

July 21, 2026

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 Mrs. Mary Jane Leager, Commissioner Fithian's neighbor, who passed away unexpectedly, and to keep her family in their prayers.

Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator; G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney; Lacey M. Townsend, County Clerk; and Roni L. Thomas, Deputy Clerk II, were also present.

CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Fithian, the Commissioners unanimously approved all seven consent items as presented:

1. Regular Session Minutes, July 14, 2026.
2. Scott Boone, Director, Information Technology
 - Renew Microsoft Volume Licensing Agreement
 - Purchase Microsoft Licensing
3. G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney
 - Maryland State Highway Administration Road Conveyance (portions of 301/291)
4. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works
 - FY2027 Vehicle Order
5. Shelly Neal-Edwards, Director of Social Services
 - Social Services Advisory Board Recommendation
6. Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company, Combined Gaming Devices Raffle Permit, July 25, 2026
7. C. Henry Price II American Legion Post 246, Raffle Only, August 1, 2026

G. ROBERT MOWELL, COUNTY ATTORNEY, PUBLIC HEARING

Code Home Rule 3-2026 Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission: A public hearing was conducted. Information about the above-noted legislation and minutes is available on the County's website at <https://www.kentcounty.com/government>.

PETE LANDON, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

FY2025 Emergency Management Grant Subrecipient Award Agreement: The Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025) Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG) is a FEMA preparedness grant that provides funding to state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency management agencies to strengthen all-hazards preparedness and enhance the Nation's ability to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. EMPG funding supports the implementation of the National Preparedness System and National Preparedness Goal by sustaining essential emergency management capabilities. Allowable uses include personnel salaries and

benefits, planning, training, exercises, public outreach, emergency operations center support, interoperable communications, and other activities that build and sustain core capabilities across all five mission areas. The grant serves as a foundational funding source that enables emergency management agencies to maintain day-to-day readiness while improving resilience to natural, technological, and human-caused hazards. The Kent County Office of Emergency Services (OES) will use EMPG funding to continue revising the Kent County Hazard Mitigation Plan and has initiated an update to reflect current risks and vulnerabilities. This plan serves as a comprehensive framework for identifying, assessing, and reducing long-term risks to life, property, and critical infrastructure from natural and human-caused hazards. This update will place particular emphasis on enhancing community resilience, accelerating recovery capabilities, and integrating lessons learned from experienced events. This grant funding ensures that the needs of all residents, including those with access and functional needs, are considered. It will also help address increasing risks due to extreme weather events. Additionally, EMPG funding will be used to ensure alignment with local goals, making sure that hazard mitigation efforts support broader community planning and development objectives. Finally, EMPG funding will assist OES and guide Kent County's efforts to reduce disaster risk, strengthen recovery processes, and build a safer, more resilient future for all residents. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved acceptance of the FY2025 FEMA Emergency Management Performance Grant award to Kent County in the amount of \$61,150.72. Discussion took place after the motion.

CARLA GERBER, DIRECTOR, PLANNING, HOUSING, AND ZONING

Kent County Housing Study – Recommendation for Selection of Consultant: In FY2026, Kent County Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning received grant funding in the amount of \$30,000.00 from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and \$13,000.00 from the Upper Shore Regional Council, for a total project budget of \$43,000.00, to conduct a comprehensive countywide housing study to determine current and projected housing needs in Kent County with detailed analysis by income demographics and other population-based characteristics. After grant funding was secured, a team comprised of the Directors of Planning, Housing, and Zoning, Economic & Tourism Development, Local Management Board, and Grants and Contracts, developed a Request for Proposals to identify a qualified consultant vendor to undertake this study. A significant response was received with seventeen proposals submitted. The review team selected the top three highest-scoring proposals for interviews and submitted a recommendation for a consultant to the Commissioners for consideration. The recommended vendor, Urban Partners, is a Philadelphia-based consulting practice with 46 years of experience providing planning, housing, and economic development consulting to communities across the nation. While Kent County received a number of highly qualified proposals from experienced vendors, the above vendor scored highest amongst the committee for the mix of desired skills, experience, and methodology and approach responsive to Kent County's needs and our rural character. Discussion took place. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the recommended consultant, Urban Partners, to conduct a comprehensive countywide housing study and the delegation of signature authority for the contract to the County Administrator as requested.

