

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

*Open Session Minutes*

**January 29, 2019**

**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 Jeffrey A. Cline called the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland, to order at 8:04 a.m. at 100 West Washington Street, Room 1113, Hagerstown, Maryland, with the following members present: Vice President Terry L. Baker and Commissioners Wayne K. Keefer, Cort F. Meinelschmidt, and Randall E. Wagner.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Meinelschmidt, moved to approve the minutes of January 15, 2019. The motion passed unanimously

*The Commissioners relocated the Closed Session portion of the meeting to Suite 1115, 100 West Washington Street, Hagerstown, Maryland.*

**CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to convene in closed session at 8:04 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, and to consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State, in accordance with Section 3-305(b)(1) and (4) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The motion passed unanimously.

In closed session, the Commissioners discussed the potential for a business entity or entities to locate in the State and County, and discussed a variety of personnel matters, including the filling of vacancies and disciplinary, performance, and resignation matters, and to receive legal advice regarding same.

Present during closed session were Commissioners Jeffrey A. Cline, Terry L. Baker, Wayne K. Keefer, Cort F. Meinelschmidt, and Randall E. Wagner. Also present were Robert J. Slocum, County Administrator; Krista L. Hart, County Clerk; Kirk C. Downey, County Attorney; Kendall McPeak, Assistant County Attorney, and at various times Deb Peyton, Director, Health and Human Services; Deb Condo, Deputy Director, Health and Human Services; Dan DiVito, Director, Environmental Management; Jonathan Hart, Assistant Director of Fire Services; Sam Anderson, Operations Manager, Emergency Services; and Susan Small, Director, Business Development.

*The Commissioners returned the Open Session portion of the meeting to Suite 1113, 100 West Washington Street, Hagerstown, Maryland.*

### **RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Meinelschmidt, moved to reconvene in open session at 10:32 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Commissioner Baker shared that he attended a meeting of the Community Action Council and he stressed that members and support are needed for that Council; he encourages the citizens to become involved.

Commissioner Keefer shared that he and Commissioner Meinelschmidt attended a meeting with representation of the Fort Ritchie Community Center and Rob Slocum, County Administrator, to discuss a draft plan to gap the budget, as well as to provide a solution for a long-term plan to work with their existence at that location.

Commissioner Wagner shared that he supports consideration of a Washington County Public School Student Representation joining the Board of County Commissioners meetings. He has also requested a list which shows properties currently owned by Washington County so that the information can be reviewed for liquidation, to release funds. Additionally, he shared that he is a member of the Airport Advisory Board and he anticipates great changes at the Hagerstown Airport. He also serves on the Commission for Women and encouraged everyone to become more involved with that organization by attending sponsored expos, meetings, and funding drives.

Commissioner Meinelschmidt echoed Commissioner Keefer's comments regarding the Fort Ritchie Community Center. Additionally, he noted that all Commissioners were in attendance for the Clear Spring Fire and Police Banquet last Saturday, he appreciated the outcome. He also thanked all staff at the Washington County Landfill for the informative tour of their location and stated that he looks forward to visiting other County facilities.

President Cline discussed efforts in reaching additional citizens by holding afternoon Board meetings and shared information regarding a survey currently underway on the Washington County website, which would compute a need among citizens for the afternoon and/or early evening meetings. Commissioner Cline shared that this is a group effort among all the County Commissioners. Additionally, he commented on the lack of Fire and Rescue Volunteers in our community and the awareness that is needed to assist with funding and staffing in those organizations.

### **REPORTS FROM COUNTY STAFF**

#### **County Administrator**

Rob Slocum shared that senior staff will present departmental / divisional information to the Board.

### **YOUTH MERITORIOUS AWARDS**

The Commissioners presented certificates of merit to students selected by the Washington County Office of Grant Management (OGM) for their scholastic achievement, leadership qualities, community service performed or other positive contributions to their school or community. The following students received January 2019 Youth Meritorious Awards: Indira Aranha, Boonsboro Middle School; Christopher Loble, Northern Middle School; Macie Montiel, Smithsburg High

School; and Alyssa Getz, North Hagerstown High School. Each student received a Washington County lapel pin from the Commissioners and a \$100 Office Max gift card from the OGM. The Commissioners commended the students for their achievements and families for their support.

### **CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION**

Karen Luther, 1701 Abby Lane, Hagerstown MD, (former Director of Wash. County Purchasing) brought forth information regarding implementing Local Preference. Ms. Luther discussed the topic as written in the Code of Public Local Laws.

Tom Clemons, Chairman of Historic District Commission, Keedysville, MD, shared with the Board, the number of properties and structures on the National Historic Registry. Additionally, he discussed the demolition of the Emmert Wingert House. He mentioned Historical Tourism and requested that the Board consider a Delay of Demolition Permit resolution.

### **PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATION ANNOUNCING JANUARY AS PORK MONTH FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY AND PRESENTATION TO WALTZ FAMILY**

The Commissioners presented a proclamation announcing January as Pork Month for Washington County to the Waltz Family. The occasion recognizes that farming is a 365 day a year job and the importance of the animal care on all farms, and that Americans spend over \$4 billion each year on pork products.

### **REPORTS FROM COUNTY STAFF (continued)**

Dave Hays, Director, Division of Emergency Services, shared with the Board a request received from the City of Hagerstown regarding donation of a vehicle to the Police Department for use by the Auxiliary Police; who, at times, supports County activities as well. He asks that the Board consider the vehicle as surplus and to donate to the City of Hagerstown Police Department.

Commissioner Meinelschmidt, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to declare the vehicle as surplus and donate to the City of Hagerstown Police Department as requested. The motion passed unanimously.

Dan DiVito, Director, Division of Environmental Management, and Juanita Grimm, Town of Clear Spring, discussed County employee's performance within the Clear Spring Water/Sewer Operations plant. Those employees being recognized include John Kline, Justin Smith, Kevin McClanathan, Kim Bowers, Mark Bradshaw, Donnie Shilling and Brian Nichols. Ms. Grimm also thanked Mr. DiVito for his efforts in creating a successful working relationship with Town staff.

### **Health and Human Services Position Recommendations**

Deb Peyton, Director, introduced several position recommendations for approval by the County Commissioners, as follows:

David Olson for a Firefighter II Technician position with the Division of Emergency Services (DES), Grade 5 (DES scale) \$41,736.

Clay Shealey for a Firefighter II Technician position with the Division of Emergency Services (DES), Grade 5 (DES scale) \$41,736.

Pam Mohn for the Chief of Design position with the Division of Engineering, Grade 16, Step 4 \$71,386.

Commissioner Meinelschmidt, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the recommendation for promotion of Pam Mohn as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

#### County Attorney

Kirk Downey brought forth three (3) proposed bills from the Washington County Delegation for which County Commissioner support has been requested; they include: 1) Instituting a safety zone which would require that an archery hunter remain 50-yards from any residence, church, public or private school, or any other building occupied by human beings. Additionally, when a hunter is shooting within 50-100 yards of any residence, church, public or private school, or any other building occupied by human beings, the hunter must be in the erect position; this position would mean that an arrow would be shot in a downward path; 2) Amending the permissible times for sale of alcoholic beverages on Sunday from what currently is in place of noon – midnight, to 11:00 a.m. to midnight; and 3) The transfer of \$10.00 from the marriage ceremony fee of \$25.00, which is currently transferred from the Clerk of Circuit Court to the State of Maryland, to the Washington County Historic Society.

The Commissioners discussed the three (3) proposed bills as presented and reached a consensus to submit the letters of support to the Washington County Delegation. The support was unanimous.

#### **SENIOR STAFF PRESENTATIONS**

Members of Senior Staff presented information regarding individual departments / divisions within the County to the new Board of Commissioners for informational purposes only.

#### **RETIREMENT AND OTHER POST-RETIREMENT EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PRESENTATION**

Colin England, Senior Consulting Actuary, Bolton Partners; Erika Bode, Consultant, Bolton Partners; and Kevin Binder, Senior Actuary, Bolton Partners provided information to the Board regarding the County's pension and other post-retirement employee benefit (OPEB) plans.

*Commissioner Wagner left the meeting at 1:04 p.m. and returned at 1:07 p.m.*

#### **RECESS**

The Commissioners recessed at 1:19 p.m.

#### **AFTERNOON SESSION**

The Commissioners reconvened at 1:45 p.m. with the following members present: Commissioners Jeffrey A. Cline, Terry L. Baker, Wayne K. Keefer, Cort F. Meinelschmidt, and Randall E. Wagner.

