



Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland

Open Session Minutes

April 23, 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, Commissioner Randall E. Wagner and Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to approve the minutes of April 16, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Wagner thanked Alex Reed, County staff, and all who participated in Earth Day at Doubs Woods Park. He attended the Daughters of the American Revolution unveiling of the plaque at Kiwanis Park. Commissioner Wagner shared Open Airplane Days are at the Aviation Museum on Saturday and Sunday. He thanked County staff and First Responders for attending the SAREX Drill this past week. Commissioner Wagner attended the Washington County Career Expo at Hagerstown Community College this week and thanked Jonathan Horowitz, Director Business and Economic Development, and his staff for setting the event up. He commented on this evening's meeting in Smithsburg and recommended downloading the Sheriff's Department Smartphone Ap.

Commissioner Keefer recognized local resident and wrestler, Aaron Brooks, who will be competing at the 2024 Summer Olympics.

Commissioner Harvey commented on activities the County has been sponsoring including the tree planting. He shared in that activity by planting trees at his home for Earth Day. He commented on the successfulness of the Washington County Career Expo. Commissioner Harvey attended the Washington County Fire and Rescue Association meeting and commended the volunteers for all they do for the County. He attended the Commission on Aging's Gala on Saturday evening. Commissioner Harvey shared the 50th Annual East Coast Military Vehicle Rally will be held at the Hagerstown Aviation Museum May 2, 2024, through May 4, 2024. He will be there with his 1950 Green War US Army Weapons Carrier.

Commissioner Cline attended the tree planting event for Earth Day at Doubs Woods Park and thanked Alex Reed, associated agencies and County staff. He attended the SAREX Drill training and commended the combined efforts of the many different agencies in attendance to include County staff. Commissioner Cline attended the ceremony at the Halfway African American Cemetery and recognized Elizabeth Paul for granting an easement on her property for the benefit of the cemetery. He attended the Daughters of the American Revolution events at Kiwanis Park. He attended the event in the Square of Sharpsburg where 250th Anniversary markers were placed honoring the heroes of the

Revolutionary War. Commissioner Cline attended the Keedysville Spring Festival and recognized Resident Deputy Dakota Watkins and Alex Reed of the Stormwater Management Team. He attended the Washington County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association meeting. He attended the Tri County Council Membership meeting in Allegheny County.

Commissioner Barr thanked Oley Griffith, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, for meeting County Staff in South County and taking staff to the SAREX Drill while giving a historic tour of the South County area. He commented on learning the protocol for declaring a State of Emergency at the SAREX drill, and how that drill also promoted preparedness for emergencies of magnitude in the community. Commissioner Barr recognized Elizabeth Paul for dedicating her personal property for the Halfway African American Cemetery as they will now have access to clean up the cemetery property. He attended the Teacher of the Year Awards and recognized Brittany Collins of Springfield Middle School. Ms. Collins was awarded the Washington County Teacher of the Year; and she will now participate in the statewide Teacher of the Year Awards. Commissioner Barr shared upcoming events and informed the public of the upcoming evening meeting in Smithsburg.

STAFF COMMENTS

Eric Jacobs, Operations Manager, Emergency Services, presented a request for a change order for the Engine Fleet that was approved in 2022. In April 2024, they met at Pierce Manufacturing in Wisconsin and focused on three components safety, security, and efficiency. Eric indicated that their goal is to make sure the fleet is user friendly and functional for the volunteer companies who would be using the apparatus. These upgrades added to the price. They opted to take the 2022 unit and add 2024 features. The total shortfall is \$50,184.00; however, they will absorb the cost in their Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget. They are requesting a motion for approval to move forward with the purchase and approve the change order for the shortfall. Dave Hays, Director Emergency Management shared no additional funding is needed. This agenda item seeks permission to take the additional amount from their CIP budget. He added the bulk of the changes were safety oriented. The anticipated delivery will be in October or November 2024.

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

Chip Rose, Director, Human Resources, presented the request to approve the DES Job Family or Career Ladder between the EMT and Paramedic single role positions. DES would like permission to transition EMT single role jobs who qualify with Paramedic licenses. They would like permission to fill a single role job through a non-competitive job process once an EMT is qualified to be a Paramedic. Once qualified, DES will transfer the qualified employee without posting the job. If approved, DES would like to transfer these position numbers 1828, 1829 and 1830 to EMT single role positions.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the DES Job Family and transfers as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Chip Rose, Director, Human Resources, presented the request to move current employee, Andrew Wood, Firefighter FAO to DES Grade 2, Step 5 \$49,945.00/annually effective April 27, 2024.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve Andrew Wood, Firefighter FAO as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Chip Rose, Director, Human Resources, presented the request to hire two positions, for Jessica Doyle and Elaina Lyons, to the Emergency Medical Technician, Single Role Position DES Grade 2, Step 1 \$45,252.00/annually, the offer will be extended if approved.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to approve the hires of Jessica Doyle and Elaina Lyons as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk, presented the request to approve the appointment of Delancy Catlett to serve a first full, three-year term from May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2027, as the Clergy Representative on the Washington County Mental Health Authority. This is not a paid board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the appointment of Delancy Catlett as presented. The Motion passed unanimously.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk, presented the request to approve the appointment of Ronald Maggiore to serve a first full, three-year term from May 1, 2024, through April 30, 2027, as the Elder Advocate on the Washington County Mental Health Authority. This is not a paid board.

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to approve the appointment of Ronald Maggiore as presented. The Motion passed unanimously.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator, attended the Washington County Career Expo at Hagerstown Community College. She thanked the Business and Economic Development staff for participating in the event and Tony Parks from the Human Resources Department for manning the County's booth. She attended the multi-agency search and rescue exercise on April 18, 2024. Ms. Gordon attended the Earth Day tree planting event where County personnel and volunteers planted seventy-eight (78) trees at Doubs Woods Park. The tree plantings will ensure that as older growth dies off there will be newer growth trees for future generations of visitors. Other Earth Day events included trash and debris clean-up at our watersheds. She thanked Alex Reed, Watershed Specialist, for coordinating the events. On Friday, she attended the first of three meetings created by the Permits and Inspections Department to assist builders, residents and businesses with the transition to the new 2021 Building Codes and Standards. She thanked staff for coordinating those events. Ms. Gordon shared that staff is meeting with rating agencies next week to go over the economic and financial outlook for Washington County as part of the review the County's Bond Rating for the 2024 issuance. The County's current ratings are: Standard and Poor's rating is AA+, Moody's is Aa1 and Fitch's is AA+. The next meeting will be May 7, 2024; and, the Public Budget Hearing will be May 15, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Training Center for the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Paulie Ward, Hagerstown thanked Commissioners Barr, Harvey and Keefer for attending the Senior Gala at St. James School last week. He thanked Lou Scalley and the staff at St. James School.

Mrs. Bean, Substitute Teacher Washington County Public Schools shared hers support of the Graffiti Goons of Western Arts Middle School. A Go-Fund me page has been set up for the students to go to the Global Finals in Kansas City. They are holding additional fundraisers at local restaurants and are looking for any possible grant funding that may be available.

Carol Mowen, WCTA Hagerstown, shared her support for adequate funding for the Washington County Public Schools. She commented on the Kirwan Blueprint, funding formulas, requirements for State and Local funding, the impacts of inflation and thanked the Commissioners for their past contributions.

PUBLIC HEARING-HISTORIC PROPERTIES TAX CREDIT ORD. AMENDMENTS

President Barr convened a Public Hearing at 9:37 a.m. to obtain public comment for the Historic Properties Tax Credit Ordinance Amendments.

Jill Baker, Director, Planning and Zoning; Meghan Jenkins, GIS Coordinator, Planning and Zoning, presented that an application is being made to repeal the existing ordinance entitled "An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Credits for Improvements to Specified Historic Structures in Washington County Maryland" and to reenact, with amendments, "The Washington County Historic Properties Tax Credit Ordinance". The Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland adopted an ordinance entitled "An Ordinance to Provide Property Tax Credits for Improvements to Specified Historic Structures in Washington County, Maryland" on May 5, 1990. The purpose of the 1990 Ordinance was to encourage preservation and protection of historic structures by granting a County Property Tax Credit on the improvements made to structures in the "HP" Historic Preservation District and the "AO" Antietam Overlay District as defined in the Washington County Zoning Ordinance. These amendments seek to modernize and align the Ordinance with the changes made at the State and Local level since 1990 by increasing the percentage of tax credit to the maximum allowed by State law, clarify and expand eligible geographies, clearly define qualifying municipalities, expand qualifying rehabilitation expenses, and simplify the application process by accepting equivalent documentation. Since its inception in 1990, tax credits in the amount of \$103,000.00 have been processed. While these updates do intend to increase the percentage of credit from the existing 10% to 25%, based on the areas/properties that would qualify, the impact is not anticipated to be more than the existing sum the program has awarded to date.

There are several Rural Village areas that have been surveyed which include Antietam, Cavetown, Fairplay, Highfield, Leitersburg, Pen Mar, Ringgold, Rohrersville, Sandy Hook and Tilghmanton. There are other areas which will be surveyed in the future. Hagerstown is currently the only municipality included in the current Ordinance; and the updates seek to explicitly include municipalities and provide a means for all of them to participate. A final area of qualification includes the properties with the Maryland Historical Trust Easement for the duration of the tax credit. These properties are typically participating in State programs for tax credits and have agreed to exterior design provisions through the Maryland Historical Trust. The Ordinance updates also list the qualified rehabilitation expenses and provides that life safety and ADA requirements become eligible. The Ordinance explicitly states the application criteria for the tax credit and proposes to allow the Historic District Commission to accept applications of other State and Federal Tax Credit Programs if they are equivalent to the Ordinance.

The Public Hearing was opened for public comment:

John Williamson, The Terrace, Hagerstown, shared that he and his wife own a house was built in 1915. He has an approved State Tax Credit which has very rigorous requirements. Mr. Williamson shared the tax credits will incentivize people to do the necessary work on historic properties that they may not do otherwise and encouraged the Commissioners to approve the amendments.

Andrew Eshleman, Blue Heron Lane, Hagerstown, supports the amendments to apply an incentive-based program for historic preservation rather than a punitive one that protects private property rights.

His property dates back to 1737 and is one of the 103 properties listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. He has not used the current program due to the benefit not being worth the administrative effort and time loss. He believes expanding the tax credit percentage for restoration projects and the eligible pool of properties for historic properties will encourage others to rehabilitate properties. He supports the revisions to the Ordinance and hopes it will encourage others to see the value in historic preservation. He believes it will promote and support future efforts of other programs to help defray the renovation costs. These programs will help people to care for and maintain their property in the architectural style they were built. This program will help make sure historic homes do not fall into disrepair and become blighted properties too expensive to care for.

Ann Aldridge, Unger Road, Hagerstown, serves on the Historic District Commission and on the Washington County Historical Trust. She owns an 1803 historic stone house. She commented that the historic resources in the County are a tremendous asset to the County, visitors and the economy. Ms. Aldridge encouraged the Commissioners to pass the update. It will help to spread the word that historic preservation is important to the County. She echoes the previous speaker on the costs associated with maintaining a historic home and the current 10% is not worth filing for the tax credit.

The Public Comment was closed.

Commissioner Wagner shared his support for the Tax Credit Amendment.

Commissioner Harvey asked procedural questions regarding the tax credit duration, being tied to the property tax, expenditure of the entire credit, requirements for homes not in the Rural Village area and the need to apply for the National Historic Registry. He shared he has a historic stone home built in 1818. His neighbor's homes are all the same time period which are not in the Rural Village Area. He commented on the high costs associated with the repairs. Commissioner Harvey supports the Amendment.

Ms. Jenkins responded there are five years to expend the tax credits and have requirements that home must either be in the Rural Village area or on the National Historic Registry. The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties contains the surveys that the Board previously adopted through the Comprehensive Plan efforts that have a period of significance that is associated with the Rural Village. There are typically contributing and non-contributing structures that are listed individually in that documentation. If they are a contributing structure they would be eligible for the credit as they have had the survey completed. Homes not in the Rural Village Area would need to apply to be on the National Historic Registry; and her office assists with that application.

