

August 4, 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 in the loss of a long-time employee, Joe Gsell, who had a tragic accident at his farm and is no longer with us. Commissioner Fithian also mentioned Mr. Gsell's son, Mike, who has been sick for quite some time. Commissioner Fithian asked that everyone keep his wife, Portia, and the rest of the 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 Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved all sixteen consent items as presented:

1. Regular Session Minutes, July 21, 2026.
2. Public Hearing Minutes, July 21, 2026
3. Dennis Hickman, Sheriff, Kent County Sheriff's Office
 - Budget adjustment for Axon Invoice
4. Dennis Hickman, Kent County Sheriff's Office
 - Request to move funds from the FY2026 budget to the FY27 budget for the purchase of the Idemia Fingerprinting Machine.
5. Carla Gerber Director of Planning, Housing, and Zoning
 - FY27 Critical Area Grant Agreement No. K00P7600122
6. Pete Landon, Director, Office of Emergency Services
 - Kent County Emergency Medical Services, Volunteer Fire Company Personnel Assignment and Deployment Agreements
7. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Water and Wastewater Division
 - Sewer Allocation Request and Public Works Agreement, Elroy G. Boyer, Jr.
8. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Water and Wastewater Division
 - Sewer Allocation Request and Public Works Agreement, Baymeadow, LLC
9. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Water and Wastewater Division
 - Water and Sewer Allocation Request and Public Works Agreement, Melinda A. and John E. Swain
10. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Roads Division
 - FY2027 Blacktop Projects and Contract
11. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works
 - FY2027 Vehicle Orders
12. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works, Water and Wastewater Division
 - Independent Contractor Contract Award – Water and Wastewater Consulting
13. Regional Behavioral Health Advisory Committee Reappointment Letter

14. Shelly Neal-Edwards, Director, Kent County Department of Social Services, Social Services Advisory Board Recommendation
15. Chestertown Lions Club Raffle Only, August 15, 2026, to December 20, 2026
16. Kent County High School Clay Target Team, Raffle Only, August 2026 to December 25, 2026

SPECIAL REGOGNITIONS

Certificate of Recognition, Bishop Leon Frison, Years of Service: As a young minister, Leon Frison established the Living Water Greater Highway Church of Christ in December of 1991. He was a “favorite” teacher to many students during his 25 years with Kent County Public Schools, until his retirement in 2020. He is the former Chair of the Local Management Board for Children and Family Services of Kent County, the Clergy Representative for Eastern Shore Hospice, a Member of the Mid-Shore Council on Domestic Violence, and a Kent County Social Services Board Member. While serving in those capacities, he also served in the Greater Highway Church of Christ International, advancing through the offices of Pastor, Elder, and ultimately Ordained Bishop. Bishop Frison was appointed Chaplain of Kent County Detention Center by the Commissioners in October 2002 and has served twelve years as Chaplain for the Chestertown Volunteer Fire Company. He served on the Advisory Board for Children’s and Family Services under Governor Bob Ehrlich and the Commission on Testing under Governor Larry Hogan. He currently serves on the following boards: Kent Attainable Housing, Uplift Us, and the Police Accountability Board of Kent County. The Commissioners recognized and congratulated Bishop Leon Frison on thirty-five years of distinguished and unwavering pastoral leadership. Commissioner Price read the Certificate of Recognition into the record, and the Commissioners presented the certificate to Bishop Frison and his wife, Karen.