#### **LOCAL PREFERENCE DISCUSSION**

Sara Greaves, Chief Financial Officer; and Rick Curry, Director, Purchasing, provided information to the Board with regards to Local Preference, as related to the County's procurement process, following a request received during a prior Board meeting. Ms. Greaves shared that Washington

County does not have a local preference established. The Commissioners discussed options and policies and requested a meeting of stakeholders be established for further discussion; to be developed by staff.

#### **COUNTY STEP AND COLA FOLLOW UP**

Sara Greaves, and Debra Peyton, Director, Division of Health and Human Services, provided information to the Board regarding the County's Step / COLA history as compared to an annual 2.5% step and up to 1% COLA based on the CPI-W. Ms. Greaves discussed the history of the step / COLA methodology and the outcome of proposed changes. Commissioner Cline shared his concern with a 2.5% step increase followed by an increase in insurance.

#### **DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT REORGANIZATION**

Dan DiVito, Director, Division of Environmental Management; and Sara Greaves, Chief Financial Officer, requested approval of the reorganization of the Division of Environmental Management as presented on January 8<sup>th</sup>. It was shared that, if approved, the changes would provide a savings of approximately \$215,000 to the County. The Commissioners discussed details of the proposed reorganization as presented.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to approve the reorganization of the Division of Environmental Management as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **REQUEST FOR LOCAL FUNDING SUPPORT FOR THE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REBUILDING AMERICA GRANT (INFRA)**

Susan Buchanan, Director, Office of Grant Management; and Scott Hobbs, Director, Division of Engineering, recommended approval of local funding support in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Grant application for the Interstate 81, Phase 2 project, contingent upon an approved grant award.

Commissioner Meinelschmidt, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to provide \$1,000,000 of local funding support to match a successful INFRA grant award for the project. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Meinelschmidt inquired as to what account the funding would be assigned. Mr. Slocum shared that it would be the Capital Improvement Plan Reserve account.

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING CENTER – WATER SERVICE**

Scott Hobbs, Director, Division of Engineering, recommended approval to submit letter to City of Hagerstown regarding the water service at the Public Safety Training Center, as discussed by the Board previously on October 23, 2018.

The Commissioners discussed the request and reached a consensus to support the letter to City of Hagerstown as presented.

#### **BUDGET TRANSFER – REPLACEMENT TRUCK FOR WEED CONTROL**

Lane Heimer, Supervisor, Weed Control recommended approval for a budget transfer used for the purchase a replacement vehicle to be assigned to the Weed Control Program. Mr. Heimer explained vehicle number 680015 needed to be replaced due to transmission failure which resulted in

necessary repairs in excess of value. The proposed vehicle would be a half-ton, four-wheel drive truck, outlined in the Maryland State BPO 001B9400176 at an approximate cost of \$27,903. Mr. Heimer explained that funds would be available from spray revenues invoiced by the program.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Baker, moved to approve the budget transfer in the amount of \$27,910 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**SEWER DEBT FORGIVENESS DISCUSSION**

Russ Weaver, Vice-Mayor, Town of Sharpsburg; and Donnie Souders, Vice-President, Smithsburg Town Council, Town of Smithsburg, requested information regarding the sewer debt forgiveness previously owed by the Town of Williamsport. Mr. Weaver has requested that the Board reconsider or rescind the decision to forgive the debt with the Town of Williamsport due to the potential impact it may have on rate payers. Mr. Slocum shared that efforts are currently in place to ensure that debt issues do not recur.

Commissioner Wagner stated that he would not attempt to rescind a decision made by the previous Board. Mr. Souders raised concern regarding the impact that the debt forgiveness would have on potential rate increases for citizens.

Commissioner Meinelschmidt shared that he would not rescind a decision made by the previous Board.

Commissioner Keefer expressed his desire to be informed regarding future communications with the Town of Williamsport's usage over the past year; he also made request for a report on each Town yearly.

Mr. Souders asked that the Board ensure that rate payers of the County are considered when reviewing for rate increases and be sure to include items as discussed today in Open Session, under normal protocol for transparency.

The Board discussed potential rate increases with Sara Greaves, Chief Financial Officer. Ms. Greaves advised the Board not to discuss increases until accounts are reviewed.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to adjourn at 3:22 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

  
Krista L. Hart, *County Clerk*