



## Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland

### *Open Session Minutes*

March 26, 2024

#### **MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by the full assemblage.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

President John F. Barr called the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland, to order at 9:01 a.m. with the following members present: Vice-President Jeffrey A. Cline, Commissioner Derek Harvey and Commissioner Randall E. Wagner and Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the minutes of March 12, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Commissioner Wagner attended the MML meeting in Hagerstown at Western Enterprise Fire Department. He attended the grand opening of River Roasters in Williamsport. Commissioner Wagner thanked the Parks and Recreation Department, Jaime Dick and staff for putting on the St. Patrick's Day Run Fest. He attended the installation of Reverend Dr. E. Scott Winette at the Zion Reformed United Church of Christ.

Commissioner Keefer sends prayers to the victims and emergency responders on the bridge collapse in Baltimore. He commented on the building collapse in Hancock and the County's roll to assist with blighted properties. Commissioner Keefer requested an agenda item at a future meeting involving code enforcement and safety standards for blighted properties to include the municipalities as part of the conversation.

Commissioner Harvey attended the grand opening of the River Bottom Roasters. He commented on Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Commissioner Harvey attended the Fire Association meeting in Dargan and commented on the building collapse in Hancock and the multiple fires in Hagerstown. He shared the Commission on Aging has their annual fundraising Gala coming up on April 20, 2024, at St. James. Commissioner Harvey discussed balancing the budget, allocating resources, requests of the school board, requests from the Commission on Aging and County need for investment for capital expenditures. He would like to have discussion regarding options, removing the past decrement to the income tax rate and the incorporation of progressive characteristics.

Commissioner Cline attended the MML meeting and attended the Boonsboro Annual Awards banquet and was honored to swear in the Officers. He attended the River Bottom Roasters grand opening. Commissioner Cline attended the Maryland Film Festival grand opening and thanked Tom Riford and Nicole Houser for the event. Commissioner Cline attended the grand opening of The Admiral restaurant in Boonsboro and thanked owner Steve Kemmett. He attended the St. Patrick's Day Run Fest and thanked Jaime Dick and staff. Commissioner Cline attended the 75<sup>th</sup> Awards Banquet at Halfway Fire Company. He recognized the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Zach Greenlees Trackside restaurant.

Commissioner Barr attended the Washington County Board of Education's Essential Personnel Service Awards Banquet and congratulated school bus driver Norma Kelly and thanked all personnel who work for the school systems. He has been appointed by Governor Wes Moore to serve on the Maryland Service Volunteerism Committee and attended meetings in Annapolis. Commissioner Barr shared information regarding the Memorial Day parade on Sunday May 26, 2024, in Boonsboro and the Sharpsburg Parade on Saturday, May 25, 2024. He commented on upcoming events to include the evening Commissioner's meeting in Williamsport this evening and reminded there will be no meeting next week. Commissioner Barr commented on Holy Week.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Leslie Hart, Business and Economic Development presented the Grown Local Magazine Legacy Edition naming some of the long-standing farming families in the magazine. She commented on Ag stats and will share information in the future regarding funds of the Agricultural Industry.

Chip Rose, Director, Human Resources presented the request to promote Zachary J. Kieffer for the position of County Attorney at a Grade 20/rate of \$78.64 per hour, effective March 18, 2024.

Commissioner, Wagner seconded by Commissioner Cline moved to approve the appointment of Zachary J. Kiefer as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Chip Rose, Director, Human Resources presented the request to advertise for the Deputy County Attorney position at a Grade 18.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline moved to approve to advertise for the Deputy County Attorney position as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Rosalinda Pascual, Assistant County Attorney presented the request for approval for a curative ordinance regarding an ordinance that has already been approved and signed. The ordinance has a typographical error that referred to the wrong section of the zoning ordinance and needs to be corrected. The original Ordinance ORD-2024-04 is regarding RZ2023-06 a rezoning amendment application.