Proclamation, National Health Center Week, August 2 - August 8, 2026: For more than 45 years, Choptank Community Health System has provided comprehensive primary medical, dental, behavioral health, nutrition, women's health, pediatric, and school-based health care to residents throughout Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties. Today, Choptank Community Health System serves approximately 35,000 patients each year, regardless of their ability to pay. National Health Center Week is an opportunity to recognize the vital role community health centers play in improving access to affordable, high-quality health care while celebrating the dedicated professionals and community partners who make this work possible. Kristy Winborne, Practice Manager at Choptank Community Health System, provided an overview of Choptank Community Health Services and the services they provide to the community. Ms. Winborne stated that they would be holding an open house on September 22, 2026, at 4:30 p.m. at the Chestertown Health Center. Dr. Marcela Flores, Dentist, accompanied Ms. Winborne. Commissioner Nickerson read the proclamation into the record, and the Commissioners presented the proclamation to Ms. Winborne and Ms. Flores.

G. ROBERT MOWELL, COUNTY ATTORNEY, PUBLIC HEARING

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.

Code Home Rule 3-2026 - Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission, Third Read, Considered for Vote: Code Home Rule Bill No. 3-2026 Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission, was read for a third time and considered for a vote. 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 gave an overview of the bill. A public hearing was held on July 21, 2026. No written comments were received. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to adopt Code Home Rule Bill No. 3-2026 Community Reinvestment and Repair Commission.

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to go back into open session at 6:20 p.m.

MICHAEL SUTTON, DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES

Finance Associate Vacancy: Mr. Sutton discussed a hiring recommendation for the Finance Associate 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.

Kent County Detention Center - Promotions: Following the retirement of two employees within the Detention Center, two supervisory vacancies were created. To ensure continuity of operations, out-of-title pay was approved for two Corporal staff members while they assumed the duties of Acting Sergeants. Mr. Sutton requested that both employees be permanently reclassified to the position of Sergeant, replacing their current Acting Sergeant assignments. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the permanent reclassification of the two recommended Kent County Detention Center Corporals to the position of Sergeants.

SCOTT BOONE, DIRECTOR, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Department Spotlight, Kent Family Center: Mr. Boone provided a spotlight on the Kent Family Center, a county program serving families expecting a child or raising children under the age of five. Mr. Boone provided the Commissioners with a better understanding of the Center's services, current team, and upcoming initiatives. The Center has served Kent County for ten years and is frequently recognized as a model program by other centers across the state. Mr. Boone highlighted the work and the impact it continues to have on local families.

JOANNE MCNAMARA, DIRECTOR, GRANTS AND CONTRACTS, AND CARRIE KLEIN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS

FY2027 Program Open Space Allocation: Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Program Open Space (POS) provides annual grant allocations to each of Maryland's counties and Baltimore City for park acquisition and development projects. POS funding may be used to cover 90% of the costs of the proposed projects, with a 10% match required by the local government. In FY2027, Kent County received a POS allocation of \$171,621.00 in new funds, which will be available to the County after July 1, 2026. Due to the passage of HB717, Kent County can now use an unencumbered balance of \$203,857.00 from its prior-year POS allotments reserved for new parkland acquisitions toward park development projects. These two factors combined now present a total of \$375,478.00 in currently available POS funding that can be used for the FY2027 year and beyond (\$171,621.00 in new FY2027 funds, combined with the \$203,857.00 in prior acquisition allocations that can now be used for parks development). Parks & Recreation seeks to use these funds to complete a project identified as a need by the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB) and in the Kent County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plans (LPPRP), adding lighting to the softball field at Worton Park. The project may also include completion of an additional dugout cover, as funds allow, after the softball lighting project is completed. The estimated cost of softball field lighting ranges from \$350,000.00 to \$400,000.00. As such, Parks & Recreation proposes a total POS project budget of \$410,000.00 to cover the completion of the softball field lighting and account for potential increases in material costs between now and the FY2027 spring softball season. To contribute toward project costs and reduce cost impact to the County, Kent County Parks and Recreation (KCPR) also proposes to request that DNR revert a current open POS project to design and build a restroom at Toal Park (Galena) – a project with a \$105,000.00 budget (\$94,500.00 POS grant funds and \$10,500.00 County match) – and instead put these funds toward the Worton softball field lighting project. The request was presented to the Commissioners at this time as a contingency request, due to the timing of the Toal Park reversion and the availability of POS acquisition funds that are now available to be used. It is noted that although the County must make a commitment of a 10% match to move the project ahead for DNR approval, the project does not have to be completed in FY2027, allowing for County match funds to be appropriated either in FY2027 or an upcoming fiscal year, so long as the commitment to appropriation is made for purposes of submitting the requests to DNR. Ms. MacNamara and Ms. Klein provided further information regarding the POS projects and the deductive reasoning for handling them in this manner. A discussion took place. No decision was made on these projects because the Commissioners requested additional information to make a more informed decision, as this wasn't a time-sensitive decision. Ms. MacNamara and Ms. Klein are to gather further information and return to discuss the details with the Commissioners at an upcoming meeting.

