

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

WORK SESSION
July 2, 2019

Present: President, Larry C. Porter; Vice President, Daniel J. Franklin, Commissioner, Wilbur Levensgood, Jr.; Jeremy Goldman, County Administrator; Heather Price, County Attorney; Sara Visintainer, Chief of Staff; and Jennifer Farina, Administrative Coordinator

Meeting began at 9:00 AM

Topic 1: Economic Development FY2019 Annual Report

Debbie Bowden presented the Commissioners with the official updated FY2019 Annual Report for Caroline County Economic Development. The annual report highlights the efforts and successes of the Department, which leads to business retention and attraction, job creation, and investment in workforce development of the county. Ms. Bowden then explained some highlighted activities that have happened since her employment. She stated that the County hosted their first ever “Career and Technologies Fair” for local high school students to apply for jobs located in their County. The County received six inquiries for Small Business Loans and 24 discreet inquiries about locations throughout the County for potential business.

Ms. Bowden emphasized the growing partnerships the County is continuing to have with the municipalities and the Maryland Rural Development Corporation. Ms. Bowden ended by explaining that Economic development does not occur without a link to the community development. Major partners included Maryland Business for Education Roundtable, Drug-Free Caroline, Farming4Hunger, Caroline County Library, and Caroline County Public Schools.

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Bowden for her detailed report which can be found on the Economic Development website at www.carolinebusiness.com.

Topic Two: Government Access Channel:

Ms. Price stated that the County was asked to create a government access channel to provide video of Commissioners meetings and other government programming. She stated that the County Cable Franchise Agreement requires the County to create rules and procedures governing access and use, etc.

Commissioner Franklin stated that he was not against allowing public access to meetings, however he was not in favor of spending from the budget to pay for equipment to produce the meeting.

Mr. Thayer, who works with neighboring counties who do productions of meetings, stated in his experience, the cable company may cover the financial side of the project. He stated that it would not just be a public access channel for government, but also a channel to see all events and community wide projects occurring within the County.

The Commissioners stated that they would have staff look into this project and get more details for them, however they would not proceed if the County needed to use any funds for the project.

Topic three: Circuit Court Operations and Space Needs:

Judge Newell expressed concern about the space available for Circuit Court operations, in addition to the safety of the building. Circuit Court has grown and changed substantially over the last decade, with an increasingly busy family docket and other cases related to drugs. Additionally, new programs Drug Court and pre-trial release require a collaborative approach that necessitates more meeting and conference space. Judge Newell stated that he feels his office could work in the space they currently have, however if in the future the State’s Attorney’s Office moved, or the County Office left, they would be able to fill the vacant

office. Judge Newell went on to explain that his main concern for the Courthouse is security. He stated that there are many improvements he would like to work on in the future, based on the results of a security audit.

The Commissioners stated that they have considered the idea of moving County Office out of the Courthouse to free space for the courts, however that is a project that would take due consideration and likely a few years to implement. They stated that they agree the safety of the public, as well as the State and County employees, is a main priority and they understood the Judge's concerns.

Topic Four: Greensboro Elementary School Bond Issuance:

Ms. Visintainer stated as discussed briefly at the last meeting, the Governor has not unfenced the money in the State budget that includes school construction funds, and as a result, the County will need to have its money for the GES project ready sooner than expected.

In addition to reviewing the bond process, Ms. Visintainer stated that the Commissioners would need to determine if there are any other projects they want to include in this bond. Bond eligible projects must be capital in nature with at least a 20-year lifespan (projects have to last the life of the bond or greater). Each project must be listed in the bond legislation. The GES project will cost approximately \$20 million (worst case scenario). This will translate into annual debt payments of around \$1.6 M. This leaves room in the annual bond payment for some additional projects if the Commissioners choose, since income tax revenue from the increase is about \$2 M a year. Additionally, the County's Financial Advisors are analyzing current debt to see if the County can realize a savings by folding in a refunding for that debt, since the current bond market is so favorable for local governments. This could result in some additional borrowing capacity/offset additional projects.

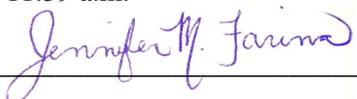
Looking at the Capital Improvement Plan, the four projects staff have identified as potential options to include are: 1) Renovation of the space vacated by the Sheriff's Office at the Detention Center and a rework of the intake and booking area to accommodate central booking and to better address the need for more and improved isolation cells; 2) North County park improvements with local funds leveraging State and Federal park development funds; 3) Hot mix asphalt for roads that have it and need retreatment or the conversion of especially high traffic/high truck traffic road segments from tar and chip to hot mix; and 4) Space solution for Circuit Court/County offices.

The Commissioners discussed the various options and stated that their highest priority would be projects that addressed pressing problems, such as the space configuration issues at the Detention Center and security improvements at the Courthouse. They asked staff to work on gathering more information and to schedule further discussion at their next work session.

Closed Session:

- Legal Advice Regarding a Developers Right and Responsibilities Agreement
- Authority: Maryland Code, General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(7)
- Convened in closed session at 11:30 a.m., motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Levengood, unanimous.
- Adjourned closed session at 11:55 a. m.; motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Levengood; unanimous.
- President's Report: The Commissioners received a draft DRRA with staff and the County Attorney and received advice on how to proceed.

There being no further discussion the work session ended at 11:59 a.m.



Coordinator

Jennifer M. Farina, Administrative