



## Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland

### *Open Session Minutes*

October 17, 2023

#### **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 Randall E. Wagner, Commissioner Derek Harvey and Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer.

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

Commissioner Wagner welcomed the family of the Weddle's. He thanked Meritus medical for their care. He commented on the Women's Commission TED EX event at the Kepler Theater.

Commissioner Keefer commented he would like to have another joint meeting with the City of Hagerstown and would like a of the Commission. He would like to revisit meeting with the Board of Education for an update as well. He thanked Bob Bruchey for his service to the City of Hagerstown.

Commissioner consensus pending a firm agenda and the location.

Commissioner Harvey attended the Comp Plan meeting in Smithsburg. He attended the Washington County 100<sup>th</sup> Annual Farm Bureau Dinner which was a nice event with many representatives from the tri-state area.

Commissioner Cline welcomed today's visitors. He attended the BMX Northeast Finals at the Fair Ground. He attended the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Farm Bureau. Commissioner Cline attended the opening of the Aviation Program at Williamsport High School. He attended the opening of the Chick Filet on Sharpsburg Pike, and he attended the Steam Fest at the college. He commented on the USS Cole attack on October 12, 2000, and recognized two local sailors, Patrick Roy and Craig Wibberley who were killed in the terrorist attack to honor them and all of the victims.

Commissioner Barr welcomed today's visitors. He wished a happy seventh birthday to his granddaughter Hadley Grace Hawbaker. He apologized for missing the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Farm Bureau as he attended the State Teacher of the Year Award in Baltimore our own Raymond Weber from Salem Elementary was one of seven finalists. There was a surprise visit from Governor Wes Moore at the event. He attended the fifth Town Hall meeting Sunday at Bnai Abraham in honor of their 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary in our community. Commissioner Barr attended the Aviation Program ribbon cutting ceremony at Williamsport High School and wishes them much success. He attended the Airport Advisory Committee meeting last week. He attended the TED EX Women's Commission Event and thanked Beth Harvey for her hard work and Hagerstown Community College. Commissioner Barr congratulated Black Rock Golf Course for being recognized as the best golf course in the tri-state area. He welcome Greg Cartrette to Washington County. He attended the appreciation breakfast at the Salvation Army this morning and thanked the volunteers, he requested a consensus from the

Commission to do a ringing of the bell again this year to support the community. He commented on upcoming events to include tonight's evening meeting at Clear Spring. Reminded of flu shots in the building today.

Commissioner consensus to schedule a ringing of the bell event through the Salvation Army.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator attended the grand opening on Chick Filet. She attended the WC Coalition meeting at the Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Gordon attended the Aviation Program ribbon cutting ceremony. She commented on the Human Resources Department program Management Bootcamp and Jason Millier is working on a wellness program called Fit Pro for our employees. Ms. Gordon commented the next Comprehensive Plan on October 25, 2023, in Williamsport will be the last.

Michelle Gordon, County Administer, presented the recommendation that Kelcee Mace be appointed as the Chief Financial Officer at a Grade 20, Step 17, salary \$148,179.00 annually with an effective date of October 16, 2023.

Commissioner Wagner , seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the appointment of Kelcee Mace as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Michelle Gordon, County Administer, presented the request to advertise for Ms. Mace's replacement for the position of Deputy Director of Budget and Finance at a Grade 17.

Commissioner consensus to advertise for the Deputy Director position,

Michelle Gordon, County Administer, presented the recommendation to hire Dominic Turano as the Deputy Director of Human Resources at a Grade 16, Step 5, salary \$80,995.00 annually with a start date to be determined by Human Resources.

Commissioner Cline , seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to approve the appointment of Dominic Turano as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator welcomed and introduced Greg Cartrette as the new Director of Permits and Inspection his first day was yesterday.

Gregory Cartrette, Director of Permits appreciates the opportunity and is looking forward to working with staff.

Zachary Kiefer, Assistant County Attorney, presented the recommendation to re-appoint Amber Smart, Ronald Humble and Danielle Weaver to serve a first full three-year term on the Police Accountability Board and to approve the re-appointment of Charles Summers to serve a first full three-year term on the Administrative Charging Committee. The Police Accountability Board is not a paid board. The Administrative Charging Committee is a paid board.

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

Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Business and Economic Development presented that next week kicks off Economic Development week across Maryland. He introduced the Department's online trivia hunt game. Every citizen is encouraged to play and those who provide a correct answer will be entered into a drawing on Friday for a gift of a Visa Gift Card.

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Stephanie Phillips, Summit Avenue, Hagerstown has requested parking information form security. She commented on her experience visiting many meetings in multiple counties and states. She appreciates the meetings. She commented on the need of support from every citizen.

### **RESULTS FROM WASHINGTON COUNTY MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL INNOVATION GRANT**

Leslie Hart, Business Development Specialist, Department of Business and Economic Development and Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Department of Business and Economic Development presented the Washington County Department of Business and Economic Development developed an agricultural focused innovation grant program for Washington County Maryland agricultural producers and businesses. The grant was advertised in the late July timeframe and closed on August 21, 2023. The total grant requests received from 23 applications exceeded \$562,000.00. The approved Agricultural Innovation Grants in the total amount of \$100,000.00 were awarded in the September 2023 time frame to the following recipients: Creek Bound Farms LLC for purchase of a drone trailer to complement their existing drone equipment. (\$23,850.00); Waltz Family Farm for expansion and housing needs for their beef operation. (\$25,000.00); Painted Pastures for renovation and upgrades to kitchen area to add new product lines. (\$1,150.00); Milk and Honey Farms for equipment expansion for their vegetable operation. (\$25,000.00); Deliteful Dairy for 12-month seating capacity to complement their milk and cheese increase production. (\$25,000.00). Grant request examples received included expansion of advertising and marketing efforts, educational outreach initiatives, farm buildings improvements, upgrades and enhancements, technological advancements for animal specific operations, and purchase of equipment. The full \$100,000 total grant for 2022-2023 has been awarded. The awards were based on a point component.

### **PRESENTATION OF 2023-2024 WASHINGTON COUNTY FARM OF THE YEAR**

Leslie Hart, Washington County Department of Economic and Business Development, Agriculture Business Specialist announced the 2023 – 2024 Farm of the Year to Creek Bound Farms LLC. The farm was previously recognized in 2011 and received the first award under the ownership of Tim and Bonnie Weddle. This year they are recognized under the ownership of Jeremiah and Jenelle Weddle. Creek Bound Farms LLC was recognized as the Maryland Conservation Steward in 2013 and recognized their accomplishments over the years. Photographs were taken of the group with the Commission.

Jeremiah Weddle, owner Creek Bound Farms LLC, thanked Leslie and everyone in the Ag Community he also thanked the family and staff of the farm.

Jonathan Horowitz, Director Business and Economic Development recognized Leslie Hart as she was recognized for the second year in a row by the International Economic Development Council for her marketing efforts in agriculture Washington County. Her magazine Grown Local received the gold medal award. The Faces of Farming Campaign received a bronze medal award.

The Commissioners presented Leslie with a Certificate from the Commissioners, they also presented the Gold Medal Award, and the Bronze Medal Award received from the International Economic Development Council.

**CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT- APPROVAL TO SUBMIT APPLICATION**

Nicole Phillips, Senior Grant Manager, Office of Grant Management and Lt. Val Buskirk, Washington County Sheriff's Office, Judicial Division presented the recommendation to approve the submission of the application for the Child Support Administration Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement to the Maryland Department of Human Services requesting a total of \$483,808.00 for FY24 and accept funding as awarded by the agency.

Commissioner discussion regarding distribution of the funding.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline moved to approve the submission of the application for the Child Support Administration Cooperative Reimbursement Agreement as presented and authorized the execution of the necessary documentation. The motion passed unanimously.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE CONTRACT – LEASE/PURCHASE (INTG-23-0122) – ONE (1) JOHN DEERE 624P WHEEL LOADER**

Brandi Naugle, Buyer, Purchasing; Dave Mason, Deputy Director, Solid Waste presented the recommendation to authorize by Resolution, for the Solid Waste Department to lease/purchase one (1) John Deere 624P Wheel Loader from Jesco Inc, of South Plainfield, NJ for a total cost of \$294,040.27 and to utilize another jurisdiction's contract that was awarded by Sourcewell, (Contract 032119-JDC) to John Deere & Company of Cary, NC. Funds are available in the amount of \$604,601.10 in the department's operating budget 535055-21-21020.

Commissioner discussion regarding lease purchase with option, life expectancy and maintenance agreement.

Commissioner Wagner , seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to authorize by Resolution, for the Solid Waste Department to lease/purchase one (1) John Deere 624P Wheel Loader from Jesco Inc., as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**RESCIND CONTRACT AWARD (PUR-1607) – MLK ELECTRICAL SERVICES UPGRADE**

Brandi Naugle, Buyer, Purchasing; Andrew Eshleman, Director, Public Works; Danny Hixon, Deputy Director, Buildings, Grounds, and Facilities presented the request to relieve Star Excavating and Electrical, LLC., of Clear Spring, MD from the contract without prejudices for the contracted electrical services in Washington County's MLK Building approved by the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County on July 11, 2023, for the total sum of \$204,372.60.

