

**Board of County Commissioners
Amended Worksession Minutes
February 1, 2011**

PRESENT: Commissioners Mullin, Moore, Dunn arrived at 9:12 a.m., Broomell and Hodge; County Administrator Al Wein, Public Works Director Scott Flanigan and staff; Planning and Zoning Director Eric Sennstrom; Permits and Inspections Director Pat Conway, Budget Manager Craig Whiteford; Executive Office Administrator Vicky Rinkerman; Council Norman Wilson arrived at 10:30 a.m.; School Superintendent D'Ette Devine and staff; members of the press, and members of the public.

OPEN SESSION

9:00 a.m. – President Mullin called the meeting to order.

US 301 Project update - Mark Tudor, US Route 301 Project Director, reviewed the design of the transportation project. A portion of US 301 crosses the Maryland line in the southern area of the County, and this section of the project will be completed to meet State Road Code standards. He reviewed the proposed traffic patterns for the construction phase of the project. The Federally funded project may begin within one year provided there is available funding. The project includes a proposed toll booth with an anticipated fee of \$4.00 per vehicle.

The Maryland State Highway Administration would acquire the right-of-ways for the proposed project; however, the officials at the meeting were not able to answer the question relative to conveyance of the right-of-ways after the project is completed.

Mr. Dixon from the Maryland Department of Transportation stated that staff is working with the Delaware Department of Transportation on this project. Water and sewer infrastructure would not be extended into Cecil County with this project.

Director Flanigan stated that Roads Chief Dan Webber would contact the project personnel relative to discussing other county concerns.

Belle Hill Manor Road Briefing – Attorney Dwight Thomey, representing Stephen Moore, stated that the previous Board of Commissioners supported this housing project. Mr. Moore reviewed the proposed Bell Hill Manor rental housing project. He stated that they are applying for State funding that would require a letter of support from the Board.

Mr. Thomey stated that this type of housing project would require financial or in-kind support from local government. The project group is working with Artesian and the Town of Elkton relative to securing water and sewer service for the project. The road improvements required would be addressed during the building process. The project officials are discussing the possibility of the property being annexed into the Town of Elkton, which would resolve the utility service issue. In order to secure funding through the State, they need the county to support the project.

Mr. Moore stated that they will be submitting a new financing application to the State in April and it would require a letter of support and local contribution, which could be in the form of a waiver of building permit fees. The project group has a meeting scheduled with Artesian next week, and their intent is to keep the project in the county jurisdiction.

The Board concurred that they would discuss their request further and forward a decision.

Annual Transportation Plan and Taxi Voucher, Harford/Cecil connection grant application –Leslie Gorak, Senior Services Transit Supervisor, stated that the county match for the grant has increased approximately \$10,000. She reviewed the transportation plan and grant financing for the project, which does not include any requests for expansion routes in this funding cycle.

Discussion ensued relative to concerns with transporting seniors to the Elkton Center. Acting Director Dermott stated that a Cecilton senior center has been discussed in the past and staff does interact with the members of this group on a monthly basis.

Commissioner Broomell stated that she would like to have more centers for senior citizens in other locations throughout the county.

The Taxi Voucher Program was initiated to meet the transportation needs of senior citizens, disabled individuals, and those requiring transportation for medical reasons throughout the county. Individuals must meet specific financial criteria to use the program. The department works with taxi companies who accept the taxi vouchers, and no matching funds are required from the county for this grant. The grant application is for two-years and they anticipate the United Way will continue to provide the cash match as they have in the past.

One possible solution to the issue of transportation between Cecil and Harford County being discussed is to split the cost for a new route, which would extend transportation service across the bridge between the counties. The anticipated cost for the new route is \$140,000. The cost for Cecil County would be \$70,000 and grant funding may be available to pay half of this cost. This proposed route would be a "fixed route" that runs regardless of the number of riders. County transportation rates are comparable to other jurisdictions, and the fare for the Perryville route was adjusted to increase ridership.

Evening meeting agenda review

County Administrator Wein reviewed the public hearings on the agenda.

Discussion ensued relative to feedback from the towns on visiting meetings. The Board concurred that the public meeting schedule would be revised if this ordinance were adopted.

Discussion ensued relative to meeting the proposed regulations for zoning and inspections for commercial kennels. Director Sennstrom stated that the revised ordinance requires new kennels be vetted through the site plan approval process. Relative to kennel inspections, the Board concurred to ensure this was addressed in the ordinance.

County Administrator Wein reviewed the action items. He stated that one revision was requested in Ordinance 2011-04 relative to changing the date in the DES agreement from March 1 to April 1.

