

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY
Health and Public Services (HAPS) Building
403 S. 7th Street, Room 111
Denton, MD 21629

Minutes
July 11, 2023

Present: President J. Travis Breeding; Vice President Larry C. Porter, Commissioner N. Franklin Bartz, III.

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

Commissioners Meeting Convened, Invocation by Pastor Thomas Fisher – Abrams
Memorial Church of Denton

Reporting Out Statement: Commissioner Breeding read the following statement, “During the June 20th Commissioners Meeting, the Commissioners held a closed session to discuss pending litigation under section 8 of the general provisions article 3-305(b). Commissioners Breeding, Porter, and Bartz were in attendance as well as County Administrator, Jeremy Goldman, County Attorney, Stewart Barroll, Paralegal, Mary Berneski, and Executive Assistant, Kaleigh Leager. No actions were taken.”

Public Comment:

- Rebecca Hutchison, Cordova: Ms. Hutchison stated that she wanted to start a conversation to discuss Pride in Caroline County and how things said from people in power affect a community.
- Miella Hathaway, Federalsburg: Ms. Hathaway stated she is straight but wanted to speak because her daughter is transgender and is now her son. Ms. Hathaway shared with the Commissioners that being apart of the LGBTQ+ community is not a choice.
- Paul Merritt, Greensboro: Mr. Merritt stated that he has lived in Caroline County all his life. Mr. Merritt stated that he started a support group for LGBTQ+ people. Mr. Merritt stated that his life has been threatened several times in this County while he has been in drag and for being a gay man.
- Harry George, Caroline County: Mr. George stated that everybody has a right to do whatever they want but it is not the County’s responsibility to focus on sexual orientation.
- Earl Dempsey, FirstState: Mr. Dempsey wanted to let the Commissioners know he is in the audience if there are any questions regarding the contract that is in the consent agenda.

Caroline County Hospice Services Update – Heather Guerieri, Executive Director,

Compass Hospice: Ms. Guerieri was accompanied by Mr. Brandon Angel and Ms. Carole Visintainer from the Compass Hospice Board. Ms. Guerieri presented statistics specifically related to Caroline County residents. Ms. Guerieri stated that on June 30th Compass signed a memorandum of understanding with Arcadia Living in Denton. This partnership will offer beds in Denton starting on August 1st. Per Ms. Guerieri, this agreement will auto-renew yearly unless either party gives a 60-day notice. In addition, this enables Caroline County residents who need a hospice bed to stay in Caroline County with residential care only.

North County Park State Highway Entrance Discussion – Jamie Beechey, Director of

Recreation & Parks: Ms. Beechey provided the Commissioners with a copy of the schematic from the State Highway Administration (SHA). Ms. Beechey stated that SHA is requiring the County to provide a stop sign at the exit of North County Park (NCP). Ms. Beechey stated that there is \$12,500 cost associated if the County does a traffic impact study. The Commissioners directed Ms. Beechey to do the traffic study and make the same improvements that Greensboro Volunteer Fire Company did to their entrance, if that's all the study reveals.

Commissioner Breeding stated that the Town of Denton had a Council meeting last Thursday night related to the proposed Sharp Road multi-purpose field. Commissioner Breeding stated there was no objection to Commissioner Breeding's schematics and subdividing a 1/3 of the property to develop the park.

Ms. Beechey stated that she does not recommend using funds at Denton Elementary for T-Ball fields. Sports

Property Maintenance Code Discussion – Katheleen Freeman, Director of Planning &

Codes: Ms. Freeman and Ms. Dadds discussed the preliminary recommendations regarding property maintenance codes in the County. Ms. Freeman focused on nuisances regarding health, safety, and welfare. Commissioner Breeding envisions a complaint driven process that requires the complaint must negatively impact an adjoining property owner or adjacent property owner.

Mid Shore Regional Technology & Business Park Discussion – Debbie Bowden, Director of

Economic Development: Ms. Bowden stated this is a follow-up to the June 20th meeting report from MacLeod Law Group. Ms. Bowden stated that the County has a mechanism to go to Dept. of Commerce at any time regarding the Tech Park. Ms. Bowden also mentioned the need to fix drainage the issue in Tech Park. The Commissioners request that all "attached strings" be removed for the property to become "sellable". The Commissioners asked Ms. Bowden about getting the property to a similar in competitiveness with surrounding tech parks.

