

August 26, 2025

A meeting of the County Commissioners of Kent County was called to order at 10:00 a.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 all the unrest throughout the world.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, was also present.

CONSENT ITEMS

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

1. Regular Session Minutes, August 19, 2025
2. Liquor Minutes, August 19, 2025
3. Closed Session Minutes, August 19, 2025
4. Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Association, Raffle Permit, August 29 & August 31, 2025

THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION, KENT COUNTY SNAP EDUCATION

Eric Fitch, Kent County SNAP Education, presented the Maryland Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Kent County's SNAP-Ed initiative helps local families lead healthy lives through increased food access, improved nutrition, and physical activity. After participating in SNAP-Ed programming, families make healthier beverage choices. Specifically, 32% of elementary school students report drinking more water. Further, 29% of parents whose children participate in SNAP-Ed programs report buying fewer sugar-sweetened beverages, such as soda or other sugary drinks.

KENT COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Pete Landon, Director of the Office of Emergency Services (OES), and Logan Quinn, Chief of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), were presented to discuss a few projects. But first, Mr. Landon shared the heartfelt news that Brenda Brown, 9-1-1 Specialist Supervisor at the Office of Emergency Services, is retiring after three decades of dedicated service. Ms. Brown's commitment and contributions have left an indelible mark on the County, and she will be truly missed as she starts on this new chapter in her life and a well-earned retirement.

Mr. Landon then provided updates on projects, including the new EMS building, EMS and Betterton Volunteer Fire Company, and the recent 9-1-1 center refresh. OES staff discussed and requested approval to furnish the new EMS building and discussed the Commissioners' consideration of utilizing previously approved and allocated funding to fulfill other EMS projects at no additional cost to Kent County. Mr. Landon summarized the proposed project costs with estimates of nearly \$100,000.00. Specific projects for the Board's consideration were as follows, in no order of priority or preference:

- Robert Rust Memorial EMS Building furnishings comprised office needs, medical supplies/storage/other, and station furniture
- Betterton Volunteer Fire Company EMS Office furnishings
- Galena Volunteer Fire Company EMS, HVAC repair cost share

Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the costs related to furnishing the new EMS building with the assurance that all procurements will adhere to established Kent County procurement policies and procedures. ODP Business Solutions Quote #648393 for \$49,058.90 formalized a portion of the Board's approval. On a motion made by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved utilization of budgeted fixed asset funding saved on the new EMS building furnishings to fund furnishing of the Betterton EMS quarters, and 50% cost-share repair to the Galena HVAC system.

Commissioner Fithian asked Dan Mattson, Director of Public Works, for an updated completion date of the EMS building. Mr. Mattson stated that October 3rd is the estimated date of completion.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Vauné Johnson, Human Resources Specialist, Human Resources, requested approval of the recommended candidate to fill the Water and Wastewater Utility Technician vacancy in the Public Works Division. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners approved the conditional offer of employment for the recommended candidate.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENT

Commissioner Price, Commissioner Fithian, Mr. Mattson, and Bill Burton, President of the Friends of Eastern Neck, discussed Eastern Neck National Wildlife Refuge (Eastern Neck Island). On April 22, 2025, the Commissioners sent letters to Congressman Andy Harris and Senators Chris Van Hollen and Angela Alsobrooks requesting support for appropriate staffing levels at the refuge. Commissioner Fithian read a message he received from Bonnie Ford, Vice President, Friends of Eastern Neck. A meeting/site visit is scheduled for September 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Burton shared current outreach efforts to educate the community. The Board will try to get one Commissioner to attend. Mr. Mattson offered further insight on County maintenance elements and offered staff attendance at the meeting.

Mr. Mattson shared information with the Board concerning the Department of Natural Resources' grant program for waterway improvement funds and the possible uses of those funds. The department is developing a plan to submit for funds to improve Bogles Landing facilities.

LETTERS OR DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNATURE

Frank Hodgetts, President/CEO, Home Partnership, Inc., requested a letter of intent. This request was discussed at the Commissioners' meetings on May 13, 2025. At that time, Mr. Hodgetts

was to send information to the staff for legal review. The purpose of this letter of Intent (“Agreement”) is to set forth the interest of the Home Partnership of Cecil County, Inc. (“Developer”) to borrow from Kent County Commissioners (“Lender”) up to \$425,000.00 to pay for construction costs of the Millington Senior Village project located at 172 Sassafras Street, formerly known as the Millington Elementary School. Once approved by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development/Community Development Administration (“CDA”), the Developer requested the funds necessary to complete such project. This request was discussed again at the August 19, 2025, Commissioners Meeting. During that meeting, County Attorney Tom Yeager requested additional language to be added to the Letter of Intent. The letter was updated and submitted for President Fithian’s signature.

