

**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY**  
Preston Volunteer Fire Company Hall, 3860 Choptank Road, Preston, Maryland

**MINUTES**  
**March 10, 2020**

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

**Invocation** by Reverend Buddy Dunn; **Pledge of Allegiance.** The agenda was accepted as presented.

**FY2020 Budget Hearing:**

The first Fiscal Year 2020-2021 public hearing to receive testimony regarding the Caroline County Government budget requests **convened** at 6:00 p.m.

President Larry Porter introduced the Commissioners and staff and stated that the purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony related to budget requests received for Fiscal Year 2021. He stated that the notice of public hearing was published in the Star Democrat newspaper and on the County website.

The following is a summary of testimony received:

**Susan Runnel, Local Management Board:** Ms. Runnels stated that she is from the Caroline County Human Services Council. She thanked the Commissioners for funding of the LMB, however she is requesting an additional \$20,00 due to State budget cuts. She stated that the State has limited the funding for all LMB's however she is hopeful for a brighter future with more funding to come.

**Dr. Cliff Coppersmith, Chesapeake College:** Dr. Coppersmith thanked the Commissioners for working with him and the staff of Chesapeake College on his first budget hearing as the President. He stated that Chesapeake College values the support from Caroline County.

**Dina Daly, Director, Caroline County Department of Social Services:** Ms. Daly stated that most funding comes from the State regarding Social Services, however there is a need from the County. She stated that her first request is to send board members to an annual conference to learn about new and improved services. Her final request is for \$20,000 to keep a administrative position in the office which is beneficial to the program and county.

**Don Reed, Chair of Caroline County Employee Advisory Board:** Mr. Reed stated that the Employee Advisory Board would like to thank the Commissioners for considering an across the board pay increase, as well as supporting the retirees of the County.

Phil Less, Caroline County Tourism, President, thanked the Commissioners and stated that the Caroline County Office of Tourism was presenting a flat budget for this fiscal year. He stated that they are grateful for the County's continued support and they are working on hiring a new director to lead tourism.

**Pastor Ricks, Men for Change,** Pastor Rick stated that he is a member of Caroline County's Men for a Change. This advocacy group has helped mentor the youth of Caroline County for the past 13 years. He stated that this is the first request for funds Men for a Change has made. He went on to state that in order to provide more detailed programs they need to establish an administrative side. Pastor Rick thanked the

Commissioners again for all their support and stated that currently they have 25-35 kids go through their program each year.

**Patty Saelens , Caroline County Public Schools:** Ms. Saelens, Superintendent, stated that she would like to officially thank and emphasis the important role the Commissioners played in the project of Greensboro Elementary school. She also thanked the Board for supporting the new Schools Resource Officer (SRO)program. She stated that the SRO program has benefited the students and parents in a huge way.

**Jenn Hodge, Caroline County Council of the Arts:** Ms. Hodge thanked the Commissioners for the continued support for the local arts council in Caroline County. She stated that new classes are being offered throughout the county for children this year as well as leadership opportunities for high school students.

**Debby Bennet, Caroline County Public Library:** Ms. Bennet stated that she has requested an increase in her budget to allow for an across the board pay increase to retain her amazing staff. She also stated that she thanks the Commissioners for their contained support of the library and all the programs they fund especially Imagination Library which allows for every child under the age of five in Caroline County to receive a book to read each month.

**Dalton Mann, Recreation and Parks Advisory Board:** Mr. Mann thank all the Commissioners for making the County a better place to live in. Mr. Mann stated that as always, the Commissioners know the importance recreation and parks brings to the youth and the overall members of Caroline County.

**Ross Benincasa, Town of Hillsboro,** Mr. Benincasa thanked the Commissioners for their support of the small towns in Caroline County and he stated that he hopes they fill the request from the Town of Hillsboro for \$2,500 for an exercising trail.

President Porter asked if there was anyone else from the audience that would like to speak. He then stated that he would allow this time to seek comments from his fellow commissioners

Commissioner Levengood thanked everyone who attended and testified to support the needs of the community. He stated that although the Commissioners cannot give increase to every department in need, he feels the importance of public safety and the children of Caroline County remain the top priority of the budget.

Commissioner Franklin stated it is unfortunate the County does not have unlimited revenues in order to support all internal and external requests. He went on to state how much he appreciates how each department can work together to collaborate on the budget and is grateful for the strong working relationship the County has with its outside and internal departments. Mr. Franklin stated that this year would mark his 7<sup>th</sup> budget to balance, with revenues continuing to increase a little each year.

Commissioner Porter stated that this was his 11<sup>th</sup> budget. He stated that he would like to acknowledge the amazing relationship the County has continued to have with agencies such as the Board of Education and the Caroline County Sheriff's Office. Mr. Porter explained that each requested is looked over by the Board and all are considered important.

The Commissioners took a brief recess.

## ANNUAL MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAX DIFFERENTIAL MEETING

At 7:00 p.m. the Commissioners convened the annual Municipal Property Tax Differential meeting with representatives from Preston, Ridgely, Denton, Greensboro, and Federalsburg present

Cathie Moore, Comptroller, opened the discussion and stated that in the State of Maryland, counties are either required to or may grant tax differential rates on property taxes. She stated Caroline is a “may” county and that the County had provided a differential for many years, with the current formula based on police protection. The five smallest towns Hillsboro, Goldsboro, Henderson, Templeville, and Marydel do not receive a differential because it is based on police protection, and they do not provide that service. Ms. Moore also noted that under the formula, as the Commissioners increase the number of deputies, it raises the County’s level of service, which results in a greater differential, or tax break, for town residents. She stated that this current fiscal year the Commissioner voted to keep the differential the same has FY20, which would allow the tax payers to receive the same funds as the year prior.

Town	Property Tax Rate Discount
Denton	\$0.06
Federalsburg	\$0.8
Greensboro	\$0.06
Preston	\$0.01

The Commissioners took a brief recess.

## REGULAR COMMISSIONERS MEETING

### Consent Agenda: all items were approved by unanimous consent

- Minutes: February 4, 2020 Work Session, February 11, 2020 Open and Closed Session; February 18, 2020 Work Session
- [P.O #2020-0361 and Service Agreement to Stryker Sales Corporation for Department of Emergency Services, Total Amount \\$14,400.00](#)
- [P.O#2020- 0535, to Schummer Inc for Change order for Caroline County Detention Center Project, Total Amount \\$14,318.13](#)
- [Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town of Easton Police Department](#)
- [Joint Use Agreement for Courthouse Green Use, Denton Veterans Parade](#)

### County Administrator’s Report:

- Mr. Goldman stated that they have received final bids for the concrete work at the HAPS building which will be on you next agenda.

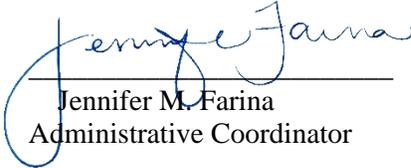
### Commissioners Open Discussion Period:

Commissioner Levengood stated that he has continued to attend MACo meetings in Annapolis

Commissioner Franklin stated that he spent Friday in Annapolis with Administrators for the Benedictine school to receive more funds from the State.

Commissioner Porter stated that he did a walkthrough of the new Caroline County Sheriff's Office he stated that is looking nice and everything is on schedule.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.



Jennifer M. Farina  
Administrative Coordinator