MICHAEL SUTTON, DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES

Associate Planner Vacancy: Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for the Associate Planner Vacancy. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate at the proposed rate for the identified vacant position.

Motor Equipment Operator II Vacancy - Environmental Operations Division: Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for a Motor Equipment Operator II Vacancy. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate.

Motor Equipment Operator I Vacancy- Roads Division: Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for a Motor Equipment Operator I Vacancy. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate at the proposed rate for the identified vacant position.

DAN MATTSON, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS

Rock Hall Dredging - Tipping Fees Contract Award: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is currently planning the Rock Hall Harbor and Channel Maintenance Dredging Project for Fall 2027. However, USACE has recently expressed renewed interest in advancing the project to late 2026, provided the dredged material placement site can be prepared in time and other internal factors align with an accelerated schedule. In order for either schedule to remain viable, a permitted placement site must be available prior to the commencement of dredging. Orem Pit, owned by David A. Bramble, Inc., is the only viable local placement site with the necessary property rights, mining permit, and ability to construct the additional containment capacity required for the project. The site currently has 18,800 Cubic Yards (CY) of capacity, while the target dredge volume is 92,000 CY. The Army Corps recommends 104,200 CY to ensure the project can be fully completed. The proposed contract will ensure adequate capacity is available at the time of dredging. It also establishes a unit price per load of hauled dredge material. A "guaranteed minimum" is established, as Bramble is undertaking significant efforts to prepare the site and requires both reassurance and cash flow to fund those activities should dredging not occur until Fall 2027. It has been structured to maximize the likelihood of achieving the maximum scope eligible for Grant Funding. Mr. Mattson provided several options for the Commissioners' consideration. Discussion took place. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Agreement with David A. Bramble, Inc. for dredged material placement services associated with the Rock Hall Harbor and Channel Maintenance Dredging Project and execution of the Agreement. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved that if we are unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding, we will go to our fund balance to pay the required amount of \$250,000.00.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Bayside Public Landing, Rock Hall: Commissioner Fithian spoke about a local business that recently purchased a pontoon boat as a water taxi for the harbor in Rock Hall. They are inquiring about tying up and parking the boat at the public landing to load and unload passengers during the water taxi's operating hours, which are roughly four hours a day. The owner has been taking riders to various businesses in Rock Hall Harbor, from marinas to restaurants. He has a lot of local support from businesses in the area, and they have placed advertisements on his boat. Both Commissioner Fithian and Commissioner Price have been to the public landing to check into where the Water Taxi is requesting to dock. Commissioner Fithian suggested putting up a reserved sign for the water taxi. Commissioner Price spoke about installing railings on each side of the dock for safety and installing two cleats for tying up the water taxi. Commissioner Price provided pictures for Mr. Mattson to review, helping him understand the suggested safety measures to implement at the dock for this request. Mr. Mattson spoke about forms the county requires, such as the use facilities form, as well as the need to submit insurance paperwork to the county for liability purposes. Mr. Mattson suggested drafting an agreement to present to the business owner for consideration. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson the Commissioners unanimously approved the public works director and county attorney to work together and take a look at providing a part time spot for the water taxi to tie up and unload passengers at the County ramp, and also take into consideration the railing, cleats and signs, that need to be installed, contingent upon that there is insurance being carried by the water taxi owner to cover the County if there is any accident or injuries.

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 7, 2026, is \$ 351,118.00. No use of the Fund Balance has been requested to date.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

At 6:49 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, August 4, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lacey M. Townsend
County Clerk

Approved:

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

July 21, 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; G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney; Bonnie S. Pearsall, Inspector, Kent Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement; Lacey M. Townsend, County Clerk; and Roni L. Thomas, Deputy Clerk II, were also present.

CONSENT ITEM

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Consent Item, Liquor Minutes, July 14, 2026.