DAN MATTSON, DIRECTOR, PUBLIC WORKS

FY2027 Fund Balance Request - Various Projects: Various projects that were budgeted and initiated in FY2026 were not completed by the end of the fiscal year. As a result, the funding associated with these projects was reverted to "Fund Balance". To complete these projects and honor ongoing active Contracts, Public Works requested restoration of various

budget amounts from the Fund Balance, as this will not negatively impact County finances. The project's needing to be completed, and further funds allocated for them are as follows:

- Water & Wastewater (WWW) Capital Projects (Various Projects) for a total amount of \$1,102,867.78. A spreadsheet was provided to the Commissioners for further breakdown of the FY2026 WWW Capital projects - budgets, actual expenditures, and proposed restoration via fund balance.
- Humane Society Vehicle Donations of \$42,989.27. Public Works experienced significant delays in donating the vehicles to the Humane Society due to delays in receiving new vehicle orders from Enterprise and subsequent titling issues. These delays led to a delay in outfitting the donated vehicles with aftermarket equipment. Proposed aftermarket outfitting includes bed caps, new tires, and other potential upgrades. Mr. Mattson requested that funding for this budget line be restored via Fund Balance to complete the aftermarket outfitting selected in lieu of the originally proposed new vehicle purchase.
- Buck Neck Landing Outlet Installation of \$15,000. This project was authorized by Commissioners late in FY2026, and Public Works immediately engaged Delmarva Power and private electricians to begin coordinating and contracting for the necessary work. Progress has been made; however, the project could not be completed prior to June 30th. As a result, recovery of this funding from Fund Balance is needed to fund the proposed work.
- Courthouse Landscaping maintenance contract of \$5,003.44. Public Works completed a landscaping project at the County Courthouse in coordination with Judge Murphy and Courthouse Staff in lieu of the initially envisioned paver installation project. The landscaping project was completed under budget. Previous landscaping projects at this location were unsuccessful, and to ensure the long-term feasibility of this investment, Public Works included a maintenance contract in the project to guarantee the viability of the plantings over their most vulnerable years. As the maintenance efforts extend beyond FY2026, funding will be needed in FY2027 for the associated work.

Mr. Mattson emphasized that no 'new' or increased funding is sought in connection with the request. The request is only to restore funding that reverted to Fund Balance due to the fiscal year changeover. Mr. Mattson requested that the County Commissioners delegate authority to the Director of Public Works to reallocate funding between WWW Capital budget lines for all remaining FY2026 projects and currently budgeted FY2027 projects. Authority granted under this item would be limited to projects and the total funding amount listed in the provided "WWW FY2027 Capital Budget" Spreadsheet. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Fund Balance Request for a total amount of \$1,165,860.49 for the Capital Projects as presented and approved the delegation of authority to reallocate funding between projects to the Director of Public Works, as presented.