Commissioner discussion regarding bonding requirements.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to rescind the bid as presented. The motion passed 4-0. Commissioner Barr abstained from the vote.

**CONTRACT AWARD (PUR-1607) – MARTIN LUTHER KING (MLK) ELECTRICAL UPGRADES**

Brandi Naugle, Buyer, Purchasing; Andrew Eshleman, Director, Public Works; Danny Hixon, Deputy Director, Buildings, Grounds, and Facilities presented the request to award the contract for the MLK Electrical Upgrades project to the responsible, responsive bidder, Ebenezer Electric, LLC., of Woodbridge, VA who submitted the lowest total lump sum bid in the amount of \$290,000.00

Commissioner discussion regarding the bid process and providing classes for local businesses to assist with the process.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to award the contract for the MLK Electrical Upgrades project to the responsible, responsive bidder, Ebenezer Electric, LLC., as presented. The motion passed 4 - 0. Commissioner Barr abstained from the vote.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to convene in closed at 10:02 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. The motion passed unanimously.

In closed session, the Commissioners discussed budget items, personnel issues and an update on emergency management services.

Present during closed session were Commissioners John F. Barr, Jeffrey A. Cline, Randall E. Wagner, Wayne K. Keefer and Derek Harvey. Also present was Dawn Marcus, County Clerk; Zachary Kieffer, Assistant County Attorney; Also present, for a certain matter, was; Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Business and Economic Development; Dave Chisholm, Deputy Director Emergency Services; and Tom Brown, Director Emergency Management.

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to reconvene in open session at 10:48 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

**RECESS**

**EVENING MEETING AT THE TOWN OF CLEAR SPRING**  
*Location: Town Hall, 146 Cumberland Street, Clear Spring, MD*

**INVOCATION 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**

Vice President Jeffrey A. Cline 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: Commissioner Randall E. Wagner, Commissioner Derek Harvey and Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer.

President John F. Barr was absent.

### **TOWN OF CLEA SPRING'S LEADERS REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Mayor Steve Blickenstaff thanked the Commission for coming to Clear Spring. He commented on the issue of the County taking over real estate tax billing. They have not been approached about this, they heard about it from Keedysville. They are not in support of it. He thanked Commissioner Cline for coming to the County Park and riding the bicycle and commented on the need for a disability access path in the park and requested a walking path around the park which would assist with providing access to the little league fields. He recognized county agencies and employees. Mayor Blickenstiff discussed issues with permitting and has discussed them with the permitting office. He provided an update on the hotel tax uses for the year, Fall Fest is this Saturday, Christmas Town will be an all-day event in the town this year. He recognized the resident deputy for the outstanding job that he does.

### **COUNTY STAFF INTRODUCTION**

Sheriff, Brian Albert; Mark Bradshaw Director of Environmental Management; Scott Hobbs, Director of Engineering; Andrew Eshleman Director of Public Works; Jonathan Horowitz, Director of Business and Economic Development.

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

Commissioner Keefer thanked the town for having the Commission and commented on his drive in and the view of the beautiful leaves and the church steeple. He shared feedback received from the Comprehensive Plan meetings.

Commissioner Harvey commented on the feedback received from the Comprehensive Plan and reminded of next weeks meeting in Williamsport. He discussed taking care of our communities to include development, schools, water and sewer, public safety and concerns for fire and EMS. Commissioner Harvey clarified the budget overage and the fifteen million dollars in loans and unfunded requirements including new projects for economic developments, funding additional revenues, grants and tax increases.

Commissioner Wagner thanked the Town of Clear Spring and thanked staff for attending. He discussed the real estate tax issue which has not been discussed with the Commissioners and they have not provided support. Commissioner Wagner commented on the permits issue and the possible use of a map.

Commissioner Cline thanked the Town of Clear Spring and commented on the bike riding event. He recognized County Administrator Michelle Gordon, the first female County Administrator.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator thanked the Town of Clear Spring for recognizing the staff and over the years she has enjoyed spending time in Clear Spring. She addressed the real estate tax issue, this has not been brought before the County Commissioners for consideration, there are a lot of steps involved and would not be able to be provided for free possibly a cost sharing however a cost analysis, an MOU and other issues would need to be addressed which would be required prior to bringing it before the Commissioners.

Commissioner Cline recognized Juanita Grimm with a certificate honoring her for her 40 years of service to the communities.

**CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Heath Barnes, Mayor of Woodsboro, Maryland is running for congress and commented on his reasons for running.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to adjourn at 6:23 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



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Dawn L. Marcus, *County Clerk*

