

**County Council of Dorchester County
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2015**

The County Council of Dorchester County met in regular session on December 15, 2015 with the following members present: Ricky C. Travers, President; Tom C. Bradshaw, Vice President; Rick M. Price and Don B. Satterfield. Also present were E. Thomas Merryweather, County Attorney; Jeremy Goldman, County Manager; and Donna Lane, Executive Administrative Specialist.

REGULAR SESSION

CLOSED SESSION

The Council adjourned from a Regular Session and convened into a Closed Session pursuant to Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, pursuant to §3-305(b)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction; pursuant to §3-305(b)(3) to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto; and pursuant to §3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

Voting in favor of the closed Closed Session were all Council members.

REGULAR SESSION

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Bradshaw led the invocation and the pledge of allegiance.

CALL FOR ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA

The Council agreed to add a request to deploy an ambulance and crew as part of a regional strike team to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- DECEMBER 1, 2015

The Council approved the minutes of December 1, 2015.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS

The Council approved the vouchers as presented with Councilman Travers abstaining for payments made to Simmons Center Market.

FINANCIAL REPORT: CASH AND INVESTMENTS

Councilman Travers reported total cash and investments as \$9,279,734.00.

CLOSED SESSION SUMMARY

The County Council of Dorchester County convened in an Closed Session at 4:30 p.m. on December 15, 2015 in a closed session at Room 110, County Office Building, 501 Court Lane, Cambridge, Maryland, pursuant to Title 3 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Annotated Code, pursuant to §3-305(b)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom it has jurisdiction; pursuant to §3-305(b)(3) to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto; and pursuant to §3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter.

Motion made, seconded and carried to conduct a closed session pursuant to the above. All members of the Council voted in the affirmative to conduct the closed session for the purposes stated above and to discuss the topics listed below.

Action taken at the closed session: 1) approved the hiring of an individual to fill an on call Advanced Life Support position in the Emergency Medical Services Division by a 4 to 0 vote with 1 vote by written proxy; 2) continued discussions on the potential assumption of property; 3) discussed an offer for a County owned property acquired by tax sale; 4) discussed a matter relating to a tax sale property; 5) discussed a proposed departmental policy; and 6) discussed with legal counsel License Agreements relating to the Eastern Shore Innovation Center.

The above information is being provided to the public pursuant to and in compliance with Section §3-306(b) and (c) of Title 3 of the General Provisions Article.

REGULAR SESSION

UPDATE-HARRIET TUBMAN UNDERGROUND RAILROAD NATIONAL MONUMENT AND HISTORICAL PARK & NATIONAL PARK SERVICE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD "NETWORK TO FREEDOM" PROGRAM

Mike Slattery, Acting Refuge Manager, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, and Robert T. Parker, Superintendent of Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Monument and Historical Park (Historical Park) & National Park Service Underground Railroad "Network to Freedom" Program introduced themselves.

Mr. Slattery said he and Mr. Parker are present in response to concerns the Council raised in its October 14, 2015 correspondence to Sally Jewell, U.S. Department of Interior. He noted that the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Wildlife Service) are two different entities that have distinct statutes and responsibilities. Mr. Slattery advised that he will speak to the issues relating to the Wildlife Service. Mr. Slattery thanked Mr. Goldman and Councilman Satterfield for participating in conversations he has had with the public relating to the project. He stated that as a result of those discussions he has learned that the concerns generally relate to what was viewed as a departure from the Refuge's comprehensive conservation plan. He advised that he has also had the opportunity to speak with a group of local opinion leaders, farmers, foresters and businessmen through the community after receipt of the Council's

correspondence. Mr. Slattery expressed his belief that this outreach alleviated many concerns. He advised that other concerns they have heard are about the maintenance and appearance of the Refuge and crop management. He said a follow-up meeting was conducted today which included a field tour and additional meetings will be held in the future.