Construction Change Order - Fairlee Well #2 Replacement: Construction of the Fairlee Well #2 Replacement project has proceeded, but experienced unforeseen site conditions resulting in a proposed change order from the Contractor, Somerset Well Drilling Co., Inc. Funding for this proposed change order was available in the overall WWW FY2026 Capital Budget, via other projects that came in under budget, and appropriate funding was reallocated in anticipation of the

Change Order. No new funding is requested, only approval of the Change Order itself. The issue was reviewed by PW staff and the project's engineering consultant, McCrone. A revised well design was developed and agreed to be sufficient by all parties; that design is included in the change order, as the basis for pricing. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the proposed Change Order for the Fairlee Well #2 Replacement Project.

Detention Center Roof Replacement - Contract Award: The FY2027 Capital Budget includes \$800,000.00 for the replacement of the Detention Center Roof. Public Works has coordinated with Garland/DBS, Inc. to develop appropriate design and scope documents that account for all specifics of the building's construction, uses, and roof-mounted features. Garland/DBS is a reputable, full-service contracting firm that is regularly used by the Kent County School District, as well as many Counties and Municipalities throughout the Eastern Shore of Maryland. A total of five bids were received, ranging from \$778,187.00 to \$1,210,203.00. Mr. Mattson explained that Garland's fee for all services is included in the bid amounts, and no fee has been or will be assessed to the County for services outside of this figure, unless related to a specific unforeseen condition on the project. The low-bid contractor is Old Line Contractors, with a total contract value of \$778,187.00, inclusive of Garland's services. Old Line Contractors has completed numerous projects of a similar type and magnitude with Garland under this same contracting configuration. The proposed procurement will be directly with Garland, the General Contractor, via the Omnia Partners piggyback. If authorized, Garland anticipates a start date in September 2026 and a 45-60 day construction duration to substantial completion. Discussion took place. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to award the proposed contract to Garland/DBS, Inc. in the amount of \$778,187.00 as presented.

Residential Solid Waste Disposal Permits - Six Month Extension: The current Solid Waste Permits ('stickers') are set to expire on December 31, 2026. Late in the FY2027 budget process, Public Works became aware that the Midshore Regional Recycling Program (MRRP) would be revising the fee structure, including an increase in regular tipping fees and the imposition of a \$30.00 surcharge per mattress received. Data from previous years and recent months, prior to the new MRRP fee structure, indicate that the solid waste program spends significantly more than it brings in from the current coupon program. While action is needed regarding permits, it would be most appropriate for that to occur after a thorough cost evaluation is completed. Any changes or updates to the permit program should occur at the same time as any potential changes to fees/coupons, etc., associated with the program, so that residents and attendants can adapt to all changes at once and PW staff can accurately track their impact. Appropriate Public Notice must be given for any changes to permits and/or fees, so that residents and attendants have advance notice and an 'adjustment period' to minimize disruption to the Solid Waste Operation. Public Works proposes extending the validity of current permits by six months, making them valid through June 30, 2027. This will allow several months for the collection and analysis of relevant data, and the development of potential recommendations for revisions to current policies/fee structures/etc. Public Works would then present various options/alternatives early in Calendar Year 2027, along with backup data justification, for the

Commissioners to consider. Any changes to the current program, if approved by Commissioners, would then be publicly advertised 4-6 months in advance of permit expiration, allowing adequate time for the potential issuance of new permits, public notification/adjustment, and staff training (if needed). The proposed six-month extension would be advertised via the County Website, on the Public Works phone recording, and at all drop-off locations. Discussion took place.

SHELLEY L. HELLER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Indivior Direct Settlement, Opioids Implementation: On July 1, 2026, a letter from the State of Maryland Office of the Attorney General (OAG) was received inviting Kent County to join the Indivior Settlement. Kent County is estimated to receive \$1,672.86 (25%) in direct funds and \$3,011.16 (45%) in abatement funds for an estimated total of \$4,684.02. The State recommends using the same percentages as previously agreed upon, and the local jurisdictions are agreeable. Maryland's estimated potential total share, to be divided among the State and its subdivisions, is approximately \$1,550,375.19 (about 2.11 percent of the national abatement amount). The settlement also provides injunctive relief that will help protect Marylanders from future harm. The County Administrator has previously signed settlement documents electronically and is requesting approval to allow signing authority for this settlement as well. The Participation Package, the letter from the State of Maryland Office of the Attorney General (including Exhibit A), and the Subdivision Participation and Release Form (Exhibit G) were provided for review. On motion by Commissioner Price, and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved participating in the New National Opioids Settlement in association with Indivior Settlement and to delegate signature authority to the County Administrator, allowing the signing of the Subdivision Participation and Release Form.