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve curative ordinance as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the appointments of Jeremy Socks and Teresa Peek to serve a first, full three-year term, from April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2027, as Community Representatives on the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board. This is not a paid board.

Commissioner Keefer, seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the appointments of Jeremy Socks and Teresa Peek as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the appointment of Jim Aaron, to serve a first, full three-year term, from April 1, 2024, through March 31, 2027, as a Master HVAC Representative on the Washington County Plumbing and Mechanical Board. This is a paid board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the appointment of Jim Aaron as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the appointment of Ricky Mellot to serve a first, full three-year term, from March 1, 2024, through February 28, 2027, as a Master Plumber Representative on the Washington County Plumbing and Mechanical Board. This is a paid board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the appointment of Ricky Mellot as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the appointment of Daniel Hemshrodt to serve a first, full three-year term, from March 1, 2024, through February 2027, as a as a Member at Large representative on the Washington County Plumbing and Mechanical Board. This is a paid board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the appointment of Daniel Hemshrodt as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Zachary Kieffer, County Attorney presented the request to change the designation of the Resident Agent listing with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation currently listed as the previous County Attorney, Kirk Downey, to the new County Attorney, Zachary Kieffer.

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the Resident Agent change as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator congratulated Zachary Kieffer on his recent promotion to County Attorney. She attended and participated in the St. Patrick's Day Run Fest and thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for the event. Ms. Gordon shared the County provided mutual aid to Hardy County, West Virginia assisting on several large wildland fires. She thanked the volunteer fire crews and Division of Emergency Services staff for assisting in Hardy County and she thanked Montgomery County, our Inspections Department and the Division of Emergency Services staff for assisting with special response efforts on the incident in Hancock. Ms. Gordon attended the MML meeting and with the County Municipalities and presented information on the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence Event coming in 2026. She shared the next meeting will be April 9, 2024, and we will hold an evening meeting with the Town of Smithsburg on April 23, 2024.

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Paulie Ward, Hagerstown commented on the film festival and recognized it as one of the top 50 film festivals in the Country and shared special awards presented. He thanked the Commissioners and the County for their support of the endeavor.

Dave Williams, Smithsburg, thanked Commissioner Barr for recognizing the needs of the school board system and supporting a local income-tax increase. He addressed Commissioner comments on the consolidation of schools, impacts of inflation, revenue enhancements and Board of Education budget requests.

Jeffrey Lowe, owner of First Breach in Hagerstown commented on their relationship with the Hagerstown Area, their manufacturing facility, special exception zoning, hosting ATF agents and the

batching and loading of products. He discussed an internal complaint, bomb squad investigation and letter received regarding permits required. They are requesting a resolution regarding their manufacturing facility.

Carol Mowen, Washington County Teacher's Association commented on the funding of the Washington County Public School budget, staffing, injuries from students and students in crisis. She requested reconsideration of funding the school budget.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING – ETHICS ORDINANCE REVISION**

President Barr convened a Public Hearing at 9:46 a.m. to obtain public comment for the proposed Ethics Ordinance Revision.

Zachary J. Kieffer, County Attorney presented the request for a consensus to approve updates and revisions to the Washington County, Maryland Ethics Ordinance. Revisions to Ethics Ordinance include items mandated by the Maryland State Ethics Commission. Periodically, the State Ethics Commission issues updates and revisions to the Model Ethics Ordinance and directs the County to update and revise the County Ethics Ordinance, accordingly.

Commissioner Wagner left the meeting at 9:46 a.m. and returned at 9:47 a.m.

The Public Hearing was opened for public comment: There was no public comment.

Commissioner discussion regarding clarification of the color-coded changes, state mandated changes and changes outside of the state mandate.

County Attorney, Kieffer clarified the color-coded adjustments and changes regarding expansion of restrictions.

The Public Hearing was closed at 9:50 a.m.