Mr. Slattery, based on a recent conversation he had with Mr. Goldman, expressed his belief that the Wildlife Service is committed to continuing to provide the same level of support for the Refuge when selecting a new Refuge Manager for the Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

Mr. Parker explained that the National Park Service, including the National Network to Freedom Program, which is under this department, has entered into an interagency agreement with Wildlife Service for the Historical Park. He explained that the Network to Freedom program staff members have access to stories that relate to the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman. He stated that he and the program staff members are currently located at the Refuge. Mr. Parker advised that the National Park Service entered into an agreement with the State of Maryland for construction management of the Visitors Center. He said he anticipates they will move in the new facility in February 2016. He stated that the National Park Service will be responsible for the exhibits portions of the project which are anticipated to be completed in 2017. Mr. Parker said interpretive programming will be pursued in 2016 and the public will have the opportunity to be involved in the planning process. He explained that the public, stakeholders and partners will be able to engage with the National Park Service in identifying fundamental resources and values and interpretive significance of the area they are now interpreting as Ms. Tubman's birthplace.

In response to questions from Councilman Travers, Mr. Parker said: 1) there will be a soft opening on March 10, 2017 during which there will be a symposium and an open house; 2) a grand opening will be held later in 2017; 3) three structures are being constructed; 4) the property will be owned by the State; 5) the National Park Service will co-manage this property with the State; 6) employees will come from both from the State and Federal level; and 7) he intends to enter into a long term interagency agreement with the Refuge for law enforcement and resource management.

In response to additional inquiries from Councilman Travers, Mr. Parker said: 1) the Park in Dorchester County will focus on the Underground Railroad and Harriett Tubman from a regional standpoint as well as her significance to Dorchester County and Cambridge; 2) the New York site will utilize a different interpretive method and focus on other aspects of her life, including her burial, establishment of a home for the aged and worship in this State; 3) legislation in New York was approved last year for that facility; and 4) negotiation is underway between the National Park Service and the property owners on a potential partnership.

Councilman Travers welcomed Mr. Parker as a new County resident and encouraged him to contact Mr. Goldman or any of the Council members if he needs any assistance. He noted that Councilman Satterfield provided the Council members an overview of his participation in a recent community meeting regarding the project. In response to a question from Councilman Travers, Mr. Slattery said that meeting was productive.

Councilman Satterfield thanked Mr. Slattery for the field tour. He also cited his belief that the meeting was productive. He encouraged Mr. Slattery to reach out to the legislators and the Council for any assistance he may need to further the goals of the Refuge. Mr. Slattery said they will lean on the Council if they have any needs.

Councilman Travers stressed the need to focus on the Refuge, including the wildlife and waterfowl, and to consider the rights of surrounding property owners.

In response to a question from Councilman Price, Mr. Parker said his position is currently the only one that is currently funded. He expressed his understanding that State officials anticipate hiring individuals for this facility in the future.

Councilman Travers asked Ladd Johnson, resident, for his thoughts on the meeting. Mr. Johnson said during the meetings many of the problems were identified. He expressed his belief that agency policies have hampered the process. He cited concerns about the lack of budgeting for waterfowl and farming and agricultural limitations particularly those prohibiting the use of genetically modified organism or treated seeds. He said he is hopeful that the ideas presented at the meetings will be considered by the National Park Service and Refuge. He explained that the majority of today's meeting attendees were farmers and they now recognize the need to provide a food source for deer and waterfowl.

Mr. Slattery confirmed Councilman Travers statement that any monies derived from forest management, including timbering, are not returned to the Refuge and are placed into the State's General Fund. He encouraged Mr. Slattery to contact the Council members if he needs assistance in seeking support to utilize funds garnered from resource management practices for the Refuge.

The Council thanked Mr. Slattery and Mr. Parker.

MANAGERS COMMENTS

LETTER OF SUPPORT REQUEST-WIND PROJECT OPPOSITION-KENT COUNTY

Based on a written request submitted by William Graham, Organizer, Keep Kent Scenic, the Council agreed to execute a letter supporting the Kent County Commissioners' opposition to the Mills Branch Wind Project being proposed by Apex Clean Energy. Mr. Goldman clarified that the project does not directly affect Dorchester County and is being considered by the Maryland Public Service Commission and not Kent County government.

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE-CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE

The Council agreed to send correspondence to Senator Adelaide Eckardt and Delegates Johnny Mautz, Christopher Adams and Sheree Sample-Hughes in support of the restoration of community college funding to the levels prescribed by the John A. Cade Funding formula as requested by Dr. Barbara Viniar, President.

BOBTOWN ROAD FARM LEASE RENEWAL REQUEST

Based on the recommendation of Tom Moore, Public Works Director, the Council agreed to extend the farm lease between Dorchester County and Jeffrey King and Terri Wolf King for four tillable acres of land situate on the north side of Bobtown Road in the Hurlock Election District for an additional year at the annual rent of \$360, which is payable on December 1st of each year.

NOTICE OF AWARD-STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE-HAMBROOKS BAY LIVING SHORELINE PROJECT

The Council approved the request of Mr. Moore to execute an agreement between the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Shoreline Conservation Service and the Council for a no interest 20 year loan in the amount of \$139,100 for the Hambrooks Bay Living Shoreline Stabilization project. The Council acknowledged that the estimated project costs are \$18,000 for design, \$115,337 for construction and a reimbursement of \$5,763 to DNR for technical and administrative services. Based on an inquiry from Councilman Price, Mr. Moore confirmed that the total project cost is \$139,100. In response to a question from Councilman Bradshaw, Mr. Moore expressed his belief that Resource Conversation and Development staff assisted in the design of this project.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS-PUBLIC WORKS

Pursuant to a request submitted by Greg LeBlanc, Engineer, the Council agreed to enter into Storm Water Management Facilities and Sediment Control Construction, Inspection and Maintenance Agreement and Declaration of Easement agreements for poultry house construction with the following individuals: 1) Shane Cohee, Hynson Road; 2) Bruce Nossick, Harrison Ferry Road; 3) Barry Spedden, Cokesbury Road and 4) Ghuman, LLC, Lewis Wharf Road.

DELMARVA WATER TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

The Council agreed that the County will become a member of the Delmarva Water Transport Committee and to appoint a representative to that committee at a January 2016 meeting. The Council acknowledged that the cost of the membership, which is \$600 annually, will be funded through the Council's Office budget. Councilman Bradshaw noted that as result of Senator Adelaide Eckardt's attendance at a recent Committee meeting, the Council has made contact with Colonel Edward Chamberlayne, Commander, Baltimore District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, regarding dredging issues in the County.

TRAVEL REQUEST-FLOODPLAIN TRAINING-PLANNING AND ZONING

The Council approved the request of Steve Dodd, Planning and Zoning Director, for authorization for Brian Soper, Environmental Planner, to attend the national Emergency Training Center in Emmitsburg for training in the National Flood Insurance Program from March 7 to March 10, 2016 and agreed to waive the County's business meals policy to pay for meals at cost of \$125.20. The Council acknowledged that there is no cost to attend the training other than meals.

REQUEST TO ADVERTISE FOR PROPOSALS-JANITORIAL SERVICES-EASTERN SHORE INNOVATION CENTER

The Council approved the request of Keasha Haythe, Economic Development Director, to advertise for proposals for janitorial service for the Eastern Shore Innovation Center. Councilman Price opposed based on his opposition to the project.

CHANGE ORDER REQUESTS-EASTERN SHORE INNOVATION CENTER

A motion to approve the following five change orders ended in a tie vote with Councilmen Bradshaw and Price opposing: 1) #6, bathroom vanity materials upgrade, \$637.45; 2) #7 floor selection changes, \$0.00; 3) #9 dumpster enclosure (required by covenants), \$5,533.28; 4) #10 mesh screen wall, supports and sign (at entrance), \$13,300.00; and 5) #11 window film, \$1,274.90. The Council members agreed to seek Councilman Nichols vote by phone poll. The Council members recognized that the cost of these change orders will be funded from the existing budgeted contingency line item and after these changes there will be approximately \$66,000 remaining.

FY16 EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT AWARD-DELMARVA COMMUNITY SERVICES-GRANT MONITOR

The Council approved the request of Cindy Smith, Grant Monitor, to accept a FY16 Emergency Solutions Grant award of \$95,595, comprised of Federal and State funds, which will be utilized to provide assistance to individuals and families who are homeless or in jeopardy of homelessness. The Council also agreed to execute a Sub-Recipient Agreement between the Council and Delmarva Community Services (DCS) to sub grant to this non-profit organization the grant funds since this entity will provide these services. DCS has identified matching funds for this grant which include \$21,500 in in-kind services.