Commissioner Keefer shared his support of the Tax Credit Amendment and agrees with comments received from citizens. He noted that with this program, we can preserve the history and heritage we have in Washington County. Washington County is known for its stone houses and stone houses are inherent to the East Coast. He asked about the process to apply for the tax credit. He shared an example of a project needed for the tax credit. He commented about actions the towns need to take for their homes to qualify and discussed updating the tax credit brochure for the Historic Advisory Committee.

Ms. Jenkins responded that the homeowner would need to apply for the tax credit; and, the applications are reviewed during the May meetings each year. After May they would be applying for the following year's tax credit. She shared an example of a homeowner who applied for the credit with an estimate in place; however, because he needed a qualified professional to complete the scope of work, it took longer than he anticipated. Her office keeps the application for as long as the project takes to complete. The County would be contacted at the initial application and during the process they would take

pictures. The application would be reviewed once the process is completed. She shared that the towns would need to have a historic overlay in place for the area to qualify and would need to have a contributing Maryland inventory property number. The municipalities who had previously reached out were sent the Ordinance ahead of time to review.

The Public Hearing was closed at 10:04 a.m.

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

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the Amendments to the Washington County Historic Properties Tax Credit Ordinance as presented. The motion passed 4-1 Commissioner Harvey Abstained.

FY2025 GENERAL FUND AND CAPITAL BUDGET

Kelcee Mace, Chief Financial Officer, presented for informational purposes the FY2025 General Fund Budget was updated to reflect changes to individual department budgets based on the salary scale adjustment. There was no change to the overall budget amount. She presented a request for a consensus from the Board of Commissioners to take the budget as presented to the State. She shared a PowerPoint presentation. The proposed budget for all funds is \$368,312,440.00. She presented a request for a consensus from the Board of Commissioners to take the budget as presented to the Public Budget hearing on May 15, 2024.

The Commissioners reached a unanimous consensus (5-0) to take budget as presented to the State.

The Commissioners reached a unanimous consensus (5-0) to take the budget as presented to the Public Budget hearing on May 15, 2024.

REJECTION OF REQUEST FOR QUOTATION (Q-24-771) PRINTING OF ENVELOPES FOR VARIOUS COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

Aaron Weisner, Procurement Specialist, Purchasing; Rick Curry, Director, Purchasing, presented the request for a motion to take action, in the best interest of the County and to request the quotes for the Printing of Envelopes for Various County Departments be rejected. The quote specifications need to be revised. He requested approval to re-advertise and to extend the current contract for thirty (30) days. Notice of the Request for Quotation (RFQ) was listed on the State of Maryland's "eMaryland Marketplace Advantage" (eMMA) website, and on the County's website. Forty-Seven (47) persons/companies registered/ downloaded the quote document online and four (4) quotes were received for this service.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to reject the proposal as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

REJECTION OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (PUR-1660) EVENT PLANNING CONSULTANT/AGENCY

Rick Curry, Director, Purchasing, presented the request for a motion to take action, in the best interest of the County. He requested that the proposal for the Event Planning Consultant / Agency be rejected. The proposal received did not provide the requested information; and he requested approval to re-advertise. Notice of the Request for Quotation (RFQ) was listed on the State of Maryland's "eMaryland Marketplace advantage" (eMMA) website, on the County's website and in the local newspaper. Sixty-

Six (67) persons/companies registered/downloaded the quote document online and one (1) proposal was received for these services.

Commissioner discussion regarding the need for the event planner request and a request to review the revised copy of the readvertisement for the event planner.

