

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY**  
109 Market Street, Room 106, Denton, Maryland

**Minutes**  
**January 14, 2020**

Present: President Larry C. Porter; Vice President Daniel J. Franklin; Commissioner Wilbur Levengood, Jr.; Jeremy Goldman, County Administrator; and Jennifer Farina, Administrative Coordinator

Following the Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, and Agenda Review, President Porter called for **public comment** and the following testimony was given: Pastor Reynolds stated that the County Commissioners used to have a sign that read "In God we Trust" above their meeting room table. He stated that he hopes the sign can be restored and put back in its original place. Ryan White, Public Works Director, stated that the original sign had been damaged, however they have ordered a replacement which will be displaced within the upcoming months.

**Special Recognition of Ryan Freeman:** The County Commissioners awarded Ryan Freeman with a special commendation letter and County pin for receiving a citation from Governor Larry Hogan. Mr. Freeman was the first to receive the Governor's Inaugural Youth Service Award for his outstanding leadership and volunteer services provided to his community. Mr. Freeman is a recent graduate from Saint's Peter and Paul High School in Easton, and he is currently attending his first semester at the University of Maryland. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Freeman for his continued enthusiasm for helping others throughout Caroline County and the Eastern Shore.

**Proclamation of Human Trafficking Awareness Month in Caroline County:** Danae Spiering stated that January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month in Caroline County. She stated that currently For All Season is conducting several trainings throughout the Eastern Shore to help make citizens aware of the signs of human trafficking and provide the necessary teaching tools to help prevent more trafficking. She stated that all training and educational session that take place in Caroline County have been very well attended with both law enforcement agencies, and Board of Education staff. She stated that Caroline County has stood out as a county that is willing to put effort towards learning as much as possible about preventing human trafficking from occurring in their community.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Spiering for giving them information on For All Seasons, and they stated that they will continue to help spread educational material to keep the citizen of Caroline County aware of the signs of human trafficking.

**Proclamation of National Mentoring Month in Caroline County:** Erica Dennis presented the Commissioners with the proclamation from Big Brothers and Big Sisters for National Mentoring Month in Caroline County. Ms. Dennis stated that Big Brothers and Big Sisters is an organization that has continued to provide safe and inspiring mentors for youth to learn and be guided by. She stated that her organization is always open to new mentors and she hopes the County Commissioners and Caroline County, continuing support their efforts to keep mentoring a positive and educational tool.

**Request for Critical Area Growth Allocation from Jones Estate Bay County LLC (Tax Map 52, Parcel 264; 21269 Dover Bridge Road, Preston):** Katheleen Freeman, Director, Planning and Codes, reviewed the critical area growth allocation request from Jones Estate Bay Country LLC (Tax Map 52, Parcel 264; 21269 Dover Bridge Road, Preston). Ms. Freeman said the Planning Commission held a hearing on the Application for Critical Area Growth Allocation from Jones Estates Bay Country LLC on November 13, 2019. The Planning Commission made findings of fact on the Application and

recommended its approval to the Commissioners. She explained that the Commissioners held their required advertised public hearing on the Application on Tuesday December 10, 2019. While the Commissioners closed the record for oral testimony that evening, they recognized that the holiday season is a busy time and that some who wished to attend the public hearing may not have been able to do so, therefore the Commissioners elected to hold the public hearing open to receive any additional written testimony until December 31, 2019. Ms. Freeman went on to state that four pieces of written testimony were received, which are part of the hearing record. Copies of each letter were provided to the Commissioners when received. Testimony has been added to the record from the following:

- Gregory N Turner, 224080 Friendship Road, Preston: Opposed
- Arlene Q. Stevens, 3740 Frazier Neck Road, Preston: Opposed
- Mildred N. Quidas, 21355 Marsh Creek Road, Preston: Opposed
- Rex Bateman, 3150 Choptank Road, Preston: Opposed
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Ms. Freeman explained to the Commissioners that if they agree to move forward with the growth allocation it will be sent to the State Critical Area Commission for final review and approval.

On motion by Commissioner Levensgood, seconded by Commissioner Franklin, the Commissioners unanimously made the following findings of fact:

- The request for Growth Allocation is consistent with County plans and policies and with any other applicable laws or regulations.
- The property has been posted and adjoining property owners and interested parties have been notified.
- Caroline County has 159.058 acres of Critical Area Growth Allocation available to award.
- To comply with the required setbacks, the Growth Allocation awarded should be 0.814 acres (RCA – Resource Conservation Area to LDA-Limited Development Area). The applicant has resubmitted an application to reflect the additional acreage.
- The area to the west of the WWTP along the gravel lane where connections were stubbed for six additional mobile homes shall not be used to place additional mobile homes.
- Afforestation shall be required as delineated on the applicant plans to mitigate for the Growth Allocation award.
- The Growth Allocation should be contingent on the recordation of the lot line addition plat in order to meet the Critical Area regulations.
- No expansion of the mobile home park is proposed or authorized in conjunction with the growth allocation application. Any additional expansion should be outside of the Critical Area and will follow the normal expansion permit process.

On motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Levensgood, the Board unanimously voted to approve the revised Application and award 0.814 acres of Critical Area Growth Allocation to Jones Estates Bay Country LLC, subject to final approval by the Maryland Critical Area Commission and the subsequent execution of a mutually satisfactory Growth Allocation Agreement by the County Commissioners and the Applicant.

Ms. Freeman informed the Board that the Application and other materials would be submitted to the Critical Area Commission for review and final approval. Once final approval is received, the County will execute an allocation agreement with the Applicant, which will include the finding of fact as terms and restrictions on the allocation award.

On motion by Commissioner Levensgood, seconded by Commissioner Franklin the Commissioners moved into legislative session for the following public hearings:

**Public Hearing: Community Development Block Grants:**

- **Capital Improvements and Handicapped Accessible Upgrades to Group Homes in Caroline County for Severely Disabled Adults and Children Operated by the Benedictine School for Exceptional Children (Grant Number MD-19-CD-24):** Staff from the Benedictine School stated that the amount of funding received by this award would be \$336,00. They stated that these funds allow for the final stages of group homes in both Ridgely and Denton to be improved for the 34 disabled individuals that live there. The Benedictine school thanked the County for requesting grant funds to help them with these projects, and they gave a special thanks to both Margaret Roe and Danny Fox in the Office of Finance for their hard work on the grant.
- **Case Management Services for St. Martin's Ministries (Grant Number: MD-18-HI-3); Award Amount \$100,000 :** St. Martin's Ministries stated that they provided services and housing for over 350 homeless families in Caroline County. They stated that this grant will help St. Martin's keep records and allow for families to not be lost in the system.

President Porter called for further public testimony and there was none.

On motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Porter the public hearing was closed.

**Consent Agenda: the following items were approved by unanimous consent**

- Open Session: 10/8/19, 10/15/19, 10/22/19, 11/5/19, 11/12/19, 11/26/19, 12/3/19, 12/10/19, 12/17/19
- Closed Session: 8/27/19, 9/24/19, 10/8/19, 10/15/19, 12/17/19,
- P.O #2020-00287 and Accompanying Contract to CATO, Inc. for Gasoline & Diesel Fuels, \$612,600
- Secondary Terminal User Agreements Between Caroline County Emergency Services & Town Police Departments and Caroline County Sheriff's Office
- Resolution #2020-001, Establishment of 401(a) Plan Addition to Caroline County Deferred Compensation Plan (Plan Number 10-0079)
- Administrative Services Agreement Between Caroline County and ICMA Retirement Corporation for 401(a) Plan
- ICMA Retirement Corporation Governmental Money Purchase Plan and Trust Adoption Agreement
- ICMA-RC Guided Pathways Advisory Services Managed Accounts Services Agreement
- Resolution 2020-02, Disposal of Surplus County Equipment
- Maryland CDBG Program Semi Annual Report -Homeless Initiative
- Maryland CDBG Program Semi-Annual Report Public Facility
- Grant Award and Acceptance Form for Police Recruitment and Retention Grant
- State Aid for Police Protection (SAPP) Grant Application
- Employment Agreement Amendment: Compensation and Benefits Change for Recreation and Parks Recreation Specialist II (Davis)
- Letter of Support for St. Martin's Ministries to Receive Extension for CDBG Funding of Case Management Position

**County Administrator Report:**

- Mr. Goldman stated that he looked into the implementation of an Agricultural Tire Program for Caroline County. He stated that in order to drop off ag tires, one would have to be a member of the Farm Bureau, and there would be a limit of ten tires per farm. Commissioner Levengood

stated that he would like to have that number increased, however he understood that it would need to be limited due to the large number of tires.

**Commissioners Open Discussion Period**

The Commissioners discussed who would be attending the different Volunteer Fire Company banquets across the county. They stated that although they would all love to attend each one, their schedules often have conflicting events.

Commissioner Porter stated that he met with the LOSAP Committee earlier in the week. He stated that they are looking to request a 2.5% increase in benefits each year.

President Porter called for **public comment** and the following citizens came to the podium:


**Mark Wright**, Choptank Road: Mr. Wright stated that he and several other members of the community are confused by the new placement of a stop sign at the intersection of Choptank Road and Hunting Creek Road. He stated that there has always been yield sign on one side of the road, while other on Choptank, have the right of way. He stated that he is concerned the new sign will cause accidents due to many not paying attention or noticing it has been placed there. He stated that he has witnessed several people run the stop sign, and he even stated that he ran it because he didn't notice it.

**Russel Dukes**, Choptank Road: expressed his concerns as well for the potential danger the new signage may cause in the area. He stated that he has lived there his whole life and there has never been an accident.

**Duffy McConnell**, Choptank Road, stated that he expressed his concerns to the Department of Public Works regarding the need for a stop sign. He stated that the intersection has always been hazardous and, in the summertime, when the field are full of corn you can not see if anyone is coming in the opposite direction.

The Commissioners stated that they understand the concerns from the citizens. They stated that they will have the Director of Public Works to observe the area, as well as work on finding the best and safest location for a stop sign in that intersection. The Commissioners stressed the importance of always staying alert and paying attention to the road as citizens drive. They stated that although the stop sign was new, drivers should still be obeying traffic signals and signs.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

  
Jennifer M. Farina  
Administrative Coordinator