

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

MINUTES
January 24, 2017

Present: President Daniel J. Franklin; Vice President Larry C. Porter; Commissioner Wilbur Levensood, Jr.; County Administrator Ken Decker; and Chief of Staff Sara Visintainer.

Invocation by Reverend Paul Twining; **Pledge of Allegiance.** The agenda was accepted as presented.

President Franklin called for **public comment** and there was none.

Introduction of New Caroline County Sheriff's Office Deputies: Randy Bound, Sheriff, Caroline County Sheriff's Office, thanked the Commissioners for allowing him time to formally introduce the newest deputies. Sheriff Bounds introduced First Class Deputy, Benjamin Allen and First Class Deputy Chris Manno. He stated that both deputies have achieved several recognitions for their service while protecting citizens. Both deputies spent four years in the Marine Corps, have previous law enforcement experience, and have been a great addition to the Caroline County Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Bounds introduced the newest member to the Department, Deputy Amber Thamert. Deputy Thamert is the first deputy recruited from the Caroline County high school internship program and was the class speaker at her academy graduation. Sheriff Bounds stating that he is proud of the new deputies and all our looking forwarding to serving and protecting the citizens of Caroline County.

Presentation of Service Awards to Caroline County Employees for 5 and 30 Years of Service: Each year the Caroline County Commissioners take time to recognize their hard working employees that keep each County department operating smoothly. The following County employees were recognized for service Caroline County for 5 years: Kenneth Decker, County Commissioners Office; Joseph Miller, Department of Planning and Codes; James Eastland, Department of Public Works; Ernest Salmon, Theresa Baker and Jessica Hill, Department of Corrections; Debra Scott and Kat Stork, Department of Recreation and Parks; Joseph Riley, State's Attorney's Office; and Brenda Thrift, Office of Finance. The Commissioners presented each employee with a signed certificate and thanked them for their continued service to the county and its citizens. Caroline County Department of Public Works employees Amy Theford and Bryan North received their 30 years of service plaque, and thanked the Commissioners for allowing them the opportunity to continue serving the Caroline County.

Discussion of Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board Memorandum of Understanding: Dan McDermott, Executive Director, Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and George Weeks, Vice President, WIB, met with the Commissioners to discuss the updated MOU between the WIB and the neighboring counties, Talbot, Queen Anne's, Kent, Dorchester, and Caroline. The Counties and the WIB have worked as a consortium for 34 years to implement federal employment and training grants to assist job seekers and employers in their local region. The Workforce Innovation and the Opportunity Act of 2014 has given the WIB Board the encouragement to review all of its operating polices, procedure and agreements. Mr. McDermott stated that a new multi-County MOU is necessary to address changes in the federal legislation and to articulate the relationship between the Board and the Counties. Commissioners Porter asked Mr. McDermott if he thought the neighboring counties, including Caroline, were flooding the job market, with a think pool of applicants to choose from? Mr. McDermott agreed with Commissioner Porter that there are more jobs available and finding qualified employees is becoming difficult. He explained that the WIB is working with employers and citizens to prevent that from happening, and to help educate employees so they are experienced for available positions. Mr. McDermott stated that there is language in the MOU allowing all Counties 60- days to withdraw from the

agreement upon signing. The Commissioners thanked Mr. Weeks and Mr. McDermott for presenting the MOU to the County, and stated they will review the MOU and add it to their upcoming agenda for approval.

Presentation of Caroline County Public Schools 2016 Master Plan Executive Summary: Dr. Patti Saelens, Interim Superintendent, Caroline County Public Schools, presented the Commissioners with the 2016 Master Plan for the public school system. Dr. Saelens explained that the five goals for the Board of Education are to maximize student achievement, involve all stakeholders in surveys to have clear feedback, recruit and retain first and second year teachers, maintain school climate to achieve a good learning environment. She went on to include that the Board of Education is striving to debut their new Advanced Manufacturing Program (AMP) within the next year, which will let students and local business owners build partnerships and provide jobs to students after their high school graduation. The Commissioners thanked Dr. Saelens for presenting the Caroline County Public School Master Plan, and stated that are looking forward to the launch of the AMP and are confident in the staff working on the program.

Workshop: Proposed Water & Sewer Plan Amendment: Leslie Grunden, Environmental and Facilities Planner, Department of Planning and Codes, stated that the Town of Preston has requested an amendment to their water and sewer plan in order to upgrade their Wastewater Treatment Plant. The Town of Preston proposes to upgrade its WWTP to Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology to take advantage of Bay Restoration Fund grants currently available for minor WWTP ENR upgrades. The upgrade will result in an annual nitrogen load reduction to the Choptank River of approximately 1,700 pounds. Ms. Grunden stated that the proposed upgrade is to the plant's treatment technology only; the plant capacity will remain 115,000 gallons per day. The upgrade to ENR treatment allows Preston to take advantage of grant funding from MDE's Bay Restoration Fund, in addition to the State Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund (in the form of "loan forgiveness"). The project will be 80% grant-funded. The proposed upgrade is consistent with the County Water and Sewer Plan goals, and supports water quality goals in the County's Comprehensive Plan, 319 Upper Choptank Watershed Plan, and Phase 2 Watershed Implementation Plan milestones.

The Commissioners asked if this would increase the water and sewer bill for citizen living in the Town of Preston. Ms. Grunden explained that there would be an increase, however the Town has made sure to publish the increase and are implanting an increase each year so the impact will be gradual. The Commissioners reviewed the schedule for the Town of Preston Wastewater Sewer Amendment and approved the public hearing for February, 21st at 9:30 a.m.