Mr. Curry shared the event planner is being requested for the 250th anniversary event; and, he advised that will send the Commissioners a copy of the revised advertisement.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to reject the proposal as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

FY25 APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION (ARC) PRELIMINARY PROJECT DESCRIPTION REVIEW AND RANKING

Rachel Souders, Director, Grant Management, presented the request for a motion to accept the Preliminary Project Descriptions as prioritized by this Board and to forward the ranking to Tri-County Council of Western Maryland for funding consideration. As part of the annual ARC funding program, Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, the local administrator of these federal funds, requests the County review and prioritize projects submitted for grant funding consideration. A review committee consisting of directors from the offices of Planning & Zoning, Business & Economic Development, Engineering, and Grant Management has reviewed the projects and assigned a preliminary ranking. The Board of County Commissioners has the final authority to review and rank the proposals at its sole discretion prior to submission to Tri-County Council.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator, shared there was a typographical error in the original spreadsheet which has been corrected and handed out today to each commissioner. The total for Line 2 should be \$3,838,220; and the Grand Total should be \$4,416,726.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve to support the ranking as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

FY25 ADULT DAY REPORTING CENTER GRANT – APPROVAL TO SUBMIT APPLICATION AND ACCEPT FUNDING AS AWARDED

Meaghan Willis, Program Director, Day Reporting Center; Nicole Phillips, Senior Grant Manager, Grant Management, presented the request to approve submission of a grant application to the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services and accept funding as awarded.

The Washington County Sheriff's Office Day Reporting Center (WCSO DRC) is requesting approval to submit a grant application to the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim services and accept up to \$270,000.00 in awarded funding.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer moved to approve the submission of the grant and to accept funding as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

WRIGHT RURAL LEGACY PROGRAM (RLP) EASEMENT

Chris Boggs, Rural Preservation Administrator, Planning and Zoning, presented the request to approve the Samuel P. & Dana Moylan Wright RLP Easement project, in the amount of \$184,459.60 for 49.542 easement acres, paid for 100% by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, to adopt an

ordinance approving the easement purchase, and to authorize the execution of the necessary documentation to finalize the easement purchase.

The Wright property is located at 15544 Dellinger Rd., Williamsport, and the easement will serve to permanently preserve a valuable agricultural, scenic and environmental property in the County. The parcel is mostly agricultural and woodland areas. It lies in a part of Washington County that was heavily trafficked during the Civil War and the Battle of Antietam. The property is adjacent to the Whilden House which is on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Places and is also owned by the Wright's. The parcel adds on to a block of over 100 acres of contiguous preserved farmland near Antietam Battlefield and Williamsport. Eleven (11) development rights will be extinguished with this easement.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to approve the Wright Rural Easement as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

AGRICULTURE – USDA NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE UPDATE

Leslie Hart, Business Development Specialist, Business and Economic Development presented for informational purposes that the USDA compiles historical and present data. The USDA produces the Census of Agriculture Report every five (5) years. The 2022 data has been recently released reflects updates for the Washington County Agricultural Community. Washington County's agricultural business represents the backbone of the County's landscape. The 2022 Census data reports 869 operating family farms and \$167,907,000.00 in market value of products sold. Agriculture continues to be the largest economic driver in Washington County. Washington County is the largest producer of fruits, tree nuts and berries in the State of Maryland. Washington County has the largest inventory of beef cattle in the State. Washington County has the largest inventory of dairy cattle in the State. Washington County is the largest producer of milk in the State. Washington County is the largest producer of sheep, goat, wool, mohair, and milk products in the State. She shared that only 73% of Farms in Washington County have internet access which is a concern. She also shared that no farms were lost in the development of the warehouses.

Commissioner Barr clarified that the data under acres of farming should state 2003 increase and not decrease to make sure that the citizens understand the farming acres are increasing and not decreasing.

Commissioner Harvey requested clarification on the loss of thirty-three (33) dairy farms since 2017, whether the increase of beef producing farms are large farms or hobby farms and are there pork producing farms.

Ms. Hart shared that many farms in Washington County are dual income producing farms. There are many beef producing farms both small and large with the large having stock in the range of over one hundred (100). We do not have large pork producing farms; however, we are one of the largest in the state. The biggest challenge with the dairy industry is they must have multiple levels of income strains. The dairy industry is so heavily regulated that the costs on the back end are astronomical. Robot milking systems are very expensive; however, they allow for an increase in production.