The Public Hearing was opened for Commissioner comments: There were no Commissioner comments.

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the Ethics Ordinance revision as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING – MODIFICATION OF 911 FEE**

President Barr convened a Public Hearing at 9:51 a.m. to obtain public comment for the proposed Modification of 911 Fee.

Zachary J. Kieffer, County Attorney; Kelcee Mace, Chief Financial Officer presented the public hearing is to permit any member of the public to appear and testify concerning the proposed modification of the 9-1-1 Fee. Per Md. Code, Public Safety Article, § 1-311(c)(1), a county may impose a 9-1-1 fee of up to \$0.75 to be added to all current bills rendered for switched local exchange access service or CMRS or other 9-1-1 accessible service in the county. If revenues attributable to the county's 9-1-1 fee do not provide the revenues necessary to cover a county's operations costs for the 9-1-1 system, § 1-311(c)(2) allows a county to impose a 9-1-1 fee higher than \$0.75 to cover the county's projected operations costs for the 9-1-1 system. The proposed modification is to increase the fee from \$0.75 per month per bill to \$1.25 per month per bill. This fee was last increased in October 2003. For

FY23, 9-1-1 fees received totaled \$1.4M, while operational cost of the 9-1-1 system was \$5.7M, leaving a shortfall of \$4.3M. For FY24, the budgeted 9-1-1 fees are \$1.4M, while budgeted costs are \$6.7M. In the proposed FY25 budget, 9-1-1 fees, including the fee increase, are \$2.2M, while proposed costs are \$6.7M.

The Public Hearing was opened for public comment: There was no public comment.

Commissioner regarding the fee increase, lack of fee increases for 21 years, budget coverages for the deficit, fee presentations to the budget before today, restrictions or limitations to the fee amount.

Ms. Mace presented the fee increase will partially close the gap but will not completely close the deficit, the rest of the cost has been covered from the general fund. If approved this will go in effect on July 1, 2024, a decision is needed today as there is an April 15, 2024, deadline to file the increase with the state. She shared a list of other counties fees.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator shared an additional increase of \$1.30 on top of the proposed \$1.25 would be required to fully close the gap, additional fees could be phased on over five years.

Commissioner Harvey commented the fee should be reviewed each year.

The Public Hearing was closed at 9:59 a.m.

The Public Hearing was opened for Commissioner comments: There were no Commissioner comments.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the fee increase as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Keefer requested a listing of other counties fee structures when this is brought back next year along with what we do with water and sewer rates to reduce the burden on the general fund.

#### **YOUTH MERITORIOUS AWARD PRESENTATIONS (4)**

Richard Lesh, Grant Manager, Grant Management; Board of County Commissioners presented the recipients of the Youth Meritorious Awards. Throughout the school year the Board of County Commissioners present "Youth Meritorious Awards" to students attending both public and private schools or those being home schooled in Washington County. The following individuals have been selected based on their scholastic achievement, leadership qualities, community service performed or other positive contributions to their school and community. These exceptional youths have consistently worked and distinguished themselves as model students and members of our County. The following youth were recognized today:

Ashton Redman- Smithsburg High School; Parent(s) – Pamala Stotler; Nominated by Rick Gerlach

Isabel Jackson- Boyd J. Michael, III Technical High School; Parent(s) – Paul Jackson; Nominated by Bradley Stotelmyer

Camryn Eichelberger- Smithsburg High School; Parent(s) – Larry Eichelberger; Nominated by Rick Gerlach

Cheyenne Jordan- Smithsburg High School; Parent(s) – Christina Lidie; Nominated by Warren Ruark

Andrew Eshleman, Director, Public Works; Zane Rowe, Deputy Director, Highway Department; Mr. Eshleman commented on the tragedy of the Francis Scott Key Bridge. They presented the FY 25 Budget for informational purposes. The Washington County Highway Department is responsible for the maintenance of the County's Road system; this includes but is not limited to patching, resurfacing, stabilization of dirt roads, keeping ditch lines clear of debris, mowing along County right of ways, snow and ice removal, line striping, signal maintenance and signing of County Roads both regulatory and directional. Our fleet department also provides maintenance service for County owned vehicles. The Highway budget increased over FY24 by \$871,960 or 6.69%. The increase is mainly the result of the 2.5% step and 1% COLA, the proposed salary scale adjustment. Additional increase is due to road maintenance. The proposed stipend increase for mechanics was reduced by the salary committee.

