

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF  
WASHINGTON COUNTY  
Hagerstown, Maryland**

August 1, 2017

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Barr offered the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by the full assemblage.

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Terry L. Baker called the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland, to order at 10:11 a.m. at 100 West Washington Street, Room 1113, with the following members present: Commissioners John F. Barr, Wayne K. Keefer and LeRoy E. Myers, Jr. Vice President Jeffrey A. Cline was absent.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 25, 2017**

Commissioner Myers, seconded by Keefer, moved to approve the minutes of July 25, 2017. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent.)

**COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Commissioner Keefer attended the recent open house at Fort Ritchie regarding the Cascade Town Centre project. He suggested that the County Commissioners schedule a yearly evening meeting in Cascade.

Commissioner Barr commented on attending the open house at Cascade.

Commissioner Baker also attended the Cascade open house. He described the commemoration of the 64<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Korean War held locally at the Korean War Veterans monument. Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan and former County Commissioner and veteran Ron Bowers spoke during the event.

**REPORTS FROM COUNTY STAFF**

**Hagerstown Regional Airport**

Phil Ridenour, Director, Hagerstown Regional Airport (HGR), requested approval and acceptance of a \$250,373 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) toward the acquisition of a new aircraft de-icing vehicle to replace a 1988 vehicle at HGR. This represents a 90% grant from the FAA along with 5% (\$13,910) from the Maryland Aviation Administration and 5% (\$13,910) from the County, bringing the total project to \$278,195. The purchase is contained in the Airport's current Capital Improvement Plan.

Commissioner Barr, seconded by Keefer, moved to accept a \$250,373 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration to be used towards the acquisition of a new aircraft de-icing vehicle at the Hagerstown Regional Airport as presented. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent.)

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### **Emergency Services**

David Hays, Director, Emergency Services, updated the Commissioners regarding the study designed to develop a comprehensive emergency plan for Washington County. The plan is in its first draft and under review by various parties. Mr. Hays noted that volunteer staffing continues to be an issue; however, the County is working through a staffing plan that will be presented at a future date for consideration by the Commissioners. Mr. Hays also discussed the locally planned Emergency Services Public Safety Training Center that will be able to present the same curriculum currently provided at the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute.

### **County Administrator**

County Administrator Rob Slocum discussed the Cascade open house where over 200 visitors were able to view plans and have questions answered by JGBLI and County staff. He advised that former PenMar Development Corporation Executive Director Dori Nipps presented a \$24,386 check to the County from an insurance closeout and requested that the funds be donated to the Cascade Community Center. The Commissioners agreed by consensus to donate the amount as requested.

### **Budget and Finance**

Debra Murray, Chief Financial Officer, discussed the recent Financial Condition Analysis report compiled by the Budget and Finance Office that defines the County's financial condition, the forces affecting it and the obstacles associated with measuring it. The document identifies existing and emerging financial issues and provides a basis for developing remedial action if required. Ms. Murray reported on the County's stable cash reserve and liquidity ratios that are available to meet payment demands. Expenditures per capita increased 34% from 2011-15 mainly due to added emergency services costs. County capital assets are catching up after negative ratios during the 2012-15 recession periods where those purchases were temporarily eliminated. Ms. Murray discussed the County's overall slow rise in median age population that affects budget planning; as the population ages, it presents more requirements. Washington County's unemployment rate has dropped from 8% to the current 5%. A change in the number of jobs available in the community is a measure of/influence on business activity. She noted that general indicators for housing are increasing and crime is down according to Sheriff Doug Mullendore. The Commissioners discussed the information contained in the report and commended Ms. Murray and staff for the report.

### **County Clerk – Appointments to Boards/Commissions**

Commissioner Barr, seconded by Myers, moved to appoint Donnie Stotemyer to fulfill an unexpired term through June 30, 2019 as the Municipal League representative to the Economic Development Commission. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent.)

### **CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION**

Jim Devine, P. O. Box 2217, Hagerstown, discussed concerns regarding President Donald J. Trump.

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Leslie Cruz, 44 East Trego Road, Keedysville, commented against the proposed Civil War Rail Trail Project to be presented next on the Commissioners' meeting agenda.

Joseph Caha, 1840 Regina Drive, Hagerstown, commented against the proposed Civil War Rail Trail and suggested that a public meeting be held on the proposal.

Ron Vertrees, 127 East Main Street, Sharpsburg, spoke in favor of the Civil War Rail Trail.

### **CIVIL WAR RAIL TRAIL PROJECT**

Chip Wood, Consulting Environmental Engineer, and Dan Spedden, President, Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), described the Civil War Rail Trail (CWRT) Project that was previously presented to the Commissioners in 2012. The proposed CWRT project corridor begins at City Park in Hagerstown and ends at the C&O Canal towpath in the southern portion of the County. It would be ten feet wide by 24 miles long and accommodate people of all ages and mobility. He provided a history of the proposal that was first considered by the State of Maryland in 1993 and also noted present-day grant funding that might be available for the CWRT. Mr. Wood requested that the County Commissioners and staff review the reports as provided and give their assessment to Mr. Wood within sixty days.

Dan Spedden indicated that he and the CVB's Board of Directors fully support the development of the CWRT in Washington County. He noted that State and National parks are the number one reason visitors visit Washington County. The CWRT would be a State park project/facility.