SHELLEY L. HELLER, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR, REPORT

Main Street Rock Hall Letter of Support- Office of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Facade Improvement Grant: Main Street Rock Hall is applying for a \$100,000.00 2028 grant to be used for façade improvements in the Rock Hall Main Street Corridor. They have successfully applied for, and received, funding from this source in 2025, 2026, and 2027. These grant awards require matching funds from the recipients. The submittal deadline for this grant was today. Due to the timeline, the letter of support needed to be signed outside a scheduled meeting. The signed letter was provided for review.

Main Street Rock Hall Letter of Support- Office of Neighborhood Revitalization, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Community Legacy Grant: Main Street Rock Hall is applying for a \$500,000.00 Community Legacy Grant that will be used to create a fund to offer incentives for the revitalization of vacant buildings in the Rock Hall Main Street Corridor. They are modeling their program after the highly successful Project Restore Grant, which helped redevelop three properties in 2024/2025. These grant awards will require matching funds from the recipients. The submittal deadline for this grant was today. Due to the timeline, the letter of support needed to be signed outside a scheduled meeting. The signed letter was provided for review.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Maryland Department of the Environment, Water and Science Administration, Application: The Water and Science Administration (Administration) is reviewing an application for a State Permit. The application and related information are on file with the Administration at the main office; arrangements may be made for inspection and copying. Individuals are afforded the opportunity to provide written comments, request a public informational hearing, or be placed on an interested persons list for the listed application. The Maryland Department of the Environment letter was provided for review.

Maryland Department of the Environment, Water and Science Administration, Notice of Publication of Permit Decision, Tideland Gardens, Inc: Tideland Gardens, Inc., 10040 Perkins Hill Road, Chestertown, MD 21620 (Permit No. KE1986G004/08), has applied to increase an existing water appropriation. The project is located at 10040 Perkins Hill Road, Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland. After examination and consideration of the documents received and the evidence in the application file and record, the administration has determined that the application meets the statutory and regulatory criteria necessary for issuance of a Water Appropriation and Use Permit. This is a final agency determination; there is no further opportunity for administrative review. The Maryland Department of the Environment letter was provided for review.

Maryland Department of the Environment, Water and Science Administration, Notice of Publication of Permit Decision, York Farm: York Farm, LLC, 3150 West Ward Road, Suite 401, Dunkirk, MD 20754 (Permit No. KE2002G010-03), has applied to increase an existing water appropriation for filling a wildlife pond. The project is located at 6550 Quaker Neck Road, Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland. After examination and consideration of the documents received and the evidence in the application file and record, the administration has determined that the application meets the statutory and regulatory criteria necessary for issuance of a Water Appropriation and Use Permit. This is a final agency determination; there is no further opportunity for administrative review. The Maryland Department of the Environment letter was provided for review.

TurningPoint Energy - Proposed Community Solar Project: A letter was received from Frances Yuhas, Project Manager, TurningPoint Energy. He wrote to provide an overview regarding a Proposed Community Solar Project located at 5643 Crosby Road, Rock Hall. Mr. Yuhas's letter was provided 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 July 14, 2026, is \$ 323,800.00. 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 7:09 p.m., on a motion made by Commissioner Nickerson and seconded by Commissioner Proce, the Commissioners unanimously approved adjourning the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, August 18, 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

August 4, 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; 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 21, 2026.

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, August 18, 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