Commissioner discussion regarding proposed approved budget funding and overall total budget funding cuts for all of the County Budgets, trajectory of highway user revenue fees, budget of snow removal fees and decreases in funds from state funding.

County Administrator, Michelle Gordon shared the total budget cuts for this department's expenditures was \$115,590.00 the total request was approximately 14 million dollars. For the general fund there were approximately 15 million dollars in budget cuts. She commented we typically budget for the snow removal fee based on winter weather trends. Ms. Gordon will have staff look at funding reductions for state grants.

#### **FY2025 GENERAL FUND BUDGET - PROPOSED**

Kelcee Mace, Chief Financial Officer; Kim Edlund, Director, Budget and Finance presented for informational purposes. The FY25 Proposed General Fund budget is balanced at \$300,648,730. Major changes from the last proposed version include:

- Decrease to Cannabis Revenue based on restriction on revenue to be used for Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund.
- Added back in a personnel request in the Engineering Department that was proposed by the salary committee but left out of the previous budget version.
- Decrease to Highway Operating transfer due to less support needed from General Fund after Highway fund was balanced.

Ms. Mace shared consideration of future obligations has been a primary factor in balancing the FY25 budget and she provided important upcoming dates regarding the budget.

Commissioner comments regarding the upcoming budget dates, concerns for timeline for municipalities budgets, deficit between requests and allocations, request for levels across all funds, operating deficit from 911 fees, future budget needs and opportunities for increasing revenues, disparity grant funds, inflation and concerns on raising taxes and discussion on a progressive tax rate.

Ms. Mace shared the current proposed draft from requested is a deficit of 14.6 million dollars in the general fund.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator shared the originally requested levels of the general fund was 311 million dollars and we cut 14.6 million to 296.4 million dollars. She will get the numbers for across all funds. We need to keep in mind that the Capital Improvement Program funding is at a bare minimum. She provided information on the Capital Improvement Program which includes about 14 to 15 million dollars in bond issuance, if we do not issue the bonds, we would need to cut the 14 to 15 million dollars out of the Capital Improvement Program. We are at a critical point in the Capital Improvement Program funding needs. Future funding concerns are the unfunded energy efficiency mandates related to buildings, solar arrays on rooftops, car overhangs with solar arrays and environmental issues and infrastructure funding.

**CONTRACT AWARD (PUR-1646) – EMERGENCY MEDICAL BILLING SERVICES**

Rick Curry, Director, Purchasing; Kelcee Mace, Chief Financial Officer presented the recommendation to award the contract for the Emergency Medical Billing Services to the responsible, responsive bidder, Quick Med Claims, LLC of Pittsburgh, PA who submitted the percentage rate of 4.5% for the first term, first renewal term, and second renewal term. (the payment to the contractor is expressed as the percentage of the total collected balance per contract term). This award is also contingent upon the final approval of the contract documents by the County Attorney's Office.

