

March 17, 2026

A meeting of the County Commissioners of Kent County was called to order at 6:00 p.m., with Ronald H. Fithian presiding, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price. Commissioner Fithian requested a moment of silence in memory of Patricia “Linda” Wilson, a Rock Hall resident. Ms. Wilson dedicated many years of service to the community through the Kent County Health Department.

G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney, was also present.

CONSENT ITEMS

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

1. Regular Session Minutes, March 10, 2026
2. Liquor Minutes, March 10, 2026
3. Carrie Klein, Deputy Director, Public Works, Atlantic Tractor Deere and Company Quote ID 1606825 for mower with deck in the amount of \$34,223.13
4. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Water and Wastewater Division, .05 Sewer Allocation Request and Public Works Agreement, Thomas J. Gerard and Laura L. Gerard, in the amount of \$5,900.00
5. Mr. Mattson, Tolchester Actuator Valve Replacement from Augusta Actuation in the amount of \$29,977.00
6. Dennis Hickman, Sheriff, Kent County Sheriff's Office, Idemia Identity and Security USA LLC LiveScan System Purchase in the amount of \$33,013.00; and reallocation of departmental funds in the amount of \$4,141.00
7. Scott Larzelere, Program Manager, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Kent County Mosquito Control, 2026 Season Budget - Total Program Cost: \$54,100.00; County Share: \$34,500.00
8. Appointment of Carla Thorpe to the Mid Shore Regional Behavioral Health Advisory Committee
9. Letter of Recommendation from Governor Wes Moore, nominating Erica Osterhout for the position of Trustee at Chesapeake College.
10. Commissioner's Citation for Mary Rosalee (Middleton) Brice on the Occasion of Her Centennial Birthday.
11. Washington College Trap and Skeet, Raffle Only, March 18 - May 31, 2026

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

Kent County Citizens' Academy Spring Cohort: Jamie Williams, Director, Economic and Tourism Development (ETD), offered opening remarks. The County Commissioners were awarded a grant from the Maryland Two-Fifty Commission to support a local initiative commemorating the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America. The grant funded a free, short-term educational program designed to enhance citizens' knowledge of their local government and encourage greater civic engagement.

As part of this initiative, Kent County offered a five-week civic engagement program to approximately 15–20 Kent County residents. The program provided participants with a behind-the-scenes, small-group experience to explore the structure and operations of county government and its role in the community. Scott Boone, Director, Information Technology (IT), explained the role of IT and its impact on government operations and citizens. Michael Sutton, Director of Human Resources, gave a presentation on the department's role and impact they have. Seven residents successfully completed the Kent County Citizens' Academy and received Certificates of Recognition for their time and effort. Recipients were as follows: Gerette Balon; Thad Bench; John Carroll; Sophie Cousineau; Caleb Hook; Robert Johnson; and Logan Monteleone.

APPOINTMENTS

Dr. Mary McComas, Superintendent, and Kreigh Kirby, Director of Finance, Kent County Public Schools (KCPS): Dr. McComas and Mr. Kirby presented the FY2025 Annual Financial Statement Audit, the FY2025 Single Audit Report, and the recommendation for the Worton Elementary School roof bid award. Discussion took place. The first two matters were taken for a vote. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the acceptance of the FY2025 Audited Financial Statements for the Board of Education. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the acceptance of the FY2025 Single Audit Report for the Board of Education.

The Worton Elementary School roof project was discussed. The cost of roof replacement is \$1,894,458.00. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the award of the Worton Elementary School Roof Bid to Apex Construction.

A lengthy discussion took place. Dr. McComas provided an update on recent and ongoing conversations with the Interagency Commission (IAC) on School Construction. Commissioner Price shared appreciation for the efforts of many who have worked to secure funding for the proposed new middle school project and efforts to increase the State's cost-share or additional funding. Notable advocates for Kent County include Mike Waal, Senator Steven Hershey, Delegates Jay Jacobs, Jefferson Ghrist, and Steve Arentz, as well as the Commissioners collectively, Comptroller Lierman, Dr. McComas, and Mr. Kirby. Commissioners Fithian and Nickerson also offered comments on the project's funding needs.

Kimrose Goodall, Executive Director, The Shelter Alliance: Ms. Goodall took the opportunity to reintroduce the organization and present comprehensive updates on the Shelter Alliance's ongoing efforts to address housing insecurities in Kent County. Ms. Goodall recognized members of the Board of Directors, Carol Niemand, Past President; Sheila Barry, President; and Joe Holt, present in the audience. Also reviewed were recent initiatives, progress made to date, and an outline of next steps to further strengthen support for individuals and families experiencing housing instability. Discussion took place.

