



Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland

Open Session Minutes

March 23, 2021

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 10:04 a.m. at 100 West Washington Street, Hagerstown, Maryland, with the following members present: Vice-President Terry L. Baker, Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer, and Commissioner Randall E. Wagner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the minutes of March 16, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Vice-President Baker shared his support for the Hancock High School and Cascade Elementary and requested that the Board of Education consider allowing those schools to remain open. Additionally, he discussed the condition of Mills Road and requested that staff provide an update.

Commissioner Keefer shared that although the County Commissioners have taken a neutral position to the proposed stadium in Hagerstown, Mr. Bereano, the County's Lobbyist, erroneously offered the County Governments unconditional support to the legislative leadership for the baseball stadium and in particular, that County Government would secure the loan for construction and that it would be responsible for creating a self-funding mechanism. Commissioner Keefer confirmed that he is not opposed to a baseball stadium; however, he is opposed to placing the burden on taxpayers for funding. Also, he commented on the Hancock and Cascade school closings and pressed for the Board of Education to arrive at a consensus to permit both schools to remain open. Commissioner Keefer cited a comment in printed in The Herald Mail Newspaper, "Opinions" Section; a copy of the comment is submitted as part of the minutes (attachment "A").

Commissioner Wagner shared his concern for the closing of Hancock High School and Cascade Elementary School. Additionally, he echoed Commissioner Keefer's comments regard the proposed Stadium in Washington County.

President Cline shared his concurrence on all comments made by the Commissioners regarding the closing of schools. President Cline shared that the Commissioners have agreed to take no position at this time with regard to the proposed Stadium, nor does he support utilizing County funds for said project. He congratulated the new Veteran owned business, JD Junk; additionally, he congratulated the new employees in the Firefighter recruit academy.

STAFF COMMENTS

Division of Emergency Services

Dave Hays, Director, provided the Board with an update regarding the hiring of Firefighter / Paramedic Safety personnel. Mr. Hays thanked all County staff members involved in the process of hiring the new staff; additionally, he thanked the Commissioners for supporting Public Safety; Hagerstown Community College, Frederick County, and City of Hagerstown.

County Administrator

John Martirano thanked staff of Water Quality for their fast response in successfully repairing a force main break in Westfields over the weekend. Mr. Martirano shared that mass vaccination sites are available in Washington County; pre-registration is required for ages 60 and above. Additionally, he shared that Governor Hogan will hold a press conference today at 2:30 p.m. He welcomed the new candidates in the Fire Training Academy.

REQUEST FOR REALLOCATION OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT FUNDING

Jeffrey Proulx, Chief Operating Officer, Washington County Public Schools, recommended approval of a transfer of Capital Improvement Project funding, in the amount of \$3,771,851, the balance of the Sharpsburg Elementary School project and the balance of the Urban Improvement Project, to Capital Maintenance to support planned maintenance projects needed within Washington Public Schools.

The Commissioners took no action on the matter at this time.

**ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE SCHOOL MITIGATION PROPOSAL
CLAGGETT'S MILL SECTION 2**

Jill Baker, Director, Planning & Zoning, and Jason Divelbiss, Esquire, presented a request for acceptance of the developer's offer for mitigation of school capacity for the Claggett's Mill Section 2 development in the amount of \$334,530.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer with comments, moved to approve the request in the amount of \$334,530 for mitigation of school capacity for the Claggett's Mill Section 2 development. Mr. Keefer's comments surrounded the potential for negotiation of additional dollar contribution. The motion passed unanimously.

**EXPRESS APPROVAL: TOWN OF SMITHSBURG ANNEXATION AT 12214 & 12205
CLOVERLY FARM LANE**

Ms. Baker and Daniel Cross, Cross and Company, requested that express approval be granted to the Town of Smithsburg to allow commercial development on two properties containing 1.57 acres, currently zoned as Residential, Transition under County regulations; the Town of Smithsburg has proposed to apply General Commercial zoning on the properties upon annexation. Ms. Baker confirmed that the annexation had been formerly heard via public hearing with no opposition by the Town.

Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to grant the express approval to the Town of Smithsburg, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**APPLICATION FOR ZONING MAP AMENDMENT RZ-21-002, FRANK & KATHY
MURRAY**

Ms. Baker requested approval to approve or deny the applicant's request to rezone the property located at 14025 Greencastle Pike, for a full termination of the Rural Business Floating Zone on 1.5 acres, the underlying zoning of Rural Village would be re-activated as the governing zoning district. Ms. Baker shared that the Planning Commission reviewed and recommended approval at its regular meeting on March 2, 2021.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Baker, moved to approve the application for Zoning Map Amendment RZ-21-002, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF CRIME PREVENTION, YOUTH AND VICTIM SERVICES
FISCAL YEAR 2022 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT PROPOSAL**

Allison Hartshorn, Grant Manager, Office of Grant Management, recommended approval to submit the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Community Partnership Agreement proposal to the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services in the amount of \$661,103 and to accept funding as awarded.