*Commissioner Cline left the meeting at 10:58 a.m. and returned at 10:59 a.m.*

Commissioner Wagner seconded by Commissioner Harvey moved to award the contract for the Emergency Medical Billing Services as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**CONAIR, LLC**

Linda Spence, Business Specialist, Business and Economic Development; Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Business and Economic Development presented the request to approve the Resolution for endorsement of the State of Maryland's \$2,000,000.00 Maryland Economic Assistance Authority Fund (MEDAAF), also referred to as the Advantage Maryland loan and to provide a County \$200,000.00 conditional loan. The State of Maryland Department of Commerce (Department), under the Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority Fund, has agreed to conditionally loan Conair, LLC, or an entity acceptable to the Department (the "Company") to the amount of \$2,000,000.00 from the Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority Fund (MEDAAF) (the "MEDAAF Loan"). In accordance with MD Code, Economic Development Article, Section 5-319(d), the County is required to endorse the making of the MEDAAF Loan for the Project and approve the required local match. To complement the State of Maryland's offer of assistance, the County will contribute \$200,000.00 toward the project in the form of a conditional loan. Any incentive will have an impact on the Hotel/Motel Tax Fund Revenue balance.

Commissioner discussion regarding the local match, impact fees, tax values of the building, hotel tax funds and attracting warehouses in the family.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator clarified that regarding the 700 new jobs, must be on the jobsite by December 2027.

Commissioner Wagner seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the Resolution for endorsement of the State of Maryland's \$2,000,000.00 Maryland Economic Assistance Authority Fund (MEDAAF), also referred to as the Advantage Maryland loan and to provide a County \$200,000.00 conditional loan as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**SANDY HOOK WWTP FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Joseph W. Moss, Deputy Director – Engineering, Environmental Management presented the request to approve the proposal from Buchart Horn, Inc. under PUR–1547, Oncall Engineering Services, in the amount of \$62,490.00 to complete the Sandy Hook WWTP Feasibility Study. The Buchart Horn, Inc. Proposal was the lowest bid solicited for these services out of the 5 firms selected under PUR–1547, On-call Engineering Services. While a request for proposal was sent to all 5 firms on the list, only 3 Proposals were received. There are adequate funds in TRP021 to cover this study.

Commissioner Harvey seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the proposal from Buchart Horn, Inc. to complete the Sandy Hook WWTP Feasibility Study as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**CONOCOCHEAGUE WWTP CENTRIFUGE MAINTENANCE SERVICES**

Joseph W. Moss, Deputy Director – Engineering, Environmental Management presented the request to approve the proposals from GEA Mechanical Equipment US, Inc. in the amounts of \$57,775.77 and \$10,683.56 for a major service and a minor service. The Conococheague WWTP has 2 sludge dewatering centrifuges that are due for service. One is due for a major service while the other is due for a minor service. These services are sole source to the Original Equipment Manufacturer, GEA, due to the exclusive equipment and specialized training needed to properly perform maintenance on this equipment. There are adequate funds in the operating budget account to cover these services.

Commissioner Harvey seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the proposals from GEA Mechanical Equipment US, Inc. as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**FISCAL YEAR 2025 ANNUAL TRANSIT PLAN (ATP) APPLICATION – APPROVAL TO SUBMIT APPLICATION AND ACCEPT AWARDED FUNDING**

Kevin Cerrone, Director, Transit; Richard Lesh, Grant Manager, Grant Management presented the request to approve the resolution authorizing the filing of the application as a sub-grantee for funding under the Federal Transit Act and approve the execution of the agreement upon receipt, subject to review and approval by the County Attorney’s Office. The fiscal year 2025 application requests \$1,442,115.00 in Federal and State funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and MDOT/MTA to subsidize the transit system. Local match is required to secure the Federal and State grant funds. The local match requirement associated with the fiscal year 2025 application is as follows:

5307 Operating Grant (General Funds)	\$681,684.00
5307 Capital Grant (General Funds)	\$ 12,200.00
SSTAP Grant:	\$ 48,972.00
Total:	\$742,856.00

Commissioner Wagner seconded by Commissioner Harvey moved to approve the resolution authorizing the filing of the application as a sub-grantee for funding under the Federal Transit Act and approve the execution of the agreement upon receipt, subject to review and approval by the County Attorney’s Office as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner discussion regarding information on the County Commuter service to McCleary Hill, Boonsboro and Hancock.