At the August 19, 2025, meeting, Commissioner Fithian read a letter from Robert Newberry, Captain and Chairman of the Delmarva Fisheries, and Brian Hardman, Captain and President of the Maryland Charter Boat Association. Captain Newberry and Captain Hardman requested a letter of opposition involving amendments to Maryland’s Fishery Management Plan, which the Commissioners unanimously approved. An opposition letter to the Honorable Joshua E. Kurtz, Secretary of Natural Resources, was submitted for signature. Courtesy copy recipients are as follows: Governor Westley W. Moore, The Honorable Stephen S. Hershey, Jay A. Jacobs, Steve J. Arentz, Jefferson L. Ghrist, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Code Home Rule Bill No. 5-2025 Ethics - Adoption Notice - This item was adopted on August 19, 2025, without amendments and will be effective October 13, 2025.

Code Home Rule Bill No. 7-2025 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Public Hearing Notice - A hearing will be held on September 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the Commissioners’ Hearing Room, R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr., Kent County Government Center, 400 High Street, Chestertown, Maryland. The agenda for the meeting will be published online 24 hours in advance of the meeting at <https://www.kentcounty.com/government>.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The procedures for public comment were in place. No comments were made.

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 August 19, 2025, is \$340,521.00. The use of Fund Balance was \$13,953.00.

CLOSED SESSION

At 10:59 a.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, and carried unanimously to go into a closed session. The meeting was closed under the Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article §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 this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals. Three separate personnel matters were discussed.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator; Jamie Williams, Director, Economic and Tourism Development; Sondra M. Blackiston, Clerk; and Lacey T. Cox, Deputy Clerk II, were also in attendance.

MATTER NO. 1: PERSONNEL

Topics to be discussed: Candidates to serve on a Board(s)/Committee(s).

Reasons for closing: Discussion of each candidate's qualifications is confidential and must be shielded.

Jamie Williams, Director of Economic and Tourism Development, provided some background information regarding an upcoming vacancy and offered a recommendation. Discussion took place. Ms. Williams departed the closed session at 11:17 a.m. All other persons remained.

MATTER NO. 2: PERSONNEL

Topic to be discussed: Candidate's qualifications, job performance, and compensation related to hiring individuals for job vacancies.

Reason for closing: An individual's qualifications, job performance, and compensation are confidential.

At 11:17 a.m., Jennifer White, Human Resources Business Partner, Human Resources, joined the closed session. Ms. White explained the recruitment efforts for a vacancy. A recommendation was proposed.

MATTER NO. 3: PERSONNEL

Topic to be discussed: Candidate's qualifications, job performance, and compensation related to hiring individuals for job vacancies

Reason for closing: An individual's qualifications, job performance, and compensation are confidential.

A lengthy discussion occurred concerning the qualifications of applicants/proposals to fill a vacancy. A recommendation was proposed.

At 12:22 p.m., a motion made by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously adjourned the closed session and reconvened in an open session.

OPEN SESSION

Upon returning to the open session, Commissioner Price summarized all three discussion topics from the closed session. The first topic was appointing a member to a local county board, and the other topics were related to hiring approval. As a result of those discussions, Commissioner Price stated he was ready to reaffirm them.

Matter No. 1 Personnel - On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Fithian, by a vote of 2-1, the Commissioners appointed the Economic and Tourism Development Commission member as discussed. Commissioner Nickerson was opposed.

Matter No. 2 Personnel - On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the recommended candidate and directed staff to proceed as discussed.

Matter No. 3 Personnel - On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to offer the recommended candidate the position of County Attorney and directed staff to proceed as directed.

At 12:24 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, September 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

Albert H. Nickerson, President,
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland

August 26, 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 Bonnie S. Pearsall, Inspector, Kent Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement, 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, August 19, 2025.

SPECIAL CLASS C LICENSES

Minary's Dream Alliance (MDA) submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer, wine, and liquor for a fundraising event on September 6, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at MDA, 9155 American Legion Road, Chestertown. The application and an email correspondence from Eric Colliflower on July 16, 2025, regarding the MDA's application were reviewed. Commissioner Fithian read Mr. Colliflower's correspondence into the record. Commissioner Price asked Inspector Pearsall to check in on the event, and she confirmed that she would. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for Minary's Dream Alliance.

The Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 246, submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer, wine, and liquor on September 13-14, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (the start and end times are scheduled for both days) at Kent AG Center, Tolchester, during the Kent AG Center Dog Days event. The application was provided for review. On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for the Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 246.

At 12:24 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Nickerson, seconded by Commissioner Price, and the Commissioners unanimously approved adjourning the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

THE BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk/KATE Manager

Approved:

Albert H. Nickerson, Member,
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland