or offices for the purpose of enforcing any element of any law that infringes upon the right of the people to keep and bear arms. A copy of the drafted proposed resolution can be reviewed at the Commissioner's Office, 11916 Somerset Avenue, Room 111, Princess Anne, MD, of the County Office Complex.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
FOR SOMERSET COUNTY**

Ralph D. Taylor  
County Administrator

Due to the many people attending today's public hearing, those wishing to speak were asked to keep comments to 3 minutes or less.

President Mathies called for proponent's present wishing to speak and first asked Sheriff Ronnie Howard to come forward.

Sheriff Howard stated that on March 22, 2021, he issued a proclamation signifying Somerset County as a Second Amendment Sanctuary to protect and preserve our right to bear arms. He expressed his opinions regarding protecting and preserving citizens regarding their right to bear arms. He discussed various types of weapons, acknowledging county residents who use weapons for home protection and hunting. He noted criminal violators not abiding by the laws, stating that he does not have the right to tell citizens what type of firearm they are allowed to own. He encouraged citizens to receive training for the safe use of firearms. He specified the seconded amendment right for the right of people to bear arms shall not be infringed, and stated he will not remove firearms from law abiding citizens. Sheriff Howard closed his comments noting recent criminal violation statistics, and stated that when you repeat the lie enough, the lie becomes the truth.

Next, the following proponents spoke in favor of the adoption of the resolution:

Frank Sturgis, Eden  
Robert Lee Price, Princess Anne  
Luen Compton, Crisfield  
John Crockett, Crisfield  
Steve Willard, Marion Station  
Debra Maske, Allen Road  
Judy McDaniel, Sherree Lane  
Lee Bromley, Marion Station  
Tammy Truitt/Representative of Republican Committee, Marion Station  
Tammy Truitt/Citizen, Marion Station  
Steven Fisher, Chance  
Henry Teagle, Princess Anne  
Lara Skinkle, Fortune Lane  
Jamie Wink, Charles Boston Road  
Bruce Mason, Henry Riggin Road  
Rebecca Brenner, Perry Hawkin Church Road  
Robert Deviva, Old Westover Road

President Mathies next asked if there were any opponents present wanting to speak. There were none. Public comment will be taken for 10 days, until April 9, 2021. President Mathies thanked all those present at the public hearing today, and declared the public hearing closed at 1:32 p.m.

Mr. Charles Cavanaugh, Director of Solid Waste and Maintenance, came forward to discuss the FY22 Landfill and Transfer Station Fee schedule; previously presented during the March 2, 2021 meeting. Mr. Cavanaugh made the recommendation to increase the Tipping Fee, currently \$66.00 per ton to \$70.00 per ton. Additionally, he requested the Tipping Fee for the municipalities (City of Crisfield and Town of Princess Anne) and the Sanitary District to remain the same for this upcoming year at \$66.00 per ton.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins, and seconded by Commissioner Willing to have the Transfer Station Fee remain the same at \$60.00. Vice President Charles Laird and Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Commissioner Randy Laird made a motion to pro-rate the second sticker fee. He then withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Randy Laird made a motion to keep the Tipping Fee for municipalities the same at \$66.00 for FY22. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. Commissioner Willing and Commissioner Simpkins voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

A motion made by Vice President Charles Laird, and seconded by Commissioner Simpkins to have the Tipping Fee increase from \$66.00 to \$70.00 for FY22. Commissioner Randy Laird and

Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried. Before leaving the meeting, Mr. Cavanaugh stated the fee schedule will be effective July 1, 2021.

Mr. John Redden, County Engineer, came forward. Mr. Taylor provided a brief overview of the Relief Act of 2021, advising that on March 16, 2021, the Maryland Department of Commerce notified jurisdictions of funding for the Relief Act of 2021 to provide additional funding for hotels, restaurants and online businesses. The State allocated \$92,954.55 towards restaurant funding, \$42,265.70 towards hotel funding and \$2,113.29 towards online businesses to promote and encourage stabilization within the hospitality, restaurant and online shopping industry in Somerset County. The funds must be dispersed by June 30, 2021 or be returned to the State, and it was recommended that this grant be administered by the Economic Development Commission.

Commissioner Randy Laird made a motion to accept the Relief Act of 2021 Hotel, Restaurant and Online Business grant agreements as presented. Vice President Charles Laird seconded the motion. Commissioner Simpkins and Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Next, Mr. Taylor advised that on March 18, 2021, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) notified jurisdictions of funding available (Maryland Recovery NOW) to non-profits via Senate Bill 496, with the State allocating \$84,742.00 to Somerset County non-profits to support the economic recovery efforts in the county and assist qualifying non-profits that have been impacted by this crisis. Funds must be dispersed by June 30, 2021 or be returned to the State. It was recommended that the Office of the County Engineer administer this grant.

Vice President Charles Laird made a motion to approve the DHCD Maryland Recovery NOW grant agreement. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. Commissioner Randy Laird and Commissioner Eldon Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried. Mr. Redden left the meeting at this time.

Next, Mr. Clint Sterling, Director of Recreation and Parks/Tourism, came forward to present the bipartisan Relief Act of 2021 agreement through the Maryland Tourism Development Board. This grant, in the amount of \$4,227.00 is to be used to market Maryland small business for tourism via the Destination Marketing Organizations.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins to approve the Maryland Tourism Development Boards Relief Act of 2021 agreement. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion.

Vice President Charles Laird and Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

As the meeting was running ahead of schedule, Mr. Taylor continued with correspondence and discussion items.

A request was received from Mr. Brian Laird for an FY21 budget allocation to assist with the startup costs of a new youth league baseball charter named the Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken League. During the discussion held, Mr. Taylor advised that \$7,160 remains available in the unallocated funds category. Commissioner Randy Laird requested that if awarded, the amount be the same as is allocated to Crisfield Little League. As this amount was unknown, Mr. Taylor advised he would check, and report back to the Board, therefore, no action was taken.

The letters sent to Mr. Leslie Pruitt, Supervisor of Assessments and Mr. Willis Dryden, Tax Supervisor regarding Public Drainage Association (PDA) Tax Levy Rates for FY 21-22 was provided. PDA rates remained the same for this upcoming year.

Following a brief recess, at 1:41 p.m., Mr. Gary Pusey, Department of Technical and Community Services came forward.

First, Mr. Pusey presented a letter of support request regarding the Beach to Bay Heritage Area, from Mt. Zion Memorial Church, Polks Road, to amend the boundaries of the heritage area that would allow the church to apply for matching funds for much needed repairs to the church's roof. In order to apply for this funding, the church must be within the boundaries of the Heritage Area, and the boundary amendment must be approved by the local governing body.

Commissioner Simpkins made a motion to approve the letter of support to amend the Certified Heritage Area boundaries of the Beach to Bay Heritage Area. Commissioner Willing seconded the motion. Vice President Charles Laird and Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Next, Mr. Pusey presented the application for DHCD Emergency Rental Assistance Program funding for the Boards approval. It was noted that previously there has been three rounds of federal funding authorized totaling \$360,000. This fourth round, for \$1,841,274, must be applied for before April 2, 2021, and spent before September 30, 2022.

Commissioner Randy Laird made a motion to approve the DHCD Emergency Rental Assistance grant application for \$1,841,274, and the supporting resolution (#1161). Vice President seconded the motion. Commissioner Simpkins and Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Lastly, Mr. Pusey presented a lien release request between Gertrude Frost and the Board of Commissioners, in January 2015, for the use of CDBG funds to do rehabilitation work in the amount of \$12,630 . The ten-year lien is reduced proportionally each year, and currently, the outstanding balance is \$5052.00, which has been reimbursed by the new owner. Therefore, the recommendation was made to approve the lien release as requested.

A motion was made by Commissioner Willing to approve the lien release as requested, noting that the \$5,052.00 balance owed has been paid. Commissioner Simpkins seconded the motion. Vice President Charles Laird and Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Mr. Taylor requested formal approval for the Local Management Board FY21 Community Partnership Agreement in the amount of \$311,403.

Vice President Charles Laird made a motion to authorize the Presidents signature on the FY21 Community Partnership Agreement. Commissioner Randy Laird seconded the motion. Commissioner Simpkins and Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

A letter of support request was received from the Somerset County Humane Society to secure grant funding for the organization. The Humane Society is a great asset in controlling the cat population in the county.

A motion was made by Commissioner Randy Laird and seconded by Vice President Charles Laird to authorize President Mathies to sign the letter of support for the Humane Society's grant funding efforts. Commissioner Simpkins and Commissioner Willing voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

President Mathies asked if there was anyone remaining present that wanted to address the Board.

Mr. Tim Howlett, 2661 Old State Road, Crisfield, came forward. First, Mr. Howlett discussed the article he read in the County Times regarding the amount of money the county received from the American Rescue Plan, noting the people (hospital/medical staff, police, corrections) who were required to work, and advising he feels they should be given premium pay or given something for their commitment. Secondly, he discussed the meeting times, and requested consideration be given to holding the meetings at a different time, when people are off work. He also requested better communication, stating that people don't know what's going on. Video and audio of the meetings being available was also requested. Last, he voiced his complaint regarding the website process regarding alerts received to updated minutes and revisions noting that the

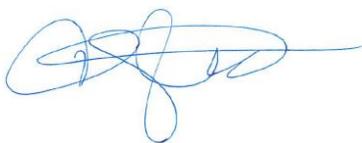
updates do not make it clear as to what is being updated. He complimented Ms. Kim Lopez who was extremely helpful, when she explained that this function was up to the web designer, but also explained how to find the updates posted. Commissioner Randy Laird advised Mr. Howlett that the meetings are broadcasted via audio. Mr. Howlett advised that it was difficult to hear however. He would still suggest video and audio.

Mr. Eric Emely, Crisfield Maryland next requested to address the Board. He first thanked the Board for approving the inclusion of 'not for profits', such as the Elks, to receive recovery funding that has helped to keep the lodge open, and allow it to support the community. As a citizen, he also brought it to the Boards attention that there is not one place to shoot basketball outdoors in Crisfield, and something needs to be done to give kids somewhere to go. He offered to volunteer his services to do anything he can that will help.

With no further business, at 2:03 p.m., the Board was advised of the need to enter into Closed Session. Therefore, upon a motion made by Commissioner Willing and seconded by Commissioner Simpkins, 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. Commissioner Randy Laird and Vice President Charles Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

The Commissioner and Closed Session meetings were adjourned at 2:54 p.m., upon a motion made by Vice President Charles Laird and seconded by Commissioner Rex Simpkins. Commissioner Eldon Willing and Commissioner Randy Laird voted in favor; therefore, the motion carried.

Approved by:



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Board of County Commissioners  
For Somerset County

Respectfully Submitted:



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Lory E. Ebron  
Executive Aide