Mr. Cerrone shared Transit is currently working on a five-year plan that will out-line current routes and future requested routes.



**ARENA INSTALLMENT PAYMENT PROGRAM (IPP) STREAM RESTORATION EASEMENT**

Chris Boggs, Rural Preservation Administrator, Planning and Zoning presented the request to approve the Anthony P. Arena stream restoration easement and sign the associated letter of approval. Currently, Mr. Arena is pursuing a stream restoration project on his property at 14847 Fairview Road in Clear Spring. This project will not only serve to improve the stream and its existing stream buffer on the property but will also entail adding a 15.7-acre conservation easement over the buffer area. The project is being managed by Keystone Streams, “a company that plans, develops and plants vegetative stream buffers in order to protect and improve aquatic resources, water quality, and to address excessive erosion and soil loss.” The consensus of staff and the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board (Ag Board) is that the project is worthwhile and of merit, as it will improve the quality of the stream and does not take much, if any, agricultural land out of production.

Commissioner Wagner seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the Anthony P. Arena stream restoration easement as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner discussion regarding right-away requirements and environmental protections of the stream.

**PROPERTY ACQUISITION FOR HOPEWELL ROAD**

Todd Moser, Real Property Administrator, Engineering presented the request to approve the option agreement for partial property acquisition including easement for 11019 Hopewell Road and to approve an Ordinance approving said purchase and to authorize the execution of the necessary documentation to finalize the acquisition. Fiscal impact: \$8,500.00 CIP Budgeted Project.

Property Location	Easement Acquisition	Acquisition Cost
11019 Hopewell Road	9,172 SF – Temporary Easement	\$8,500.00

Commissioner Harvey seconded by Commissioner Wagner moved to approve the option agreement for partial property acquisition including easement for 11019 Hopewell Road as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**CONSTRUCTION BID AWARD – PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FY’24 HOT MIX ASPHALT APPLICATIONS, CONTRACT NO. MS-PMP-310-28**

Scott Hobbs, Director, Engineering presented the request to award the bid for the Pavement Maintenance Program FY’24 Hot Mix Asphalt Applications contract to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Craig Paving, Inc. of Hagerstown in the amount of \$3,504,532.38 which includes the option to extend the contract for a period of up to two, on-year extensions. This is a budgeted Capital Improvement Plan project (RD1024). Total expenses for the hot mix asphalt applications contract are estimated at \$3,929,532.00, including \$3,504,532.38 for proposed bid award, \$250,000.00 for inspection/testing and \$175,000.00 for 5% construction contingency.

Commissioner Wagner seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve to award the bid for the Pavement Maintenance Program FY’24 Hot Mix Asphalt Applications as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner discussion regarding number of miles paved per million dollars, citizens' concerns, quality of road repairs, and process formula for road repairs.

Mr. Hobbs shared one million dollars will cover about mile and half of hot asphalt paving and criteria of the process formula program and the pavement condition survey for repairs.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to convene in closed at 11:35 a.m. to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals; to consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State; and to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter. The motion passed unanimously.

In closed session, the Commissioners discussed boards and commissions, personnel matters, a business proposal and legal matters.

Present during closed session were Commissioners John F. Barr, Jeffrey A. Cline, Derek Harvey, Wayne Keefer and Randall E Wagner. Also, present was Dawn Marcus, County Clerk and Zachary J. Kieffer, County Attorney; Michelle Gordon, County Administrator; Also present at various times, were: Rosalinda Pascual, Assistant County Attorney; Aaron Weiss, Assistant County Attorney; Jill Baker, Director, Planning and Zoning; Chip Rose, Director Human Resources; Kelcee Mace, Chief Financial Officer; Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Business and Economic Development; Greg Cartrette, Director/Code Official, Permits and Inspections; Andrew Eshleman, Director of Public Works and R. David Hays, Director, Emergency Services.