Commissioner Keefer, seconded by Commissioner Baker, moved to approve the submittal of the FY22 Community Partnership Agreement in the amount of \$661,103, and to accept funding as awarded. The motion passed unanimously.

BLACK ROCK GOLF COURSE GRILL COOK / SERVER POSITION CHANGE

Andrew Eshleman, Director, Public Works, and Dave Brooks, Parks Supervisor, recommended changes to the Grill Cook (Grade 4) and Restaurant Server (Grade 1) positions by combining the two into combined Grill Cook/Server (Grade 1) positions. Mr. Eshleman explained that the current three part-time grill cooks and four part-time restaurant server positions would be combined into seven part-time grill cook/server positions, which would create a flexible pool of employees to cover all operating hours. Upon approval of combining the positions, Mr. Eshleman also requested approval of the revised job descriptions. Mr. Eshleman shared that the County would realize an estimated \$5,000 in wage savings on an annual basis.

Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the combined positions and to approve the revised job descriptions, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

HIGHWAY AND WATER QUALITY DEPARTMENTS' HIRING PROCESS

Mr. Eshleman, and Mark Bradshaw, Director, Environmental Management, recommended approval to execute an amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Board of County Commissioners and the Maryland Public Employees Council 67, AFSCME, AFL-CIO and its Local 2677, AFL-CIO to Article 22 Posting of Jobs Internally for the affected Departments.

Commissioner Baker, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the execution to the amendment of the MOU as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET – WATER QUALITY

Mr. Bradshaw, and Sara Greaves, CFO, presented the Board with an overview pertaining to the FY22 budget request, consisting of \$5,173,500 for Utility Fund, \$1,179,120 for Water Fund, \$11,937,300 for Sewer Fund, and \$484,700 for Pretreatment Fund. Mr. Bradshaw recommended a rate increase to the Water Fund of 3.5%, providing \$26,000 in revenue; and a 3.5% increase to the Sewer Fund, providing \$419,931 in revenue; with the proposed rate increases, Ms. Greaves requested consensus from the Commissioners to advertise for a public hearing regarding same.

The Commissioners reached a consensus to proceed with the proposed Water and Sewer Rate Increase Public Hearing.

**FISCAL YEAR 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET – HAGERSTOWN REGIONAL
AIRPORT**

Garrison Plessinger, Director, provided the Board with an overview pertaining to the FY22 budget request, submitted at \$2,020,920, which represents a \$41,290 (2.09%) increase over FY21.

FISCAL YEAR 2022 GENERAL FUND BUDGET – WASHINGTON COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Jenny Bakos, Executive Director, provided the Board with an overview pertaining to the FY22 budget request, submitted at \$3,323,510 which represents a \$141,500 (4.45%) increase over FY21.

CONVENE IN CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Baker, moved to convene in closed session at 12:03 p.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, in accordance with Section 3-305(b) (1) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The motion passed unanimously.

In closed session, the Commissioners discussed the filling of certain personnel vacancies, the hiring of certain individuals, and appointments to Boards and Commissions.

Present during closed session were Commissioners Jeffrey A. Cline, Terry L. Baker, Wayne K. Keefer, and Randall E. Wagner. Also present were John M. Martirano, County Administrator; Krista L. Hart, County Clerk; and Kirk C. Downey, County Attorney and at various time: Debra Condo, Deputy Director, Human Resources, Dave Brooks, Parks and Recreation; and Jaime Dick, Parks and Recreation.

RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Baker, moved to reconvene in open session at 2:23 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Baker, moved to adjourn at 2:24 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.



Krista L. Hart, *County Clerk*

OPINIONS

Editorial

Hancock won't stop pointing out value of schools

The timing of Washington County Public Schools' review of school enrollment and facilities is so poor that they should be embarrassed.

To consider school closures and consolidations now, during a pandemic and outside their 10-year facilities plan, is both callous and dumb.

It's callous because families and teachers (who are also taxpayers) are already under enormous stress trying to make it through another lopsided, exhausting, disoriented school term.

It's dumb because what kind of real data can county officials find that will be reliable a year from now? Enrollment is skewed because of the pandemic. Community growth is in progress but slowed by the pandemic and economic difficulties. Changes in work modes now make it possible for families to relocate more easily, and choose to live just about anywhere with good internet service. Real estate markets are more active than in 10 years.

Who knows how long those conditions will last? Who knows what an economic recovery will look like later in 2021?

Why try to evaluate the long-term future of a community school during the most uncertain times we have had since World War II?

Elected school and county officials have to make budgets work. But there is an unprecedented amount of federal money available to help schools and government agencies hit by the pandemic - more money than the average local family will ever see. Before officials eye up small schools as a source of savings, they best take a hard look at other pots of money. They also need to weigh the position they would be putting themselves in for the long haul if they make the wrong call to close a school that they later need to reopen or replace.

The people of Hancock are hard at work to make them see that big picture, and won't stop anytime soon.

EXHIBIT
CASE #
SUBMITTED BY W. Keefe, Connorsville

3.23.21

"Attachment A"