

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY
109 Market Street, Room 106
DENTON, MD 21629

Minutes
February 1, 2022

Present: President Larry C. Porter; Vice President Daniel J. Franklin, Commissioner Wilbur Levensgood, Jr.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Convocation by Reverend Paul Twining.

There was no public comment.

Reporting Out Statement from the 1/25/22 Closed Session: “On January 25th, the Commissioners held a Closed Session to discuss two separate lawsuits against the County and a lawsuit that the County has agreed to join regarding an opioid settlement. Commissioners Porter, Franklin and Levensgood as well as County Administrator, Jeremy Goldman and County Attorney Stewart Barroll, County Paralegal Mary Berneski and Executive Assistant Kaleigh Leager were in attendance. Under Authority of the General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b): (8)”

Leslie Grunden, Assistant Director of Planning and Codes – Greensboro Regional Wastewater System Comprehensive Water & Sewer Plan – Discussion: Ms. Grunden presented the proposed amendment to the Commissioners. Commissioner Porter asked Ms. Grunden if everyone in Goldsboro is hooked up? Ms. Grunden stated that everyone who is connected is hooked up. Commissioner Porter asked if the County is doing anything in Henderson? Ms. Grunden stated that the County is including Henderson. Commissioner Porter also asked if each individual lot be billed? Ms. Grunden stated that the bill goes to property owner and the owner oversees billing the renters. Ms. Grunden stated that there is a tentative schedule for the project to begin, starting in January 2023. Commissioner Franklin made a motion to schedule the public hearing. Commissioner Levensgood seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted to move the proposed amendment to the next step of a public hearing.

County Administrator Goldman started a conversation about expansion of an existing trailer park. Commissioner Franklin stated that it is technically not an expansion because it would be filling lots that they already have.

COVID-19 Response & Recovery Update - Robin Cahall, Health Officer, Caroline County Health Department: Ms. Cahall stated that there is a decline in positivity and case rate and provided the following statistics:

Positivity Rate Maryland= 9.04% a decrease of 39% Case Rate Caroline County= 72.05 a decrease of 40.5% Case Rate Maryland= 40.03 a decrease of 47.2% Caroline County Case Rate

1/22/22 to 1/28/22= 246 Death cumulative= 64 (+3 from last week)

Vaccination Rates

12-17 Fully Vaccinated = 39.4%

12+ Fully Vaccinated= 64%

65+ Fully Vaccinated = 89%

Additional doses given 7,902

5-11 administered= 441

62,800 KN95 Masks distributed to community partners and businesses

2,900 At home tests distributed. The majority going to the libraries for public distribution.

Kaleigh Leager, Executive Assistant – Maryland State Legislative Session Discussion/

Update: Ms. Leager mentioned she is looking for a decision on the request from Queen Anne’s County regarding the resolution for the new Chesapeake Bay Bridge; same location, one bridge with 8 lanes minimum. The Commissioner agreed to a letter of support.

HB633 – Del Ghrist introduced a bill regarding the Education Accountability Board (AIB) changing the membership from 7 to 11 members, which would ensure geographic diversity which the current legislation does not. The Commissioners agreed that one member from the Eastern Shore’s 9 Counties is not enough, but it is a step in the right direction. The Commissioners recommend the Board to consist of 1 member from each County.

The Maryland Electricians Act Corrections that have been drafted, but not submitted by Del. Hornberger. Ms. Leager stated that Ms. Dadds from Planning & Codes believes this Bill will:

- (1) State Board crediting work experience in apprenticeships for licensure applicants.
Provides permanent pathway for graduates of an accredited program to receive a Journeyman license WITHOUT examination.
- (2) Allowing unlicensed electricians who worked under a licensed Master to waive the examination requirements if they meet certain requirements. This window will sunset and only occur between July and the end of 2022.
- (3) Addressing reciprocity with other states and territories by asking DOL to renegotiate memoranda of understanding, or if this doesn’t work, reporting what will be needed to the Governor and the General Assembly.

SB448 – Ms. Bennett from the Library brought this to Ms. Leager’s attention. Increase for State funding to public libraries per capita FY24-FY27. Commissioner Franklin mentioned that the Counties will be responsible for 60% of funding for this program.

SB274 – This alters the sum of exempt business personal property taxes from the max of \$10,000 to \$20,000.

HB427 - This bill is for the purpose of prohibiting a person from obstructing or impeding or attempting to obstruct or impede an official proceeding of the Executive or Legislative Branch; and generally relating to obstruction of official proceedings. If found guilty of a misdemeanor the person(s) would be subject to imprisonment not to exceed 5 years or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or both. MACo has its feelers out of local governments are interested in joining this or support it.

HB371 – Salt Applicator Certification Program requires requiring the Department of the Environment to establish a Salt Applicator Certification Program to encourage efficient winter maintenance of roadways, parking lots, and sidewalks through the use of salt or salt alternatives; requiring each commercial applicator to participate in the Program, be certified on or before a certain date, and maintain a valid certification; and generally relating to a Salt Applicator Certification Program.

Consent Agenda: (The following items were unanimously approved by the Commissioners):

- [Semi- Annual CDBG Report - Judy Center in Greensboro](#)
- [CDBG Grant Agreement and Exhibit 2 - Benedict Road Project](#)
- [2nd Quarter Contingency Expenditures](#)
- [Purchase Order #2022-00000214](#)

County Administrators Report – Jeremy Goldman: Mr. Goldman stated that Public Works did a good job during the snow event. In addition, Mr. Goldman had a conversation with Mr. Scott Warner regarding a specialty grant; an unscheduled executive board meeting through regional food processing grant.

County Commissioners Open Discussion:

Commissioner Levengood announced that he is running for reelection as County Commissioner. Commissioner Levengood also mentioned that he spent the weekend plowing snow. Commissioner Franklin stated he also plowed snow this past weekend. Commissioner Porter stated there has been some discussion about using the ARPA money for the Judy Center. Commissioner Porter had coffee with Dr. Nagel, who provided some answers regarding the Judy Center. Per Mr. Nagel, Whiting & Turner estimated the cost at \$1.9M, and \$1.4M was secured. The bid came in a \$3.7M. The cost increases were strictly related to COVID, materials, labor, commerce, supply chain, etc. Commissioner Porter stated that by building the Judy Center, the County was able to save \$3.5M on the Greensboro Elementary School. Commissioner Porter suggested and requested that the County give the Judy Center \$500,000 so they can complete their project. Commissioner Porter also sent an email to the Director of Finance about per officer funds given to municipal police departments. Commissioner Porter stated that he does not see any money going to the County for County LEO's. The County is going to have to set aside \$250,000.00 for the mandated police accountability boards with zero funding coming from the state; it is going to very difficult to support a tax differential, if any at all. Commissioner Levengood said he agrees with the Judy Center through ARPA. Commissioner Levengood is concerned about the costs of building the new DES pole building. Commissioner Porter is worried that it will be built for one purpose but will end up not being used for its intended purposes.

Commissioner Franklin wants to look at the numbers for the Judy Center, Commissioner Porter is prepared to give \$500,000.00, Commissioner Levensgood is okay with \$500,000.00. Mr. Goldman stated we could have the bond counsel edit the bond and pay for it through there.

There was no public comment.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kaleigh E. Leager". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kaleigh Leager
Executive Assistant to the County Commissioners