The Commissioners and Ms. Bowden discussed the Mid Shore Regional Council (MSRC) funding and associated projects. The Commissioners requested that the \$2.3 million allocated for the data center and farm to freezer project, both be reallocated as those two projects are no longer viable. Ms. Bowden and Mr. Goldman reinforced the Commissioners that the funding must be spent by November of 2024. The Commissioners requested that the following projects receive

the MSRC funding: 1- Development of Double Hills property behind the Sheriff's Office (including road construction, sewer and water; \$1M) to expand the Denton Industrial Park, 2 – Choptank Marina (bulkheads, boat slips, bathrooms, pilings, deck work, and electrical work; \$1M), Part 3 – MRDC building/Greensboro Library (\$300,000).

Commissioner Porter made a motion to remove the data center and the farm to freezer project and replace them with the Choptank marina repairs, library repairs and double hill roads. Commissioner Bartz seconded the motion. All three Commissioners unanimously voted to approve the reallocation of funds.

Consent Agenda: All three Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the consent agenda.

- Minutes – June 20, 2023 – Open & Closed
- Board of Library Trustees Appointment – T. Kelly-Molock
- Board of Library Trustees Appointment – H. Trice
- [MDE 319\(h\) Clean Water Act Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\) & Form D Conditions of Financial Assistance](#) - Jonestown Community Park Water Quality and Stormwater Best Management Practices Project
- [Carline County Sheriff's Office – Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) between the County Commissioners of Caroline County and the Sheriff of Caroline County](#)
- [Caroline County Sheriff's Office – Warrant Apprehension Program – Grant Award & Acceptance - \\$24,975](#)
- Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes – [First State Inspection Agency Contract](#)
- Caroline County Department of Public Works – [Purchase Order #2023-545 & Contract – Taylor & Messick, Inc. - \\$48,747.00](#)
- Caroline County Department of Public Works – [Maryland State Highway Administration Weed Control Memorandum of Understanding](#)
- Caroline County Department of Emergency Services – [Purchase Order #2024-011 & Contract Addendum](#) - Motorola Solutions, Inc. - \$174,436.32
- Caroline County Department of Planning & Codes – [MALPF FY2023/2024 Easement Acquisition Program - Top 25 Applicants Approval](#)
- Caroline County Office of Finance – [Purchase Order #2024-26 – UHY LLP - \\$62,000.00](#)

Action Item: Commissioner Porter made a motion to approve the FY24 Revised Chesapeake College Budget. Commissioner Bartz seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the revised budget. Commissioner Porter made a motion to begin drafting a professional services agreement with Mr. Bereano and Mr. Wise. Commissioner Bartz seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted unanimously to have a professional services agreement drafted.

- Caroline County Lobbying Services Contract
- [FY2024 Revised Chesapeake College Budget](#)

County Administrators Report – Jeremy Goldman: Mr. Goldman discussed the issue with Worcester County and their Sheriff’s office, regarding State income tax withholding. Mr. Goldman stated that there needs to be a letter sent to MDE regarding the culvert pipe project on River Road. Mr. Goldman stated that he met with other County Administrators regarding the landfill extension and that he needs to write a letter to MES expressing our extreme frustrations towards the agency regarding their failure to provide the promised figures.

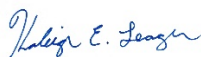
County Commissioners Open Discussion: Commissioner Bartz asked Mr. Goldman about when Warden Scott would be coming in to discuss the District Court pre-trial process. Commissioner Porter asked for an update on the Ganey’s Wharf House. Commissioner Breeding stated that the parking lot of Ganey’s Wharf was full on July 4th with trucks and boat trailers. The Commissioners suggested knocking the wharf house down and expanding the parking lot. Commissioner Breeding stated he went to look at the dilapidated industrial building at the entrance of Denton off 404. He mentioned that there is a ground water contamination issue involving the EPA. Commissioner Porter stated that Ms. Heather Clopper called him yesterday regarding the change in the light signal at 404 concerning farm equipment and the inability to turn onto 328 without running over the concrete traffic island.

Public Comment:

- Paul Merritt, Greensboro: Mr. Merritt suggested a mental health related solution for some of the property maintenance issues. Mr. Merritt stated that camper living is better for the environment, as long as there are proper electrical and sewage systems in place.

With no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Closed Session: “To consult with staff about pending litigation.” Under Section (8) of the General Provisions Art.: 3-305(b)



Kaleigh Leager
Executive Assistant to the County Commissioners