Review 2016 2nd Quarter County Expense and Revenue Report: Margaret Roe, Director, Office of Finance, gave the Commissioners a review of the updated expenditures and revenues. Ms. Roe stated that currently, revenues are over expenditures by \$10,439,363.43, and County departments have only spent 45% of their budgeted expenses, and the County as a whole has collected 67% of anticipated total revenues.

2017 Legislative Update: Sara Visintainer, Chief of Staff, Commissioners Office, briefed the Commissioners on the latest Maryland State Legislative bills that have dropped over the past week. Ms. Visintainer stated that she attended the first Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) legislative committee meeting with Commissioner Levengood and they discussed which bills they will be supporting this session. She stated MACo is drafting an initiative bill to discuss the issue of solar siting and a requirement that such dispersed energy generation sites comply with local zoning. MACo is also proposing a bill to allow grants to be awarded for the installation of sprinkler systems in certain residential properties. She stated the bill will target rural areas and workforce housing due to standards of income and square footage requirements contained in the legislation. Ms. Visintainer stated that MACo

has drafted a transportation infrastructure bill which will hopefully return highway user revenues to their previous historic local shares. Ms. Visintainer explained that the BRFA was released last week and includes a shift in the costs for local assessment offices, from 50% currently, to 70% in FY2018 and 90% in FY2019. She stated that MACo is researching this mandate further to see if it can get the language changed to stop the shift. She stressed that there are a number of sick and safe leave bills regarding employee leave time, which she will continue to watch closely, since they could have a substantial fiscal impact for county government and businesses across the state. Ms. Visintainer stated that a bill will likely be passed requiring local governments to establish some kind of pre-trial release program in the next several years. This may save some money by reducing jail costs, but other costs would be incurred for community supervision.

Consent Agenda: The commissioners unanimously approved the following items.

- Minutes: Open & Closed Session of January 10, 2017 and January 17, 2017 Work Session
- Resolution #2017-002, Disposal of Surplus Equipment, GMC Topkick
- Resolution #2017-003, Class Specifications for Administrative Coordinator
- Appointment Letter to Regional Behavioral Health Advisory Committee (Znaniec)

Action Agenda:

- On motion by Vice President Porter, seconded by Commissioner Levensgood, the Commissioners approved Resolution 2017-001, Economic Development Coordinator Class Specification.
- On motion by Vice President Porter, seconded by Commissioner Levensgood, the Commissioners authorized Ken Decker, County Administrator to sign P.O 66134 and Accompanying Professional Service Contract, Maven + Smith LLC, Consulting Service for Economic Development.

County Administrators Report:

- Mr. Decker informed the Commissioners that a new position for Economic Development Coordinator will be posted internally within the week, with employees of allied agencies with MOUs with the County eligible to apply.
- He stated that the Town of Denton has responded to the Commissioners questions regarding the staffing and hours of the new Town of Denton Visitors Center ahead of the date requested by the Commissioners for information, but that the answers were somewhat vague and difficult to follow. The Commissioners directed staff to draft a follow up letter to the Mayor and Town Council Denton regarding their answers and the Commissioners' position on the issue, and provided further direction to that end.
- Mr. Decker stated that he will be meeting with Sheriff Bounds and Captain Henning to go over their plans with an architect for a potential new Sheriff's Office building.
- He explained that the Department of Planning and Codes are conducting interviews for a new code enforcement officer, who will replace an employee that recently retired.
- Mr. Decker said he will be meeting with Jake Jacobs, Facilities Superintendent to go over the project schedule for the 4-H Park upgrades and updates.
- Mr. Decker stated that he will be contacting Paul Madden to discuss the County's pension and retirement fund. He stated that its important for the County to have a solid pension plan and to make sure all the language in the disability clause is clear.

Commissioners Open Discussion Period:

- Commissioner Levensgood stated that he feels the County is moving quickly on economic development becoming a County department and he wants to make sure they are paying attention to details. He asked for frequent updates regarding programs and projects being managed under

the new structure, which staff said they would provide and schedule regular meetings with the Commissioners.

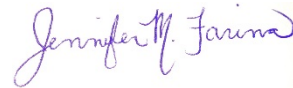
- President Franklin stated that he attended the ribbon cutting of the new Royal Farms in Denton and is looking forward to the groundbreaking for the new Shore Health Medical Pavilion in a few weeks.

Public Comment: Joseph Riley, Ad Interim State's Attorney, informed the Commissioners that he will be requesting funds for the upcoming budget to provide a salary for a full time investigator. Mr. Decker stated that Mr. Riley should add his request to the State's Attorney's Office budget request. Ms. Roe directed Mr. Riley to meet with her to calculate the total amount needed to found this position for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Riley thanked the Commissioners for their support, and the County staff for their help in navigating the budget process, which is a new responsibility for him.

At 12:19 p.m. following a brief recess, on motion by Commissioner Levensgood, seconded by Commissioner Porter, the Commissioners unanimously adjourned regular session and convened in **Closed Session** for the following purpose: Discussion of Potential Litigation and Legal Advice Regarding Same Authority: 2014 Md. Code, State Government 3-305 (b)(8) & (7) and Discussion of the Performance and Employment of a Specific Employee Authority: 2014 Md. Code, State Government 3-305 (b)(1).

President's Report: President Franklin stated that the Commissioners met to review terms of loans made by the County and accounts in arrears, which may result in litigation. They received legal and financial advice and directed staff on how to proceed. The Commissioners also met with one of their at-will employees to discuss their continued employment and directed the employee on the terms of contract preparation for consideration at a future meeting.

There being no further discussion the Commissioners unanimously adjourned their meeting at 1:30 p.m.



Jennifer M. Farina
Administrative Coordinator