

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

**Minutes**  
**September 1, 2020**

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

The meeting began at 9:00 AM. The Commissioners called for public comment and staff reported none had been submitted.

**Public Hearing: Ordinance 2020-1, Chapter 175 Zoning-Special Events Venues:** This Ordinance is an act concerning supplementary zoning regulations; for the purpose of amending the Code of Public Local Laws of Caroline County, Maryland to allow special event venues under certain circumstances and subject to certain regulations; by adding to section 175-8.B; and by adding a new section 175-47 to Article V, Supplementary Regulations.

Sara Visintainer, Chief of Staff, stated that due to COVID-19 restrictions, testimony was only accepted in writing and could be submitted via email, regular email, or through the County website. She reported that no one had submitted comment prior to the hearing. To allow additional time for public input, the Commissioners stated that the hearing will be held open until September 15, 2020.

Commissioner Levensgood asked a question about the potential impact of the ordinance on family parties, but staff clarified that the definition of Special Event Venue limits the applicability to events held for compensation. Commissioner Franklin asked about compliance with COVID-19 safety precautions, and staff stated that those could be addressed by the Event Management Plan required by the Ordinance. He also reiterated that any violations under the Ordinance should be a Code Enforcement function and not a police function.

**Discussion of 2020 Elections Process:** Allison Murphy, Director, Caroline County Board of Elections, updated the Board on the new voting process for the upcoming presidential election. Governor Hogan issued a proclamation to establish the use of vote centers for the 2020 General Elections. This meant all polling places will not be open November 3<sup>rd</sup>, instead, the three centers will be available. She informed them of the three polling places in Caroline County: Greensboro VFC Community Hall, James Frettered Community Center in Denton, and the Preston Fire Hall. Ms. Murphy stated that the general election is Tuesday November 3, 2020 and early voting will be held October 26 – November 2. Ms. Murphy also reminded the Commissioners that there are drop-off boxes located at the Frettered Center, and Caroline County Public Health and Services Building (Health Department), for those who don't want to mail in their ballots. The Commissioners expressed frustration with the lack of additional voter access, but stated they understood that was out of the control of the local Board of Elections.

**COVID-19 Response and Recovery Update:** Roger Harrell, Interim Acting Health Officer, briefed the Board on the current COVID-19 outbreak at a Caroline County nursing home. He stated that the Stater and Health Department staff are monitoring the situation closely and will continue to update the Board when more information is received. He stated that testing county-wide has slowed down, and the Health Department is now only testing every Tuesday, instead of twice weekly. Mr. Harrell explained that staff is planning the final stages for a flu clinic drive through which will begin in October.

Debbie Bowden, Director, Economic Development. Ms. Bowden addressed the Commissioners and gave them an overview of how local business were performing in Caroline County. She stated that several

businesses call regularly for updated guidance regarding restricted occupancy and masks. She stated that they are continuing to help provide PPE. Ms. Bowden suggested a third round of relief grants in October, however in the meantime she and her staff will work on educating business on employee and customer protection. She informed that Board that Economic Development continues to send out news letters and press releases that highlight business that are doing well, in hopes that it promotes and helps other local businesses in the area.

**Presentation of Income Tax:** Danny Fox and Margaret Roe, Office of Finance, presented an overview of the projected income tax revenues for FY21 to be \$2.5 million less than what was originally budgeted. Mr. Fox stated that this unexpected projection is due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they reported that the FY2020 fiscal year was being audited and the County ended the year with a surplus.

**Consent Agenda:** the following items were approved by unanimous consent:

- Open Session Minutes of February 25, 2020, March 3, 2020, March 10, 2020, March 17, 2020, and August 18, 2020
- Resolution #2020-018, Disposal of Surplus County Equipment, 2004 Ford E150
- Resolution #2020-019, Amendments to the Length of Service Awards (LOSAP)
- Joint Use Agreement, Courthouse Green, Caroline YMCA, Welcoming Week Ceremony, Monday September 14, 2020
- Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement Between Caroline County Commissioners and Caroline County Sheriff's Office and the Town of Easton and Easton Police Department
- Certification for Cooperative Local-State Library Aid Programs FY2021
- CDBG Final Semi-Annual Report for the Benedictine Foundation
- P.O.#2021-78 and Accompanying Contract, Priority Dispatch for Platinum Maintenance to 911 Software
- Part-Time Employment Contract, Emergency Services, EMT (Aydelotte)

The following item was pulled from the Consent Agenda and voted on separately. Commissioner Porter recused himself due to a working relationship with the housing rental program. On motion by Commissioner Franklin, seconded by Commissioner Levensgood, the Commissioners approved the Maryland Assisted Housing Relief Program Rental Assistance Agreement Dayspring Townhomes.

**County Administrators Report:**

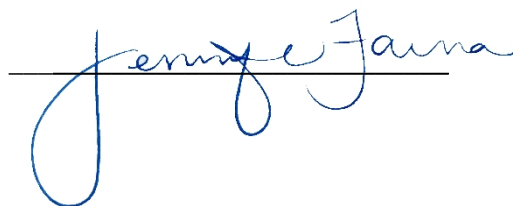
- Mr. Goldman stated that the Sheriff's Office Building is looking at a completion date in the middle of October. He stated that although there have been set backs, the project is still on budget.
- He briefed the Commissioners on a failure at the Jonestown water pump system and stated that the Department of Public Works is on site to get the pump running as promptly as possible.

**County Commissioners Open Discussion:**

Commissioner Levensgood stated that several local fire companies are hosting dinners where all items are packaged for pick-up, he stated that he hopes the community helps support their local fire companies by ordering food.

Commissioner Porter stated that he is looking forward to being on the interview panel for the position of Health Officer.

There being no further discussion the meeting ended at 10:33 am.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Jaina". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Jennifer M. Farina, Administrative Coordinator