LISA MAZINGO, DIRECTOR, KENT FAMILY CENTER (KFC)

Departmental Spotlight: Information Technology: This initiative is intended to strengthen cross-departmental understanding and provide the Commissioners with broader insight into departmental operations and achievements. Ms. Mazingo presented a Spotlight on the Information Technology (IT) Department, drawing on information gathered during a Q&A session with Mr. Boone. Ms. Mazingo stated that she now has a better understanding and newfound respect for the IT Department.

MICHAEL SUTTON, DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES

Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for a Civilian Control Room Operator vacancy at the Kent County Detention Center (KCDC). This was a new position created to hopefully help eliminate excessive overtime at the KCDC. Discussion took place. On motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate.

Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for a full-time Correctional Officer with the KCDC. Discussion took place. On motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate.

Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for a Motor Equipment Operator vacancy with the Public Works, Roads Division. Discussion took place. On motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Code Home Rule Bill No. 1-2026 Boats and Boating: AN ACT concerning Chapter 68 Boats and Boating, Section 68-15 Enforcement, 68-16 Violations and Penalties, 68-18 Additional Remedies, and 68-19 Appeals. For the purpose of designating the appropriate authority to issue civil citations for ordinance violations and establishing the procedure by which they are issued and adjudicated. By repealing Chapter 68 Boats and Boating, Section 68-15 Enforcement, 68-16 Violations and Penalties, 68-18 Additional Remedies, and 68-19 Appeals, and reenacting with amendments Chapter 68 Boats and Boating, Section 68-15 Enforcement, 68-16 Violations and Penalties, 68-18 Additional Remedies, and 68-19 Appeals.

Code Home Rule Bill No. 2-2026 Administration of Government: AN ACT amending Chapter 3 Administration of Government, Section 3-2 Terms, compensation, and Compensation Review Commission. For the purpose of increasing the compensation of the next Board of County Commissioners for Kent County as a result of a 2025 Resolution enacted by the Compensation Review Commission suggesting a phased increase in salary over four years and establishing a commencement date for the terms of the County Commissioners. By repealing Chapter 3 Administration of Government, Section 3-2 Terms, compensation, and Compensation Review Commission, Subsection A Term and Subsection B Compensation, and reenacting Chapter 3

Administration of Government, Section 3-2 Terms, compensation, and Compensation Review Commission, Subsection A Term and Subsection B Compensation, with amendments.

Public hearings for the legislative bills previously mentioned will be held on March 24, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., in the Commissioners' Hearing Room at the R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr. Kent County Government Center, located at 400 High Street, Chestertown, Maryland.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Andy Fish, Senior Director, Office of Finance Programs, Maryland Department of Commerce, provided the 2026 Private Activity Bond Initial Allocation of the Maryland State Ceiling for Maryland's jurisdictions. Contact Mr. Fish via email at andy.fish@maryland.gov for further information. A copy of the full correspondence was submitted for review.

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 10, 2026, is \$227,800.00. The use of Fund Balance was \$94,826.00.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The procedures for public comment were in place. At the request of Courtney Kusy, Commissioner Fithian read aloud the contents of an email expressing opposition to road improvements in Tolchester Estates. Residents Sue Brown, Jacki Lingerma, and Michael Kevin Coghlin voiced their concerns against the tar-and-chipping of Virginia and Ohio Avenues. Additional correspondences were received from Pat Callahan, Bill and Barbara Joyce, Kristen Kifolo, and Susan and Dan Lutz. The Commissioners held an extensive discussion. Mr. Mowell provided the Commissioners with information regarding the Tolchester Community Association.

CLOSED SESSION

G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney, read a statement regarding the proposed agenda items of a closed session, including the topic and reason for the session. At 7:55 p.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) (7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice and (8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation. One matter was taken up for discussion.

In addition to Mr. Mowell, Sondra M. Blackiston, Clerk/KATE Manager, and Lacey Townsend, Deputy Clerk II, were also in attendance.

MATTER NO. 1: LEGAL ADVICE AND LITIGATION

Topic to be discussed: The status and strategy for pending litigation before the Appellate Court of Maryland.

Reason for closing: The details of potential litigation should be closed to the public because discussing legal strategy and potential claims in public would harm the government's position, revealing weaknesses, negotiating tactics, and sensitive details that could prejudice the case.

G. Robert Mowell, the County Attorney, updated the Commissioners on the status of an appeal currently before the Appellate Court of Maryland. A discussion ensued.

At 8:07 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson; the Commissioners unanimously adjourned the closed session and reconvened in open session.

OPEN SESSION

Upon returning to the open session, Commissioner Price summarized the matter discussed in the closed session with the County Attorney, during which legal updates and advice were provided. Regarding Matter No. 1: Legal Advice and Litigation, Commissioner Price stated that no action was taken at that time.

At 8:08 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, March 24, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

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

March 17, 2026

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

G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney, was 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 10, 2026.

At 8:08 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, March 24, 2026, 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