SPECIAL CLASS C LICENSES

Echo Hill Outdoor School, Beer, Wine, and Liquor, August 1, 2026: Echo Hill Outdoor School applied for a Special Class C Alcoholic Beverage License for Beer, Wine, and Liquor for a Crab Feast at High Street Parking, Chestertown, MD, on August 1, 2026. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C Alcoholic Beverage License for Echo Hill Outdoor School for Beer, Wine, and Liquor on August 1, 2026, as presented.

Rock Hall Lions Club, Beer, Wine, and Liquor, August 8, 2026: Rock Hall Lions Club applied for a Special Class C Alcoholic Beverage License for Beer, Wine, and Liquor, for the Pirates & Wenches Beach Party located at Ferry Park, Rock Hall, MD., on August 8, 2026. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C Alcoholic Beverage License for Rock Hall Lions Club for Beer, Wine, and Liquor for August 8, 2026, as presented.

Singles On Sailboats, Beer, Wine, and Liquor, August 15, 2026: Singles on Sailboats applied for a Special Class C Alcoholic Beverage License for Beer, Wine, and Liquor for the Seafood Feast at Langford Bay Marina, 23002 McKinleyville Road, Rock Hall, MD on August 15, 2026. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C Alcoholic Beverage License for Singles on Sailboats for Beer, Wine, and Liquor for August 15, 2026, as presented.

Minary's Dream Alliance, Beer, Wine, and Liquor, August 29, 2026: Minary's Dream Alliance applied for a Special Class C Per Diem Alcoholic Beverage License for Beer, Wine, and Liquor for the Rhythm & Vines Fundraiser on August 29, 2026, at 9155 American Legion Road, Chestertown, MD. On a motion by Commissioner Price, seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C Per Diem Alcoholic Beverage License for Minary's Dream Alliance for Beer, Wine, and Liquor on August 29, 2026, as presented.

Liquor Minutes

July 21, 2026

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At 6:49 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, August 4, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

THE BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Lacey M. Townsend
County Clerk

Approved:

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

July 21, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING

County Commissioners Ronald H. Fithian, Albert Nickerson, and John F. Price were in attendance. Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator; G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney; Lacey M. Townsend, County Clerk; and Roni L. Thomas, Deputy Clerk II were also present.

On a motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to open the public hearing.

G. Robert Mowell, County Attorney, read the protocols for the public hearing and the public hearing notice into the record. The public hearing was duly advertised. The rules for a public hearing were in effect.

CODE HOME RULE BILL NO. 3-2026 COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AND REPAIR COMMISSION

The public hearing commenced at 6:06 p.m. in the County Commissioners' Hearing Room, R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr., Kent County Government Center, 400 High Street, Chestertown, MD. A public hearing to discuss Code Home Rule Bill No. 3-2026, Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission, AN ACT amending Chapter 15 Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission, Section 15-7 Duties; grant process; allocation process; use of funds and Section 15-8 Reporting. For the purpose of permitting the Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission to administer the grant distribution process, authorizing more than one distribution per calendar year, and making the reporting requirements consistent with state law. By repealing Chapter 15 Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission, Section 15-7 Duties; grant process; allocation process; use of funds, and Section 15-8 Reporting, and reenacting Chapter 15 Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission, Section 15-7 Duties; grant process; allocation process; use of funds, and Section 15-8 Reporting with amendments.

Mr. Mowell provided a brief overview of the bill. Rosemary Ramsey Granillo, Director, Kent County Local Management Board, offered support and provided additional background information on the proposed legislation. Mr. Mowell stated that the public comment period would remain open until the close of business on Friday, July 24, 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / WRITTEN COMMENTS

Citizens were invited to sign the testimony log and comment during the public hearing. No comments were made, either spoken or written, before or during the hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to close the public hearing at 6:10 p.m. and return to regular session. The legislative bill is scheduled to be considered for a vote on Tuesday, August 4, 2026.

Public Hearing Minutes – Code Home Rule Bill No. 3-2026 Community Reinvestment and
Repair Commission
July 21, 2026
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Respectfully submitted,

Lacey M. Townsend
County Clerk

Approved:

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