

March 10, 2026

A meeting of the County Commissioners of Kent County was called to order at 10:00 a.m., with Ronald H. Fithian presiding, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price. Commissioner Fithian asked everyone to observe a moment of silence and pray for all the unrest across the world.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, and G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney, were also present.

CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved six consent items as presented.

1. Regular Session Minutes, March 3, 2026
2. Liquor Minutes, March 3, 2026
3. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works Environmental Operations Division, Bayside Landing Marina - Request for Contingency Funds in the amount of \$5,219.00
4. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Water and Wastewater Division One Sewer Allocation Request and Public Works Agreement, DCG Homes, LLC, in the amount of \$11,800.00
5. Carrie Klein, Deputy Director, Public Works - Request Approval for Revised Long Fence Company, Inc., Quote Proposal in the amount of \$28,200.00
6. Chestertown High School Alumni Association, Raffle Only, August 9, 2026

CHEEMOANDIA BLAKE, ELECTION DIRECTOR, KENT COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Ms. Blake explained that there is a statewide pollbook modernization project. Pat Merritt, Chief Finance Officer, Office of Finance, joined Ms. Blake for the discussion. Each Local Board of Elections (LBE) must select a payment method. Kent County would need 55 pollbooks. The total cost is \$127,325.00 for 55 pollbooks at \$2,315.00 each. The state cost share is \$63,662.50, and the local cost share is \$63,662.50 (cost share equals \$1,157.50 per pollbook). The Commissioners were provided four payment options: Option 1, to remit payment to the State Board of Elections over three fiscal years beginning in FY2027; Option 2, to finance the cost through the State Treasurer's Office over five fiscal years, noting that interest rates and administrative fees may change and apply; Option 3, to pay the full amount in FY2027; and Option 4, to pay the full amount which can be absorbed within the current budget. Discussion took place. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved reallocating existing Board of Election funds for this current year, 2026, to cover this expense, as discussed.

JAMIE WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR, ECONOMIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Williams and Katie Abbott, Economic Development Manager, reported that the Maryland Department of Commerce has provided the data required for the redesignation of the Chestertown Enterprise Zone, which must occur every ten years and for which Chestertown remains

eligible. Ms. Williams provided background information regarding the Enterprise Zone process. Ms. Abbott is updating the 2016 application, due April 15, 2026. As part of the redesignation process, a joint public hearing with the Town of Chestertown is required, with the public notice to be advertised on March 19, 2026, and the hearing scheduled for April 7, 2026. Ms. Williams noted that eligibility is based on the poverty rate for Census Tract 9503, currently 13.6 percent for 2026, compared with 20.3 percent in 2016, 5.1 percent in 2021, and 5.9 percent in 2022, highlighting the significant fluctuations often seen in Kent County's Census data. Discussion took place.

SHELLEY L. HELLER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Ms. Heller, on behalf of Jennifer Hizer, Assistant Director for Government Grants and Sponsored Programs in the Office of College Advancement at Washington College, requested a letter of support for the College's continued efforts to secure funding for the Innovation Plant. The Board has previously provided letters of support for this project. The College plans to ask for a letter of support annually as this project continues to move forward. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to sign the letter of support as drafted.

SHELLEY L. HELLER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Ms. Heller stated that Mr. Mattson was in attendance to report on an emergency procurement for the Water and Wastewater Division. Mr. Mattson explained that a planned purchase was recently added to the division's capital budget; however, an inspection conducted of the Tolchester Pump Station #2 identified an emergent condition, necessitating reclassification from a standard to an emergency purchase in the amount of \$77,290.00. The purchase remains within the approved capital budget. A memorandum and purchase order request related to this emergency purchase have been submitted for reference. The final repair to the pump station should be completed within the next 3 to 4 months.

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 March 3, 2026, is \$233,019.00. The use of Fund Balance was \$94,826.00.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The procedures for public comment were in place, and three individuals offered remarks.

Mike Waal, County Resident, provided a comment regarding IAC (Interagency Commission) funding for the new Kent County Middle School project. Mr. Waal provided the Commissioners with a document for review. Discussion took place.

Sue Brown, County Resident, Tolchester Estates, provided comments and asked questions regarding the recent discussions of possibly tar-and-chipping a couple of roads in Tolchester Estates and the conveyance of those roads to enable the project. Mr. Mattson provided further information regarding this project.

John Massey, County Resident, provided general public comment on a range of topics.

At 11:38 a.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, March 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

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

March 10, 2026

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 G. Robert Mowell, 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, March 3, 2026.

SPECIAL CLASS C LICENSE

Minary's Dream Alliance (MDA) has submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer, wine, and liquor for an Adult Comedy Showcase, Chestertown Comedy Jam on March 14, 2026, from 7:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. at 9155 American Legion Road, Chestertown. The application was reviewed. No comments were received in support of or in opposition to the application. 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.

At 11:38 a.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, March 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.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