REQUEST TO DEPLOY AMBULANCE AND CREW-MIEMSS REGION 4 STRIKE TEAM

Based on the request of Jeremy Goldman, as Emergency Services Director, the Council authorized the deployment of one ambulance with a crew to Baltimore, Maryland, if necessary, at the request of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) Region 4 Strike Team provided there are sufficient resources to cover the County. Mr. Goldman explained that there are concerns that upon the conclusion of the first "Freddie Gray" trial there may be civil unrest in Baltimore and MIEMSS is seeking the support of team members in case this occurs. He noted that the trial was sent to the jury as of Monday afternoon and it is currently a hung jury. He said it is unlikely this resource will be needed. In response to a question from Councilman Travers, Mr. Goldman advised that if the County is called to assist the team an administrative fee will be paid to the County, all costs will be reimbursed and any damage will be covered. Councilman Travers explained that the strike team will reciprocate if Dorchester County has a need.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Donald Gray, resident, expressed concern about an increase in criminal activity in the Algonquin area and a slow response time to his call to the Sheriff's Office for assistance. Councilman Travers said both the State Police and Sheriff's Office are cognizant of the need for an increased presence in this area. He explained that both entities recently conducted an evening patrol of the area. Councilman Travers said it is his understanding there are three or four Sheriff's Deputies on each shift. Mr. Goldman said he will seek information in response to Mr. Gray's concerns about a slow response time.

In response to a question from Gene Tolley, resident, Councilman Travers said currently the Council is waiting for confirmation of grant awards prior to stabilization of the Hearn building located at 509-511 Race Street in Cambridge. Mr. Tolley advised Council that he recently spoke to Mr. Goldman about this building. He dispelled rumors that he has obtained legal representation. He stressed the need to repair the Hearn building which is adjacent to his property. Based on an inquiry from Mr. Tolley, Mr. Goldman advised that he can obtain a copy of the preliminary engineering report for the structure by filing out a Public Information Request. He explained that additional engineering must be completed before a final plan is established.

COUNCIL'S COMMENTS/ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Bradshaw expressed his appreciation for Department Heads and County staff and Mr. Goldman. He wished everyone a Happy Holiday.

Councilman Price questioned whether there has been any increased activity at the landfill lately, based on comments he received from residents who live on Gravel Branch Road. Mr. Moore said changes are being made to the mining site on that road.

Councilman Price said at the Maryland Association of Counties Winter Conference Governor Larry Hogan spoke in support of State initiatives, County cooperation and fiscal responsibility. He noted that the Governor also advised that two of his top goals are to address the heroin problem statewide and the restoration of highway user revenues. Councilman Price stated that Senator Benjamin Cardin also spoke about terrorism and cited his belief that two recent major successes are the 2015 Fast Act and a \$4.4 billion allocation to address surface transportation needs in Maryland. He explained that both the Maryland Rural Counties Coalition and Chesapeake Coalition met during this conference. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. He encouraged public attendance at local events being held during the holiday.

Based on a motion made by Councilman Satterfield, in light of residents' phone calls, the Council agreed to refer to the Traffic Safety Committee the possible placement of speed limit and "Children at Play" sign on Buttons Neck Road. Councilman Satterfield wished citizens a Happy Holiday.

Councilman Travers announced that Cambridge International will hold a job fair on December 22, 2015 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

In response to a question from Councilman Travers, Mr. Moore said despite repeated calls to Waste Management, the company did not remove dumpsters at County marine facilities. He explained that staff moved them to the landfill. Councilman Travers thanked him for being proactive.

Councilman Travers advised that Comptroller Peter Franchot visited local businesses in the County on Friday December 11, 2015 as part of the Shop Maryland for the Holidays Event and on Monday, December 14th he recognized the Bay Country Bakery for its 16 years and Herman Stevens for his civic and charitable work. He said Comptroller Franchot viewed the Hearn Building. Councilman Travers noted that there has been a substantial increase in visits to the County by State Department Secretaries under Governor Hogan's leadership.

He encouraged the public to remember the less fortunate during the holidays and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councilman Travers announced that the next meeting will be held on January 5, 2016, and the Council reserves the right to meet in closed prior to regular session.

With no further business to discuss, the Council adjourned.

ATTEST:



Jeremy Goldman
County Manager

DORCHESTER COUNTY COUNCIL:



Ricky C. Travers, President



Tom C. Bradshaw, Vice President



William V. Nichols



Rick M. Price



Don B. Satterfield

Approved the 5th day of January, 2016.