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**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS  
RELEASE**

Review of Actions Taken in the Washington County  
Board of County Commissioners Meeting  
Tuesday, May 13, 2008

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES**

Human Resources Director Bill Sonnik brought 5 new employees before the Board for introductions. Carrie Aaron is a new Senior Office Associate in Human Resources; Blair Reynolds and Benjamin C. Hainke were recently employed as Construction Inspectors in the Division of Public Works - Capital Projects. Justin Smith and John Irvin are new Plant Operator Trainees in the Department of Water Quality.

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Commissioner Terry Baker commented on attending the mayor and Council meeting at the Town of Williamsport. That jurisdiction requested additional information on increases in County sewer rates. County Administrator Greg Murray stated that a letter has been sent to all towns regarding increases in the rates and impact on municipalities.

Commissioner Jim Kercheval reported on attending the Chamber of Commerce Eggs and Issues event last week with guest speaker Josh White, former aid to Governor Martin O'Malley. White spoke on effective ways to lobby the State and Federal Government for Community initiatives. The Governor's visit for Hagerstown Capital for a Day provided County Commissioners and staff one on one interaction with state Cabinet Secretaries. Kercheval commended the business community and the City of Hagerstown for organization of the event, and thanked the Governor for taking time to visit our community. The Commissioner made a presentation on local government to the Chewsville Boy Scout Troop this week. Inquiries were received from residents of Orchard Hills regarding increases in traffic created by motorists attempting to avoid congestion during construction on Maugans Avenue. Increased traffic control measures have been requested in that subdivision during the construction time, and the public works department will be reviewing those requests, Kercheval said.

Commissioners' President John Barr also reported on attending the Capital for a Day event in Hagerstown and spending time with Governor Martin O'Malley and his staff. Members of the Governor's Cabinet were impressed with the City and County. Commissioner Barr and Commissioner Kristin Aleshire also attended the Women at the

Table event last week that honored former Commissioner Linda Irvin-Craig and Suzanne Hayes.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

County Attorney John Martirano reported on meeting with the Governor's General Counsel last week during the Capital in Hagerstown event.

#### ANNUAL CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU UPDATE AND TOURISM WEEK PROCLAMATION

Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Director Tom Riford and brought the annual update to the Bureau to the Board. The annual financial audit of the organization has been completed and was presented to the commissioners. Riford said the tourism industry is strong in Washington County, with local hotel occupancies maintaining a strong pace in 2007, and revenues up. Visitation to local attractions increased in 2007. 2008 is shaping up to be a good year, her said. 6,000 people work in tourism according to state statistics for Washington County Leisure and Hospitality. Last year 2.01 million visitors spent \$250 million in Washington County, not including visits to the local retail malls. CVB's financial situation has improved during the last three years, and the CVB is debt-free. May was proclaimed Tourism Month in Washington County. May 10-18 is Maryland and National Tourism Week The month's events includes the annual Museum Ramble, held earlier in the month, as well as the National Pike Festival and Wagon Train.

#### CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Each week the Board of County Commissioners sets aside time to hear from citizens of Washington County on matters of importance to the community.

Phil Physioc of the Beaver Creek area commented on access to property on South Mountain.

#### OTHER BUSINESS:

County Administrator's Comments: Count Administrator Greg Murray reminded internet listeners that the County Budget Hearing for fiscal Year 2009 will be held at 7:00 p.m in the Kepler Theater on the Hagerstown Community College campus. Murray also commended the Governor and staff for the Capital for a Day event in Hagerstown last week. Staff was able to meet with Cabinet officials and initiate dialog on a number of issues, Murray said. A Joint Rezoning Hearing is scheduled for Monday at 7:00 p.m. in Courtroom #1 of the County Courthouse, regarding the Bowman property, Murray reported.

Reports from County Staff: Human Resources Director Bill Sonnik requested approval to advertise a Planner position in the Department of Planning and Community Development. The measure was approved by unanimous vote.

Special Projects Director Gary Rohrer told the Board that the State Highway Administration has related that the traffic signal at Pangborn Avenue and Maryland Route 64 is County property. The state has agreed to upgrade the signal at no expense to the County, Rohrer said.

Economic Development Commission Director Tim Troxell requested approval of \$25,000 in matching funds to enable the Tri-County Council to apply for a \$300,000

grant from the Defense Logistics Agency to assist small businesses in doing business with the federal government. The measure, to use \$25,000 from the Commissioners' Contingency Fund, was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING: PROPOSED MODIFICATION TO CERTAIN LANDFILL FEES**

Julie Pippel, Director, Division of Environmental Management and Bob Davenport, DEM Deputy Director for the Solid Waste Department brought this matter to Public Hearing. The Board of County Commissioners conducted the public hearing to permit any resident of Washington County to appear and testify concerning the proposed modification to certain landfill fees. It has been recommended that the mulch fee be increased from \$15.00/ton to \$25.00/ton and that charges relating to cubic yard measurements be eliminated. Phil Physioc of Beaver Creek asked about the moisture content of the material and Solid Waste Director Davenport responded that on average 15% of the mulch is moisture. No one appeared to testify in favor of, or in opposition to the proposal. The measure, to amend the fee schedule effective Monday May 19<sup>th</sup> was approved by unanimous vote.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF MERIT PRESENTATION**

The Commissioners presented a Certificate of Merit to Amy Stahl of the Department of Water Quality in recognition for having received designation from the Maryland Rural Water Association as Rookie Water Operator of the Year 2008. This is a notable achievement requiring specialized training, adaptation and successful application of learned abilities to successfully perform the job of water operator. The Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland, offered its congratulations on this distinguished accomplishment.

#### **MARYLAND STATE POLICE PARTICIPATION AND CONTRIBUTION WITH THE CONSOLIDATED COMMUNICATIONS CENTER**

Washington County Sheriff Doug Mullendore brought this recommendation for in-kind services contribution of the Maryland State Police to the Consolidated Communications Center to the Board. The Sheriff is proposing to use dispatchers at the Sheriff's Office in the new Consolidated Communications Center to also dispatch for the Maryland State Police. The Sheriff is proposing to split public safety coverage into two areas using U.S. 11 as the dividing line. The proposal would enable County Deputies and Maryland State Troopers to respond to incidents on a proximity basis, rather than by agency, permitting more effective use of resources. The request would permit the Maryland State Police to provide space in the MSP Barrack for an Eastern District Station and for a co-located Criminal Investigation Unit as their in-kind contribution to the County consolidated dispatch project. A request to consolidate Crime Laboratory services was also made as part of the Agreement. Colonel Terrance Sheridan, Superintendent of Maryland State Police; Chief Arthur Smith, Hagerstown Police Chief; and Kevin Lewis, Acting Director of Fire and Emergency Services all concur with this arrangement. Lieutenant Colonel Matt Lawrence of MSP told the Commissioners that the cooperative effort would serve as a prototype for other County/State resource management. The measure was approved by unanimous vote.

**BID AWARD: DIGITIZE ALARM MONITORING DEVICE, WASHINGTON COUNTY 911 CENTER**

Purchasing Department Buyer Rick Curry and Communications Maintenance Manager Pete Loewenheim brought this request before the Board, to award the bid for a Digitize Alarm Monitoring Device for the Washington County 911 Center to the responsive responsible low bidder, Great Valley Systems Corp., dba N. B. Barber Company, of Uwchland, Pennsylvania for the base bid amount of \$31,200.00.

The equipment is a Digitize System 3505 Alarm Monitoring decoder. The Bidder would provide equipment, technical services, programming, testing, final certification demonstration, operation training and warranty as specified in the bid document.

Loewenheim told the Board that the item is the dialer receiver for county-wide fire, burglar, and panic alarms received at the new 911 Center at Elliott Parkway. It is identical to the unit located at the current 911 Center at 33 West Washington Street, which will become the back-up center once Elliott Parkway comes on-line. The measure was approved by unanimous vote.

**THE BOARD CONVENED AS THE BOARD OF HEALTH TO AWARD THE BID FOR AMBULANCE-WHEELCHAIR-TAXI SERVICES FOR THE WASHINGTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

County Purchasing Agent Karen Luther and Washington County Health Department (WCHD) Health Officer Earl Stoner brought this request before the Board, to issue a Contract Award for the Bid for Ambulance/Wheelchair/Taxi Services in the best interest of the County and the WCHD to the responsive, responsible bidder, Am-Van, Inc., t/a All American Ambulance and Transport of Lothian, MD based on unit costs and estimated quantities for each trip type for the lowest Total Bid in the amount of \$633,178.00. The service provider must provide and/or sub-contract ambulance/wheelchair/taxi drivers, equipment, i.e. over-sized wheelchairs, supplies, liability insurance, and reasonable incidentals necessary to transport Medicaid eligible clients to and from destinations scheduled by the WCHD in accordance with the provisions contained in the bid document and any addenda. The bid document was prepared initially in 2004 in consultation with and approved by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene—Office of Contract Policy, Management and Procurement. The contract would commence on July 1, 2008 and end June 30, 2009 with an option by the WCHD to renew for up to two additional consecutive one - year periods, subject to written notice given by the WCHD at least ninety (90) calendar days in advance of its expiration date. The WCHD does not guarantee a minimum or maximum quantity of any of the different types of transport during any term of the contract. The funds for this contract are fifty percent State of Maryland funds and fifty percent Federal funds. The Maryland Medical Assistance Program within the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene administers Medicaid within the state. The funds are allocated to the local health department through the Medicaid Transportation Grants Program. FY '09 funding for Ambulance/Wheelchair/Taxi services is anticipated to be \$592,825.00. The budget award is subject to change by legislative budget action. Should funding be inadequate, the WCHD will request additional funding from the State. However, in previous years they have returned money. Total FY '08 funding award for the program, including administrative expenses, was \$537,707. The measure was approved by unanimous vote.

## PUBLIC HEARING: MARYLAND DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT-HOUSING STUDY

David Jordan, Executive Director of the Washington County Community Action Council; and Sonja Hoover, Fiscal/Research Specialist for the Hagerstown-Washington County Economic Development Commission brought this matter to Public Hearing. In accordance with federal regulations Washington County must hold a public hearing to update citizens on the matter of Maryland Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") MD-06-CD-4 – Housing Study. The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development awarded the one-year grant to Washington County on August 21, 2006 for the amount of \$20,727. Washington County Community Action Council serves as the sub recipient of the grant. The grant funds were used to conduct a county-wide housing study to identify substandard units. Jordan told the Board that the report shows that 1 in 216 houses in Washington County are substandard, which is a positive ratio. Higher than normal concentrations of substandard housing occur in Hancock, Indian Springs and Sandy Hook, Jordan said. The Public Hearing was opened, and no one appeared to give testimony.

## AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION: PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT BONDS OF 2008

Director of Budget and Finance Debra Murray, and Timmy Ruppertsberger, Esq., Bond Counsel for Washington County brought the Authorizing Resolution for Washington County, Maryland Public Improvement Bonds of 2008 before the Board, State law authorizes and empowers the County to issue and sell at public sale, its Public Improvement Bonds of 2008 in the principal amount of \$19,950,000. Proceeds from the bonds will be used to fund a portion of road projects, education projects, environmental projects, building improvements and bond issuance cost. There is no additional amount being requested other than as was approved in the 2008 CIP budget. Annual bond issuance has been included in the County's Annual Debt Affordability Analysis. The measure was approved on a 3-2 vote with Commissioners Wivell and Aleshire voting "no".

## YOUTH MERITORIOUS AWARDS

Commissioners' President John Barr presented Youth Meritorious Awards for May 2008 to Samantha Truax of Hancock Middle/Senior High School and Nicholas Demarco of Smithsburg Middle School, as recommended by the Community Partnership Community Outreach Committee.

Samantha, daughter of Lewis and Debbie Truax of Hancock, is a Senior at Hancock High. She has been described as a go-getter who does not procrastinate, and has a great deal of skill in managing her time effectively. She is the student government President, a class officer, and participates in school athletics. Samantha is a lifeguard in the summer and helps with the local Girl Scout troop. She assists at Hancock Elementary School working with students in need of additional academic support. Last summer, Samantha further developed her leadership skills by attending Maryland Girls at Frostburg.

Nicholas, a 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Student at Smithsburg Middle School is the son of Anthony and Kathleen Demarco. Nick, a student who is in all merit classes, is usually on the

distinguished honor roll. Teachers say he is always positive and upbeat and is pleasant to teach. He relates to others, both at school and at home, in a positive manner. At school, Nick is caring and well liked by his peers. He makes a point of treating all students and adults well. He is a friend and is known for his sense of humor. At home, he is just as caring and giving with his younger brother, who has Autism. Nick takes a very active role in caring for his brother and helping him learn. Nick is also involved on the track team through SYAA, the Smithsburg Middle School Band, and is on the staff at his church.

The students receive a Commissioners' certificate and a \$100 savings bond.

#### APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Following a closed session, the Board reconvened in open session and made several appointments and reappointments to County Boards and Commissions.

David Yohman and James Blanks were reappointed to second terms on the Department of Social Services Board. A new appointment to that Board is Sheryl Goree. The measures were approved by unanimous vote.

Gary Davis, Stuart Mullendore and Tim Henry were reappointment to terms on the Economic Development Commission. The measures were approved by unanimous vote.

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY  
MARYLAND TOOK THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009 TO  
PUBLIC HEARING AT 7:00 PM IN KEPLER THEATER ON THE CAMPUS OF  
HAGERSTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

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