County Administrator Wein reviewed the recommendations for appointments to the Commission of Aging.

Director Flanigan reviewed the Public Works items on the agenda. He stated that the department has received no comments relative to the resolutions for truck restrictions on Colora Road or Cedar Corner Road.

Deputy Director Hollenbaugh reviewed the process for the request for proposal relative to the purchase, installation, and operation of the GPS units in the County fleet of vehicles. The GPS units track and collect pertinent data relative to giving officials information to manage resource more effectively and

efficiently. Additionally, they anticipate a reduction in insurance costs and an increase in accountability and cost savings. Staff recommendation is for approval of the award for the GPS units.

Director Flanigan stated that the recommendation for the GPS units is to provide staff a tool to manage resources and respond more effectively to calls for service.

Discussion ensued relative to tracking the cost savings information and the anticipated period for installation of the GPS units in the fleet. The award includes the tracking software. The Commissioners requested a future review and report from Director Flanigan on the cost savings resulting from the GPS program.

Director Flanigan reviewed Bid numbers 11-22 and 11-23. The recommendation would be to reject all bids to permit staff to revise the bid proposal.

Discussion ensued relative to restrictions and designing a purchasing process for used equipment through an auction service.

Bid Award RFP 11-10 - Facilities Manager Torgesen stated that staff recommendation is for the Board to reject the bid.

Commissioner Hodge stated that he feels the county needs to review purchasing procedures relative to soliciting vendors and seeking bids on proposals for county projects.

County Administrator Wein stated that an independent advisor is reviewing the County's purchasing ordinance and recommendations will be forwarded to the Board. He stated that vendor solicitation could be handled by staff at this time.

Budget Manager Whiteford reviewed the budget amendments for consideration by the Board.

Citizen advisory budget committee – Discussion ensued relative to defining the role, time commitment, and objectives for the budget committee.

The Board concurred that the committee should concentrate on the operating budget, which would encompass county departments and agencies.

Commissioner Dunn stated that he feels that this committee is unnecessary because it could create conflict and it is the Board's responsibility to make the tough decisions on the budget.

Commissioner Broomell stated that she does not view appointing a budget advisory committee as a conflict, and Harford County has initiated this process successfully.

Commissioner Dunn stated that there already is a mechanism in place for public input on the budget, and he does not welcome the potential conflict the recommendations could bring forward.

The Board concurred that the advisory budget committee would not have the authority, nor would the Board be advocating any budget authority to the committee.

Motion made by Commissioner Hodge to appoint two members per Commissioner to the citizen advisory budget committee. Motion died for lack of a second.

On motion made by Commissioner Broomell, seconded by Commissioner Mullin, the Board voted to appoint one member per Commissioner to the citizen advisory budget committee.

On amendment to the motion made by Commissioner Broomell, seconded by Commissioner Mullin, the Board voted to amend the original motion to include a provision that a Commissioner may appoint a new member to the committee to replace his/her appointment if they do not participate in the meetings.

Vote on motion and amendment to motion carried 3 to 2: Mullin – Y, Broomell – Y, Moore – Y, Dunn – N, Hodge – N.

Building permit fee waiver request from Pete Wagner – Director Conway reviewed the history of the building permit and the fee waiver request before the Board. The department has issued stop work orders, which have been ignored. The property owner has been notified that he must obtain a building permit and hire licensed contractors to perform the work.

On motion made by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Hodge, the Board voted unanimously to deny the building permit fee waiver request submitted by Mr. Wagner.

Commissioner Items

Commissioner Dunn reported on several meetings he attended during the week. He congratulated the Roads division staff on the snow removal effort. He suggested that the county consider consolidating departments to save money.

Commissioner Broomell recommended that the county schedule an information meeting with the local residents in the US 301 project area and SHA officials relative to providing information on the construction project.

Commissioner Moore stated that county officials need to seek toll compensation for residents relative to the tolls on I-95. She provided the Board a proposed schedule relative to the County's multi-year LDC priorities list. Each Commissioner will rank the projects on the list by their order of priority. She will continue to work on developing a grant process for community organizations to request VLT revenue funding.

Commissioner Hodge stated that the Board heard a request for additional funding for community transit; however, no suggestions were provided on budget cuts for the additional money needed for the grant.

Discussion ensued regarding the request from the Airport Advisory Board to create an Airport Authority. Commissioner Hodge suggested that County officials consider having someone with expertise in this field analyze the need for an Airport Authority.

Commissioner Hodge requested that the Board forward any recommendations for revisions to the fire sprinkler ordinance. The Board is scheduled to discuss the proposal next Tuesday at the worksession meeting.

Commissioner Hodge recommended that the Baron Road Bridge improvements be coordinated with intersection improvements. Director Flanigan stated that staff recommendation is to move forward with replacing the bridge and the project is in the CIP budget.

Commissioner Broomell stated that she received a complaint from a constituent relative to masonry mailboxes. Discussion ensued regarding masonry structures in County right-of-ways.

Counsel Wilson advised the Board that the County Code prohibits masonry structures in the County right of ways. Director Flanigan stated that County officials are attempting to enforce the policy relative to this issue.

Commissioner Broomell stated that the recommendation from the Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee to designate 0 to 2 housing units in low density zoning was changed in error to 2 to 4 housing units in low density zoning.

Director Sennstrom stated that staff has received two requests from the public for revisions relative to the TDR Program and the Low Density Residential Zoning district.

Counsel Wilson advised the Board to continue the Comprehensive Plan public hearing process since the Board will have final approval of the document.

Discussion ensued regarding maintaining the integrity of the public hearing process and not revising the document outside of the process.

Motion was made by Commissioner Broomell to change low density residential zoning areas from two housing units per acre with community facilities and four housing units per acre with Transfer of Development Rights to the original Comprehensive Plan recommendation of up to two housing units in low density residential zoning areas. Motion died for lack of a second.

12:17 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION Motion made Commissioner Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Mullin, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to closed session pursuant to the Maryland Annotated Code, State Government Article 10-508 (a) (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; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.

The Board convened in closed session.

OPEN SESSION

1:00 p.m. President Mullin called the meeting to order.

School Funding Discussion

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss proposed budget cuts in State funding for the public school system (CCPS). CCPS officials anticipate an additional reduction of over 2 million in allocation for our local school system. The anticipated shortfall of a total of 5.7 million in the 2012 budget will further reduce positions and student programs.

Discussion ensued relative to the history of formula funding experienced at the local level.

School officials concurred that the proposed shortfall in funding would result in a reduction of teachers and other staff, which would increase class sizes, eliminate student programs, the STEM program, and preventative maintenance programs. The Board was asked to consider this information when discussing the maintenance of effort for the public school system relative to providing enough funding for Cecil County students to receive the same level of education.

Commissioner Broomell stated that the Board must consider all options relative to meeting budget shortfalls if the State Government sends pension costs back to the counties. Commissioner Broomell mentioned the

Citizen's Advisory Committee would be reviewing the County's budget and asked if the Citizen's Advisory Committee could review the school budget as well. CCPS Superintendent Devine and Budget Manager Kappra agreed.

Dr. Devine stated that the information relative to collective bargaining for school employees will be available for release to the public at the February 14, 2011 budget meeting. Discussion ensued relative to proposed solutions to the teachers pension system.

Economic Development Briefing

Economic Development Director Vernon Thompson and staff briefed the Board on the role of the Economic Development Department. He reviewed the statistical information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics relative to employment, labor force, and industry in Cecil County.

Tourism Manager Sandy Turner updated the Board on department efforts to bring tourism dollars to Cecil County. Tourism has over fifty active volunteers and partners who assist with events. The return on investment dollars for tourism is extremely important to the County.

Economic Development Commission Chair Mike Ratchford invited the Board to the monthly meetings relative to engaging the Board on economic development matters and priorities.

Wastewater rate study discussion

Director Flanigan reviewed options relative to proposed revisions to the wastewater rates and decisions that would be required by the Board. The department is seeking strategic direction from the Board in order to proceed with developing the revised language for the Code.

Discussion ensued regarding flat rate billing vs. metered rate billing, and the impact on incentives for conservation. Staff recommendation is to convert to a flat rate billing structure due to the number of providers in the county. The flat rate billing may require a reduction in manual labor hours relative to reading meters and in putting billing data by Treasurer's Office staff. An estimated two-thirds of the current wastewater customers would be affected by a change to the flat rate system.

The information provided in the study was based on a flat rate billing schedule and the model "growth pays for growth" that provides for a major facilities fee/connection fee to pay for expansion. Cost allocations in the study were based on directives from county officials.

The wastewater rates were increased in 2007 and rates will need to be increased regardless of the billing rate structure used by the county. The County Wastewater division has reduced staff by six full time positions and is stretching all available resources for cost savings.

Discussion ensued regarding funding capital improvements for the system and evaluating the rate program relative to adequately maintaining the system.

The majority of the Board concurred that they were in favor of the metered billing rate system. The Board concurred to direct Director Flanigan to request the consultant recalculate the numbers in the study based on a metered billing system.

ADJOURNMENT

4:00 p.m. - On motion made by Commissioner Moore, seconded by Commissioner Broomell, the meeting was adjourned.

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