### **PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS FOR TREGO ROAD BRIDGE PROJECT AND TREGO MOUNTAIN ROAD NORTH AND SOUTH CULVERT REPLACEMENT**

Susan Small, Real Property Administrator, Engineering, requested approval of option agreements for easement and fee simple acquisitions along Trego Road, Trego Mountain Road, Twilight Lane and Alva Court to allow for culvert replacement and drainage improvements on Trego Mountain Road and a bridge replacement on Trego Road. This is a budgeted Capital Improvement Plan project. The five properties involve temporary construction easements for 3524 Trego Mountain Road – 5,828 square feet, 3515 -3539 Twilight Lane – 2,353 square feet, 4128 Trego Road – 3,384 square feet, 4239 Trego Road – 1,703 square feet, and 19906 Alva Court – 1,255 square feet. Fee simple areas include 3524 Trego Mountain Road – 3,649 square feet, 3515-3539 Twilight Lane – 1,043 square feet, 4128 Trego Road – 2,742 square feet, and 4239 Trego Road – 691 square feet.

Commissioner Myers, seconded by Keefer, moved to approve the option agreements for easement and fee simple acquisitions along Trego Road, Trego Mountain Road, Twilight Lane and Alva Court as presented and to adopt the proposed ordinance approving the purchase and to authorize the execution of the necessary documentation to finalize the acquisitions. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent.)

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**PURCHASE OF 14201 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, HAGERSTOWN**

Susan Small, Real Property Administrator, requested approval of an agreement of sale for \$150,000 to purchase property at 14201 Pennsylvania Avenue for the purpose of the future Showalter Road Extended and to improve the safety at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Showalter Road. The proposal was presented to the County Commissioners on May 16, 2017 and a decision was made at that time to revisit the potential purchase after a cost to demolish the buildings was received by the County. Ms. Small advised that a bid of \$17,600 had been obtained to demolish the existing building. There is an available budget in the Capital Improvement Plan for the project that would be reduced by the requested amount of \$150,000.00.

Commissioner Myers, seconded by Barr, moved to approve the agreement of sale to purchase property at 14201 Pennsylvania Avenue for the purpose of the future Showalter Road Extended for \$150,000 as presented. Commissioner Keefer discussed the potential future purchase of additional property toward the west. Rob Slocum and Scott Hobbs, Director, Engineering, provided information on the road improvement plan that includes tying into Paradise Church Road and the widening of Longmeadow Road. The motion passed unanimously. (3-0, Commissioner Cline was absent and Commissioner Barr was temporarily out of the meeting room during the vote.)

**REQUEST TO DECLARE REAL PROPERTY AS SURPLUS PROPERTY AND CONVEY THE SAME – 13526 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE**

Susan Small requested approval to declare certain real property located at 13526 Pennsylvania Avenue as surplus property and to authorize advertising the County's intent to convey the said property. The house on the property was razed to make way for needed right of way and road improvements along Maugans Avenue and 14,200 square feet of unimproved land remains. Ms. Small informed the Commissioners that Pennsylvania Avenue 2003, LLC recently submitted a signed Letter of Intent to the County indicating its desire to purchase the property for \$72,100.00 with a requested ninety-day study period and closing to be thirty days after the expiration of the study period.

The Commissioners discussed the option of offering the property for sale to the public. Scott Hobbs and Rob Slocum described the parcel that was acquired during the Maugans Avenue widening project. County staff recommended selling the property to Pennsylvania Avenue 2003, LLC due to its ownership of adjacent property. The Commissioners expressed their desire to make the property available through a public sale process and requested that staff review it and make a recommendation.

Commissioner Barr, seconded by Keefer, moved to declare the real property located at 13526 Pennsylvania Avenue as surplus property and to authorize advertising the County's general intent to convey said property pursuant to the Code of Public Local Laws. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent.)

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**CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioner Myers, seconded by Barr, moved to convene in closed session at 11:21 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; to consult with staff, consultants or other individuals about pending or potential litigation; and to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter; in accordance with Section 3-305(b)(1) (4), (7) and (8) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent).

In closed session, the Commissioners discussed/considered a number of County employee position recommendations and related staffing issues with County staff; considered specific issues relating to a proposal by a business entity hoping to locate, expand or remain in the County/State; and discussed issues relating to a legal matter with staff and counsel.


During closed session, the Commissioners provided direction to staff regarding a number of specific personnel/employment recommendations; provided guidance to staff regarding a proposal by a business entity hoping to locate/expand in the County/State; and requested additional information from staff and counsel regarding an ongoing legal matter.

Present during closed session were Commissioners Terry L. Baker, John F. Barr, LeRoy E. Myers, Jr. and Wayne K. Keefer. Also present were Robert J. Slocum, County Administrator; Vicki C. Lumm, County Clerk; John M. Martirano, County Attorney; and at various times Sarah Sprecher, Assistant County Administrator; Debra Peyton, Benefits Administrator, Health and Human Services; Jim Hovis, Director, Community Grant Management; Mark Bradshaw, Deputy Director, Environmental Management; Rebecca Gander, Chief of Permits, Permitting; Susan Small, Real Property Administrator, and Scott Hobbs, Director, Engineering; Jodi Bell, and Thomas Dolina.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Myers, seconded by Barr, moved to adjourn at 1:15 p.m. The motion passed unanimously. (4-0, Commissioner Cline was absent.)

  
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Robert J. Slocum, County Administrator

  
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John M. Martirano, County Attorney

  
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Vicki C. Lumm, County Clerk