Commissioner Keefer requested information regarding the former orchards in Hancock. He asked if they are still listed on the acreage of farming land. He requested data regarding the orchards in Hancock. He requested clarification of the statement that no farms were taken for warehouses. He stated that the Dickenson property was formerly where there is a warehouse now and that it was once agricultural fields. He wants to be careful on the message sent out. He feels that people do not care

about the zoning of the land. He wanted to make sure that it is understood that land being used for agricultural purposes, regardless of how it is zoned. Has been consumed by warehouses.

Ms. Hart clarified the orchards in Hancock predate her career and that twenty years ago they were taken off of the list. When the census is sent out that is the opportunity for the farmer's voice to be heard. She shared the Dickenson farm was taken out of Agricultural Zoning several years before the warehouse. It was still being leased for farmland. She considers the fact that route 70 and route 81 run through the County to be of importance and the zoning changes impact the acreage in the census.

AGRICULTURE – FACES OF FARMING PRESENTATION

Leslie Hart, Business Development Specialist, Business and Economic Development shared "Faces of Farming" is an agricultural-focused video marketing campaign that will showcase local Washington County farms every month, for one year. The "Faces of Farming" marketing videos will be showcased on the County's website, as well as and other social media platforms. The videos will target a new industry and highlight a local farmer from that specific agricultural industry. Additionally, the Faces of Farming marketing campaign will be utilized in Washington County Public Schools as an agricultural education element focused on kindergarten to fifth grade students. The campaign aims to connect Washington County youth directly with local farms. Today's farm is Antietam Pumpkins Farm in Sharpsburg, Maryland, which is a seasonal agritourism farm. Families can visit in the fall. They have pumpkins and fall activities with music where families can enjoy themselves.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to convene in closed at 10:36 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, a legal matter and conducted interviews.

Present during closed session were Commissioners John F. Barr, Jeffrey A. Cline, Derek Harvey, Wayne Keefer and Randall E Wagner; Dawn Marcus, County Clerk; Zachary J. Kieffer, County Attorney; Michelle Gordon, County Administrator; Rosalinda Pascual, Assistant County Attorney; Aaron Weiss, Assistant County Attorney; Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Business and Economic Development; Jill Baker, Director, Planning and Zoning; Chip Rose, Director Human Resources; and the Interviewees.

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to reconvene in open session at 12:59 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

RECESS

**EVENING MEETING AT THE TOWN OF SMITHSBURG
Location: 21 WEST WATER STREET
SMITHSBURG, 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 6:01 p.m. with the following members present: Vice-President Jeffrey A. Cline, Commissioner Derek Harvey, and Commissioner Randall E. Wagner and Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer.

RECOGNITION OF FORMER MAYOR MILDRED “MICKEY” MYERS.

Mayor Donald Souders recognized former Mayor Mildred “Mickey” Myers for her service to Smithsburg with a Proclamation. The Mayor declared April 23, 2024, as Mayor Mildred Mickey Myers Day. In addition, they will be dedicating the Council Room to the former Mayor in the near future.

Town Council members shared memories of the honor of being on the Town Council when Mickey was Mayor. They noted that it was a privilege and that she is a testament to the Town of Smithsburg. She was always willing to do anything needed to help. Mickey has been an inspiration and a trailblazer.

Delegate William Wivell presented a Citation from the Maryland Delegates to former Mayor Myers recognizing her as the matriarch of Smithsburg.

Liz Jones, Chief of Staff, shared that it was an honor to attend on behalf of Senator Corderman and the Senate of Maryland. She shared her respect for the former Mayor as she had the honor of working with her on the Central Committee. Ms. Jones noted that it was always fun to watch Mickey stand her ground. Ms. Jones thanked Mickey for her dedication to the Town of Smithsburg and all of Washington County.

County Commissioner President John Barr presented a certificate to former Mayor Myers. He shared memories of working with her at MML. He recognized Mickey for thirty-eight (38) years of service to the Town of Smithsburg.

Former Mayor Mickey Myers was overwhelmed. She was happy to be at the ceremony and happy that her family was in attendance. She shared her appreciation for everything that has been done for her over the years. She is the proudest of Veteran’s Park and is appreciative of everything the Commissioners and Staff have done. She shared speaking with a citizen, “Mary” who told her that she would never make it as Mayor. Mary is no longer with us, but Mickey wished that Mary could have been there today to see the recognition.