### **RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to reconvene in open session at 2:27 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

### **RECESS**

***EVENING MEETING AT THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSPORT***  
***Location: 2 NORTH CONOCOCHEAGUE STREET***  
***WILLIAMSPORT, MARYLAND***

### **MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by the full assemblage.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

President John F. Barr called the evening meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland, to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Vice-President Jeffrey A. Cline, Commissioner Derek Harvey, and Commissioner Randall E. Wagner. Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer was absent.

### **TOWN OF WILLIAMSPORT LEADERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Mayor Bill Green thanked the Commissioners for all of their support especially with the paving situation and requested an update on the library. He commented on how well the Police Deputy program is working.

Michelle Gordon, Washington County Administrator requested to bring the library issue back as an agenda item at a regular meeting and invited Jenny Bakos from the library to provide an update.

Jenny Bakos, Executive Director, Williamsport Library shared the library reopened to the public on March 20, 2024, and they currently are at a standstill regarding potential donors for a new space. They are in negotiations for potential land donors and recognized the importance of the library building.

Margaret Yaukey, Town Council, commented on the importance of keeping the library in the downtown core.

### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Commissioner Cline shared highlights from his week and events that he attended. He commented on seeing the Mayor at the MML dinner. Commissioner Cline thanked the Town for hosting the Commissioners and shared his heart will always be in Williamsport. He commented on the history of the library building, maintaining the building and a tribute to the 14 Williamsport High School students who perished in the 1935 bus tragedy in Rockville, MD.

Commissioner Harvey thanked the Town for hosting and thanked staff for attending. He appreciates the leadership of the Mayor and Council in Williamsport. He requested feedback from the Town on their needs, the emergency medical system and concerns regarding the library.

Commissioner Wagner thanked the Town for hosting and staff for attending. He commented on his history of raising his family on Artizan Street, walking the beat with Deputy Peyton and fishing with his grandson at River Bottom.

Commissioner Barr thanked the Town for hosting. He commented on upcoming events to include the Adams Family show at the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts and shared Conductor Elizabeth Shultz lives in Williamsport and will be celebrating 25 years with the Maryland Symphony Orchestra.

### **CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION**

Will from the Williamsport Volunteer Fire and EMS commented on the career staff, merger of EMS services with the County, full-time staffing, benefits and changes to the uniform.

Tom Freeman, Williamsport commented on the building collapse in Hancock and requested information on resources in the County to assist with blighted buildings.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Sheriff Brian Albert commented on the assignment of Deputy Koontz to the Police Deputy program.

Greg Cartrette, Director, Permits and Inspections shared he is working with the Mayor in Hancock regarding the building collapse. He provided information for citizens who have concerns regarding blighted properties, citizens can file a complaint about a building with structural issue concerns with the Permits and Inspections office.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator shared information regarding the costs associated with liens on blighted buildings. She thanked the Town for hosting and staff for attending. Ms. Gordon commented on being a lifelong resident of Washington County and graduating from Williamsport High School.

Mary Heeringa, Washington County Teachers Association thanked the City and County for the reopening of the library. She commented on the living in Williamsport and the school programs, her concerns with the budget and urged the Commissioners to fund the school's budget.

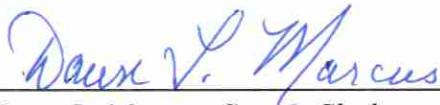
Kristy Gross, Clear Spring commented on being a Washington County Public School employee along with her husband. She discussed her concerns with students, resource officer needs and salaries, county revenues, State of Maryland budget cuts and possible school budget cuts.

Mayor Bill Green closed the meeting commenting on the library building, upcoming paving on Conococheague Street and putting possible weight restrictions on the bridge.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator will have staff review the possibility of putting weight restrictions on the Conococheague Bridge.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to adjourn at 6:37 p.m. The motion passed (4-0).



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Dawn L. Marcus, *County Clerk*