

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

Minutes
July 5, 2022

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

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM.

There was no invocation.

6/21/2022 Closed Session Closing Statement: “During the June 21st, 2022, Commissioners Meeting, the Commissioners held a closed session to discuss potential employment under General Provisions Art. 3-305(b): (1). Commissioners Porter, Franklin and Levensgood were in attendance as well as Jamie Beechey, Deputy Director of Recreation and Parks and Executive Assistant, Kaleigh Leager.”

There was no public comment.

Debbie Bowden, Director of Economic Development – Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund Proposed Project Discussion: Ms. Bowden presented a list of possible projects to receive funding through the State allocation to MRDC. Ms. Bowden stated that MRDC requested that each County overbudget projects to provide options. Caroline County has \$3.2M allocated to fund projects in the County or regionally.

Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund Proposed Projects			
	Project	Budget	Notes
1.	Data Center	2,000,000	Building and FF&E for lease to Choptank Electric/Fiber for boutique data center
2.	Administrative fee	96,000	3% of allocation
3.	Chesapeake College Foundation	250,000	Workforce Training Program, per the College's request
4.	Maryland Broadband Cooperative	240,000	Optical network upgrade, per the Cooperative's request
5.	ESEC Agbiotech project support	500,000	Agbiotech building, per Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center request
6.	Tech Park Development Plan of Action	200,000	Focused marketing and preparation for attracting buyers
7.	Featured Insights Podcast	100,000	Business information news sharing through modern media
8.	West Denton Economic Impact Study	100,000	Study of the potential market and ROI of the West Denton area
9.	Business Attraction Capacity Building	250,000	Marketing and promotion of the county as a place to conduct business
10.	Broadband	1,000,000	Offset ARPA funding, not in addition to ARPA funding
	Total Request	4,736,000	
	Available Funding	3,233,333	
	Overage	1,502,667	

The Commissioners stated that they would support the ESEC Agbiotech Project if the center is in

Caroline County. Commissioner Franklin stated that numbers 6-9 on the priority list should be relooked at as they are not his most prioritized options. Commissioner Porter stated that said anything in West Denton must include the two vacant buildings as you come into the Town of Denton. After further discussion, the Commissioners requested that Ms. Bowden reprioritize list and send them an updated version.

Sherry Bratton, Director of Human Resources – Class Specification Discussion: Ms. Bratton presented the Commissioners with 4 class specifications for discussion. 1) Parks and Capital Projects Manager 2) Program Services Manager 3) Program Services Administrator 4) Purchasing Coordinator. Ms. Bratton and Mr. Goldman stated that the Purchasing Coordinator as previously written, was an unfillable request. The previous class specification sought someone who was highly qualified and required little training. As no one was able to be found, Mr. Bratton and Mr. Goldman are requesting that the class specification be changed to allow the position to be a trainable one. The Commissioners requested that these be brought before them in Resolution format during the next Commissioners meeting for approval.

Sherry Bratton, Director of Human Resources – Employee Grievance Procedure Resolution Discussion: Ms. Bratton stated that with the advice of County Attorney, Stewart Barroll and County Administrator, Jeremy Goldman that there be a change to the current grievance procedure as it is a time-consuming process that does not change the outcome of a termination. The grievance procedure is to solely see if the termination process was done incorrectly. Currently, an employee has 30 days to file for a grievance hearing. That has been changed to 15 days. Another change Ms. Bratton mentioned was that now you must be suspended for a minimum of 5 days to file a grievance. Commissioner Franklin stated that, that needs to be changed as any suspension of any amount of time is a big deal. The Commissioners agreed to change reasons for filing to any suspension rather than minimum 5 days.

Sherry Bratton, Director of Human Resources – Proposed Pension Benefit Change Discussion: Ms. Bratton stated that the Pension Committee had an actuarial study completed by Bolton Partners; the recommended changes would have an impact on the Actuarial Value of Assets and Actuarially Determined Contribution. Bolton’s evaluation looked at the impact based on the changes being effective July 1, 2021.

- They determined that the changes would have decreased Actuarial Value of Assets from 88.27% to 88.21% (.06% reduction)
- Actuarial Determined Contribution for FY2023 would change from 7.25% to 7.34% (increase of .09%; we are including 11% in budget FY2023)

Public Safety Pension Plan – employees hired after July 1, 2013

Current Plan Setup	Proposed Plan Setup
Normal Retirement: Reaching age 55 with 25 years of service	Normal Retirement: Reaching age 50 with 25 years of service

General Employees’ Pension Plan – employees hired after July 1, 2013

Current Plan Setup	Proposed Plan Setup
Normal Retirement:	Normal Retirement:

Reaching age 60 with 30 years of service	Reaching age 55 with 30 years of service
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The Commissioners requested that this be brought back to a meeting in August for approval.