TOWN OF SMITHSBURG LEADERS’ REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Mayor Donald Souders and Town Manager Brian Brandt thanked the Commissioners for attending the evening meeting and for their support.

Mayor Souders requested an update on the Wastewater Treatment Plan upgrades, timetables and status of the regional water study bill. He shared the expected purchase rate amounts for the next five years and discussed how difficult it is to work with the City of Hagerstown. He commented their proposed

rate increase from the City of Hagerstown is 14% each year over the next 3 years and then 3% for each year for the next 2 years after that. He asked if there is some ARPA funding available. For sewer, the town has already implemented a 3% increase last year. They will be discussing budget cuts and long-term improvement plans to the infrastructure.

David Dan, Town Council Member, discussed the restructuring and water rate increases and shared the City of Hagerstown was not interested in working with the Town of Smithsburg. He asked the Commissioners if they can offer any other options for water sources.

Brian Brandt, Town Manager, shared a presentation. He provided copies of the presentation to the Commissioners. The presentation discussed the issues the Town is facing with the pump stations and costs of a new pump.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Wagner commented on the water issues stating that the County is working on those issues behind the scenes and discussing them on a weekly basis. He requested clarifications on the pump station costs. Commissioner Wagner shared his respect for former Mayor Myers, thanked Staff and the Town Council for attending the evening meeting.

Commissioner Cline requested information on the dollar amount of the increases and commented that best practices for infrastructure funding should be taken from the Enterprise Fund. He shared his prior experience with former Mayor Myers when he interviewed for the Central Committee.

Commissioner Harvey commented on the use ARPA funding. He thanked Mayor Souders for hosting the Commissioners and staff for attending. Commissioner Harvey highlighted upcoming dates for early voting at the town library. He commented on the EMS transition and acknowledged the Smithsburg Volunteers. He shared his family appreciates Veteran's Park.

Commissioner Keefer shared former Mayor Myers is a spitfire. He was surprised to learn that she was ninety (90) years old. He commented that she has always answered the phone and gave her true responses. He is looking forward to taking his daughter to Veteran's Park.

Commissioner Barr thanked Mayor Souders and the Town Council. Commissioner Barr stated that he appreciates their working relationship. He indicated that the County would continue to work through the water issues with them. He shared that former Mayor Myers was always the first to arrive at the MML functions and the last to leave. Commissioner Barr commented that it was an honor to be here for her celebration.

CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION

There was no citizen participation.

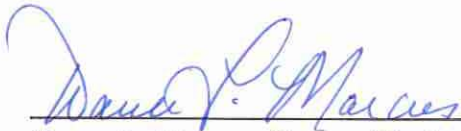
STAFF COMMENTS

Mark Bradshaw, Director Environmental Management, shared the Wastewater Treatment Plant contract has been award to HRI incorporated. HRI has been working on submitting their project submittal. Once received, we can establish a construction schedule. Longer than anticipated delivery dates of critical equipment are impacting the schedule. They expect construction to start around the first week of May. He discussed City of Hagerstown water rate changes. Mr. Bradshaw stated the life of a pump station is about twenty (20) years.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator, shared the legislative bill originally called for a water capacity study and regional water authority and would have included input from the County, Municipalities and the City of Hagerstown. The bill did not pass. A separate bill has been introduced by the Delegation for the City of Hagerstown to complete a water capacity study. County staff is working internally and with legal counsel to determine what our options are. She shared staff is looking into other potential options which could include wells or an additional draw off the Potomac River. Once potential options are identified they will share them with the individual towns. The entire process includes the regional water authority and short-term water solutions as well. Ms. Gordon shared there are very limited funds available in the County's ARPA fund balance potentially for their pump station repairs. She discussed the timeline for approval of that ARPA funding and asked the Town to submit a formal request for ARPA funding.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to adjourn at 6:48 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



Dawn L. Marcus, *County Clerk*