

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

**WORK SESSION**  
**August 21, 2018**

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

The Work Session convened at 9:04 a.m.

**Topic 1: Introduction of New County Sheriff Deputies:**

Sheriff Randy Bounds formally introduced Deputies First Class Eric Lee and Michael Stivers to the Commissioners. He also introduced Deputies Connor Cooper and Lucas Nagel. The Commissioners welcomed all of the deputies and thanked them for keeping the citizens of Caroline County safe. Sheriff Bounds stated that the Sheriff's Office is lucky to have hired such qualified deputies and he looks forward to watching them succeed in their career at the Caroline County Sheriff's Office.

**Topic Two: Proposed Hardship Leave Bank:**

Members of the Employee Advisory Board (EAB) and Sherry Bratton, Director, Office of Human Resources, presented the Commissioners with their official report regarding the County's proposed Hardship Leave Bank. The EAB stated that they met with each county department to insure every employee had the opportunity for feedback regarding this changes in the County's Personnel Rules and Regulations. After speaking with each department, the feedback from the employees was to establish a Hardship Leave Bank and replace the current Sick Leave Bank, which relied on voluntary donations of time. The Hardship Leave Bank would essentially create a short-term disability benefit by taking one sick day a year and diverting it to a shared risk insurance pool.

The Commissioners asked if the majority of the employees were in favor of a mandatory donation of eight hours to be added to the Hard Ship Leave Bank. Both Human Resources and the EAB stated that it was the majority vote in every department to change to the Hardship Leave Bank. The Commissioners asked for more time to read over the resolution before voting to move forward.

**Topic Three Draft Impact Fee Legislation:**

Sara Visintainer, Chief of Staff, stated that Legislative Bill #2018-2, Chapter 167 – Development Impact Fees – Creation, was drafted to create an impact fee on new construction in Caroline County. She stated that under the State law you cannot charge both an excise tax and an impact fee, however the Commissioners have voiced they would like to implement an impact fee over an excise tax. An impact fee will allow a tax to be collected on multi-family dwellings and apply uniformly in and out of incorporated municipalities. The impact fees are necessary to pay for capital costs caused by development, especially school construction.

The Commissioners stated that all fees collected from the impact fee would be going to the Board of Education for school construction and EMS for medical services. The Commissioners stated that they would like language added to the bill which would exempt farm lots given to a direct family member from the fee, in order to increase the likelihood of the farm remaining in active agricultural production.

**Topic Four: CDBG Grant Requirements:**

Ms. Visintainer stated that the County was recently informed of new requirements to apply for the State of Maryland Community Development Block Grant (CDBG Grants). She stated that there is a new

mandatory requirement for a Fair House and Equal Opportunity Plan, a “Section 3 Plan” – which requires that to the greatest extent possible the County provide employment and contracting opportunities to very low-income persons, and a Minority Business Plan, which requires the County to solicit minority and women owned businesses for work contracted by the County. Ms. Visintinaer stated that in order to comply with these requirements additional staff members may need to be hired, or the Commissioners could stop applying for the CDBG Grant funds.

Commissioner Porter stated that he would like the office of Human Resources to look into working on developing these required plans for the County, however he was not in favor of creating a specific position in the County to work on CDBG grants. The Commissioners were in agreement that while compliance with the requirements would be very difficult with existing staffing, they did not want to lose the opportunity to apply for CDBG grants and determined that they were willing to accept the level of risk staff was advising them existed.

#### **Topic Five: Commissioners Open Discussion**

- Commissioner Levensgood stated that he had a busy week and attended several meetings at the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) conference in Ocean City. He also stated that he enjoyed the 30<sup>th</sup> celebration of Caroline Summerfest which was attended by both the Governor and Lieutenant Governor.
- Commissioner Porter stated that he was contacted by an individual that is currently trying to build a commercial building in Bethlehem. He stated that the developer was denied approval by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) to install an innovative septic system for his proposed Dollar General. Commissioner Porter asked Debbie Bowden, Economic Development Director, to follow up, as well as contact MDE. Commissioner Porter noted that he would like to have the Courthouse power washed. Mr. Decker stated that he would quote out a price for the upcoming meeting.
- Commissioner Franklin informed the Board that he met with Department of Transportation Secretary Rahn during the MACo conference. He stated that the County would receive more Highway User Funds this year, however it would take about four to six more years until the higher level of funding is completely phased in, and it is not a full restoration of historic funding levels. Commissioner Franklin stated that the Secretary encouraged the County to include the final phase of the Route 404 dualization project in its priority list, however it is unlikely to be a departmental priority in the next several years, considering the cost of the previous phase. Commissioner Franklin stated that a meeting would be held to discuss the needs of the River Road intersection during their upcoming meeting in November. Commissioner Franklin asked staff to follow up on the process and development of the County’s Highway Safety Plan.

#### **Closed Session:**

- Discussion of the hiring of an at-will position
- Authority: Maryland Code, General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(1)
- Convened in closed session at 2:57: p.m., motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Levensgood, unanimous.
- Adjourned closed session at 4:20 p.m.; motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Levensgood; unanimous.
- President’s Report: The Commissioners met to discuss the County Administrators position.

There being no further discussion the work session ended at 4:25 p.m.

*Jennifer M. Farina*

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Jennifer M. Farina  
Administrative Coordinator