Consent Agenda: (All three Commissioners voted unanimously to pass the consent agenda with amendments): The Commissioners removed Resolution 2022-012:

- Minutes – June 21, 2022, Closed Session
- Employment Contract – EMT-B – A. Fretterd
- Employment Contract – EMT-B – W. Grimm
- Employment Contract – EMT-B – W. Vick
- Employment Contract – EMT-B – W. Wilson
- Employment Contract – EMT-B – H. Neuwiller
- Employment Contract – CRT – L. Thompson
- Deed of Forest Conservation Easement – Memorandum of Agreement – Price
- [FY2023 Mid-Shore Behavioral Health Professional Services – Memorandum of Agreement](#)
- [FY2023 Fixed Price Contract – Mental Health Services - Mid-Shore Behavioral Health – Memorandum of Agreement](#)
- [Department of Public Works – Eastern Lift Truck Service Piggyback Contract – Forklift & Purchase Order #2023-00000005](#)
- Department of Public Works – Sourcewell Piggyback Contracts – [Compactor #1 & Compactor #2 - Purchase Orders #2023-00000006 & #2023-00000007](#)
- [Department of Public Works – Atlantic Tractor, LLC. Piggyback Contract – John Deere Cab Tractor & Purchase Order #2022-00000418](#)
- [Wor-Wic Community College EMS Program - EMS Precepting Site – Memorandum of Agreement](#)
- [Resolution #2022-011 – Amendment to Caroline County Personnel Rules and Regulations - Class Specifications – Park Maintenance Worker, Grant Coordinator, Correctional Officer Pre-Trial Supervisor, Correctional Officer Pre-Trial Coordinator](#)
- [North County Regional Park Engineering Contract – Century Engineering](#)

Commissioner Levensgood requested that the following item be pulled from the consent agenda and voted on separately. (Commissioner Porter and Franklin voted to approve the paving contract. Commissioner Levensgood voted against signing the contract.)

- [Department of Public Works – County-Wide Patching and Paving Contract – R.L. Ewing & Purchase Order #2023-00000008](#)

Action Items: (All three Commissioners voted unanimously pass BOE Operating Budget)

- [Caroline County Public Schools – FY2023 Operating Budget](#)

County Administrators Report – Jeremy Goldman: Mr. Goldman stated he needs to have a discussion regarding Compass Hospice. The County is going to submit a paid ad for the public's view. It is currently being drafted by Mr. Barroll to be approved by Commissioners.

Commissioner Porter stated that Compass Hospice has backed out and misrepresented their actions in this County. Compass does provide good in-home care; Commissioner Porter has personal experience. Commissioner Porter also mention that the State Delegation expressly excluded him in meeting that they held with Compass. Commissioner Porter stated that on April 19th, the Compass CEO called in during the meeting and spoke of a starting construction date of late 2023 or late 2024. Commissioner Franklin agreed to support whatever actions are needed to ensure we serve the citizens of the County as promised. Commissioner Porter stated that County has a free piece of land and almost \$1M to give to a company to build a hospice facility in County.

Mr. Goldman stated that tomorrow he will be assisting in moving equipment from the DES warehouse to the DCT warehouse, weather dependent. Mr. Goldman also wanted to personally thank the Commissioners for paying attention and caring for the County employees by implementing the second raise within a calendar year, starting the first paycheck in July.

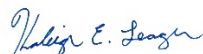
County Commissioners Open Discussion: Commissioners Franklin and Levensgood had no comments. Commissioner Levensgood stated that he wants to confirm that all future summer meetings will be moved to 9am for remainder of summer schedule. Commissioner Porter also urged Department Heads and staff to follow the agenda request procedure as the last-minute requests are getting harder and harder to fulfill.

There was no public comment.

Closed Session: Commissioner Levensgood made a motion to enter closed session. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted to enter closed session at 11:10 a.m.

At 11:40 a.m. Commissioner Franklin made a motion to enter open session. Commissioner Porter seconded. All three Commissioners voted to enter open session. Commissioner Franklin made a motion to file an appeal regarding the pending Wood Farm litigation. Commissioner Levensgood seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted to file an appeal.

Commissioner Levensgood made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Franklin seconded. All three Commissioners voted to adjourn the meeting.



Kaleigh Leager
Executive Assistant to the County Commissioners