

July 15, 2025

A meeting of the County Commissioners of Kent County was called to order at 6:00 p.m., with the following present: Ronald H. Fithian, President, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price. The meeting was convened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Fithian asked everyone to remain silent for prayers for the family of James “Jimmy” C. Yeager, Jr., a 2018 Kent County graduate who passed away, and for everyone who is affected by the flooding around the country.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, and Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney, were also present.

CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners, by unanimous vote, approved all seven consent items as presented:

1. Regular Session Minutes, July 8, 2025
2. Liquor Minutes, July 8, 2025
3. Closed Session Minutes, July 8, 2025
4. Human Resources – Administrative Correction of \$722.59
5. Kent County Sheriff’s Office – FY2026 Sex Offender Compliance and Enforcement in Maryland Grant No. SOCM-2026-0019 in the amount of \$2,610.00
6. Public Works – Memorandum of Understanding with Sentral Services, LLC for Janitorial Services – RFP# BM22-02 Renewal in the amount of \$213,219.02
7. Public Works-Road Division – Change Order Patuxent Materials, Inc. to increase contract to \$6,932.56 and Budget Adjustment for \$349.06 for Emergency Medical Services Project

THE FUTURE OF KENT COUNTY VETERANS EVENTS

Peter Sweetser, Principal Organizer, 2025 Vietnam War Veterans Day Celebration, and Katy Mulligan Weddell, Principal Organizer, 2025 Memorial Day Parade, requested that the Commissioners establish a County-based program to guarantee the continued production of veterans' events such as the Vietnam War Veterans Day Celebration and the Memorial Day Parade in the future. The Veterans National Holidays should be considered locally as civic events, and the Commissioners should be asked to recruit and encourage local organizations to coordinate the events in the future. Discussion took place. Commissioner Price made a motion for Ms. Heller to speak with Jamie Williams, Director of Economic and Tourism Development to coordinate outreach to Chestertown American Legion, Betterton American Legion, Rock Hall American Legion, Kent County VFW, Sumner Hall, Daughters of the American Revolution, Elks Lodge and Knights of Columbus for assistance to form a committee that would provide oversight of the events. Commissioner Nickerson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

At 6:19 p.m., on a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to go into legislative session.

Legislative Protocol: A legislative bill was submitted for adoption, and two bills were submitted for the Board's consideration. Mr. Yeager summarized each bill's intent and the options the Board could consider during the legislative process. Bill Mackey, Director of Planning, Housing, and Zoning, was available to assist with the details and questions.

Third Reading and Vote - Code Home Rule Bill No. 4-2025 To Rescind and Replace the Land Use Ordinance and Zoning Map - AN ACT to (1) rescind and replace Chapter 222, "Zoning," of the Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland, in its entirety, renaming Chapter 222 as the *Unified Development Ordinance*, also known as the Kent County Land Use Ordinance, to incorporate changes recommended by the Critical Area Commission, per Md. Code Ann., Natural Resources § 8-1809, and making other corrections and revisions as set forth herein; (2) rescind and replace the Kent County, Maryland Official Zoning Map, in its entirety, to incorporate changes recommended by the Critical Area Commission, per Md. Code Ann., Natural Resources § 8-1809, and implementing one requested revision as set forth herein; and (3) including non-codified provisions to address corrections and certain adopted maps indirectly related to the Unified Development Ordinance and Zoning Map. On June 10, 2025, the County Commissioners held a public hearing. No comments were offered during the public hearing. Two written comments were received during the public comment period, one from James F. McGillin and one from Karen Holcomb, and were provided for review. Mr. Mackey summarized the written amendment. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the written amendment to Exhibit A and adopted Code Home Rule Bill 4-2025.

First Read and Introduction – Code Home Rule Bill No. 5-2025 Ethics - House Bill 363 and 1058, enacted during the 2021 General Assembly session, mandated changes to county and municipal ethics laws. The State Ethics Commission revised its local government regulations in January 2022. Kent County incorporated all applicable changes and submitted its proposed revisions to the State. On January 16, 2025, the State Ethics Commission reviewed and approved the proposed changes to the Ethics Law. Code Home Rule Bill No 5-2025 is AN ACT to repeal and re-enact with amendments Chapter 29, Ethics of the Code of Kent County. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the introduction of Code Home Rule Bill No. 5-2025 and for the Bill to be scheduled for a public hearing.

First Read and Introduction – Code Home Rule Bill No. 6-2025 - AN ACT to amend Chapter 3 Administration of Government, of the Code of Public Local Laws of Kent County, Maryland. FOR the purpose of increasing the compensation of the County Commissioners. BY repealing Chapter 3 Administration of Government, Article I, General Provisions §3-2 Terms and Compensation, and reenacting with amendments herein. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the introduction of Code Home Rule Bill No. 6-2025 and for the Bill to be scheduled for a public hearing.

This concluded the legislative matters for discussion and action. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to return to regular session at 6:24 p.m.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Dennis Hickman, Sheriff, and Roland Sheppard, Director of Operations for Kent County Detention Center, gave an overview of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) being presented for approval. The purpose of the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) is to establish the terms and responsibilities under which the Queen Anne's County Detention Center, referred to as the Housing Facility, will house offenders from the Kent County Detention Center (KCDC), referred to as the Sending Facility, on a long-term basis should the County need to. A lengthy discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners, by 2 to 1 vote, approved the Intergovernmental Agreement with Queen Anne's County Detention Center, as presented. Commissioner Fithian opposed.

PUBLIC WORKS

Dan Mattson, Director, requested a public hearing to amend the 2018 County Water and Sewerage Comprehensive Plan. The draft proposal and documentation for the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan amendment were submitted to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on March 25, 2025, for review and comment. Comments were received on May 27, 2025. The department submitted a response to the comments on June 23, 2025. MDE has recommended proceeding with adopting a resolution to amend the Plan to obtain formal approval by MDE. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to proceed with the public hearing process to amend the Kent County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

KCDC – Mental Health Treatment: Through Mid Shore Behavioral Health (MSBH), the Maryland Community Criminal Justice Treatment Program agreed to provide KCDC with payment of \$57,826.00 in monthly increments of \$4,819.00 for mental health treatment to incarcerated individuals. The Maryland Community Criminal Justice Treatment Program is a detention center-based program that screens individuals for mental health issues while detained in a local detention center. Services include mental health screening and assessment, short-term crisis intervention, aftercare planning, and coordination of treatment and community support services after release. This care is provided through the vendor, Prime Care, and its partners. The Contract/Agreement needed to be signed before the July 15th meeting. Commissioner Fithian signed the Criminal Justice Behavioral Health: MD Community Criminal Justice Treatment Program MH335CSA with Mid Shore Behavioral Health on July 2, 2025.

Public Works – Enterprise Fleet Management Agreement to Sell Customer Vehicles: Enterprise Fleet Management required an agreement to sell thirteen County-leased vehicles. Terms of the agreement include a service fee to Enterprise as an administrative fee. Due to the time-

sensitive nature of the request, Commissioner Fithian signed the agreement during the Commissioners' meeting on July 8, 2025. A follow-up discussion occurred concerning General Motors' limitations on the quantity of Chevrolet Tahoes available for purchase. Mr. Mattson asked the Commissioners to consider delegating signing authorization to Ms. Heller to secure the five available emergency vehicles appropriated in the FY2026 budget. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously delegated the County Administrator to sign Enterprise Fleet Management Orders for the five emergency vehicles after receiving availability confirmation.

Public Works – Rural Maryland Council Letter of Support: Patty Shreves, Maryland Rural Water Association (MRWA), contacted Mr. Mattson to request a support letter addressed to the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) for the grant application of the MRWA. MRWA is preparing to apply for another round of grant funding to help offset the cost of apprentice training. The support letter was needed to strengthen the application and help secure the necessary funding to continue serving rural communities and growing the workforce. The Public Works department has two apprentices who have already benefited from previous RMC funding, which helped cover the cost of their coursework. The support letter was required to be submitted before July 11, 2025. The Commissioners signed the support letter during the July 8, 2025, meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The procedures for public comment were in place. Mike Waal, a Kent County resident, asked staff for an overview of the Health Department response letter that was reported on at the July 8, 2025, meeting.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENT

Commissioner Fithian reported on the meeting hosted by the Kent County Public Schools (KCPS) Board of Education today at 2:00 p.m. at Kent County Middle School. Dr. Mary McComas, Superintendent of KCPS, was in the audience. Discussion ensued regarding the costs of installing a new roof at Worton Elementary School (WES). The school has multi-use, and this location may not need to adhere to a traditional timeline of the summer months for a roofing project.

Commissioner Price advised that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDDNR) will host a meeting at Sandy Point State Park regarding waterfowl hunting to provide oversight on limits and season dates. Commissioner Price motioned to prepare correspondence opposing the proposed legislation, which he would hand carry to the meeting. Commissioner Nickerson seconded the motion, and the Commissioners unanimously agreed.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

During the June 10, 2025, meeting, the Commissioners requested that staff send a letter to the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) requesting answers to various questions the County had. Bill Webb, Health Officer, sent an in-kind response letter dated June 13, 2025.

On June 30, 2025, the Water and Science Administration granted Water Appropriation and Use Permits to Tideland Gardens, Inc. This allows them to use an average of 585,000 gallons of water per day at their nursery, divided between two permits: KE1986G004(07) and KE1992S010(04). The Water and Science Administration also issued permits to Fair Hill Farms, Inc. on the same date, allowing them to use an average of 155,000 gallons of water per day at KVD and Mueller Farms. These permits are numbered KE2006G001(03) and KE2006S003(03). The letters for both permits are available for review.

The Kent County Public Library ACH Transfer Schedule was approved and signed on July 8, 2025, under consent item. During the meeting, the Commissioners approved an additional \$5,153.00. Commissioner Fithian signed the updated schedule on July 10, 2025.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS

The Commissioners received a copy of the final ARPA Spend Plan report.

CONTINGENCY FUND

The FY2026 Contingency Fund balance as of July 8, 2025, is \$396,400.00. The use of the Fund Balance is \$13,953.00

At 7:06 p.m., on a motion made by Commissioner Nickerson and seconded by Commissioner Price, the Commissioners unanimously approved adjourning the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

Ronald H. Fithian, President,
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland

July 15, 2025

The Board of License Commissioners met today with the following present: Ronald H. Fithian, presiding, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, and Thomas N. Yeager, County Attorney, were also present.

CONSENT ITEM

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved Consent Item #2 - Liquor Minutes, July 8, 2025.

At 7:09 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Nickerson, seconded by Commissioner Price; the Commissioners unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, July 22, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

THE BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk/KATE Manager

Approved:

Ronald H. Fithian, President
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland