

May 14, 2024

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 convened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Fithian asked everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence for Kent County employee Shalyn Boulden, and her family, for the sudden passing of her father.

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

CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the following items:

1. Regular Session Minutes, May 7, 2024
2. Liquor Minutes, May 7, 2024
3. Closed Session Minutes, May 7, 2024
4. Bill Mackey, Director, Planning, Housing, and Zoning - Release of Irrevocable Letters of Credit Nos. 21-18 and 21-19 to WSFS Bank for Pep-Up, Inc.

APPOINTMENT

Choptank Community Health: Sara Rich, CEO, and Lucie Hughes, Director of Choptank Community Health, gave a general update on health programs and services available. Choptank continues to expand services in many locations in the County and plans further expansion of the Mobile Health Unit offerings. A Mobile Unit was on-site for tours.

PROCLAMATION

National Travel and Tourism Week is May 19-25, 2024: Commissioner Fithian read the proclamation into the record. Jamie Williams, Director of Economic and Tourism Development, accepted the proclamation on behalf of the department. Economic impact highlights of tourism in Kent County from 2018-2022 were provided.

ECONOMIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Williams requested approval of the Insertion Order for iHeart Media tourism promotions per the Economic Development Administration Grant. The submitted purchase order requisition involves the Commissioners' approval and signature. iHeart Media was chosen based on cost, the mix of promotions (digital, targeted audio, influencer endorsements, and bonus spots), and impressions. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved and signed the Insertion Order for iHeart Media for \$34,300.00 for FY2024 and FY2025 for Kent County Tourism promotions per the Economic Development Administration Grant.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Pete Landon, Director of the Office of Emergency Services (OES), requested approval to enter an agreement for the coverage of the Kent County Fire Chiefs Association, Inc., Term Life Insurance Policy. The renewal is due on June 1, 2024, and the invoice is \$60,852.57. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the agreement with Glatfelter Insurance Group to ensure coverage for the Kent County Fire Chiefs Association without delay.

Mr. Landon requested approval to formally apply for two (2) grants. OES utilized Federal and State grant funding in the past to supplement Kent County funding for emergency planning, personnel, and equipment. Kent OES plans to apply for the FY2024 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant and Emergency Management Program Grant (EMPG). The SHSP grant assists Kent County's efforts to build, sustain, and deliver the capabilities necessary to prevent, prepare for, protect against, and respond to acts of terrorism. Additionally, the EMPG provides the OES with additional funding resources required for implementing the National Preparedness System and works toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation. The EMPG's allowable costs support efforts to build and sustain core capabilities across the prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery mission areas. The grant justification documents were available for review. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the formal application for the FY2024 State Homeland Security Grant and Emergency Management Performance grants.

Mr. Landon requested approval to accept funding from the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to support emergency services in Kent County. The Kent County Health Department solicited funding requests for emergency-related activities and agreed to immediately fund \$50,000.00 to pay for Everbridge mass notification communications system software and a 5-year mandatory Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). MDH has required a letter of agreement from the County Commissioners to the Kent County Health Department to consummate the immediate funding transfer. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved accepting the Kent County Health Department's funding to support emergency services in Kent County by signing a letter of support.

Police Accountability Board: Frank McGarvey, Police Accountability Officer, requested approval of the proposed agreement (via signature) with the Office of Administrative Hearings for the State of Maryland. In Maryland, a Police Trial Board adjudicates matters for which a police officer or deputy is subject to discipline. The Trial Board meets when an officer appeals the decision of the Police Chief or Sheriff regarding a disciplinary issue or complaint. The Maryland Police Accountability Act requires Kent County to have an active or retired administrative law judge or a retired district or circuit court judge appointed by the County Commissioners. This Memorandum of Agreement

(MOA) between the Office of Administrative Hearings and the County Commissioners of Kent County ensures that an administrative law Judge can be quickly assigned to preside over any Kent County Police Trial Boards. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved signing the Memorandum of Agreement with the Office of Administrative Hearings to provide an Administrative Judge to preside over Kent County Police Trial Boards if necessary.

PLANNING, HOUSING AND ZONING

Bill Mackey, Director of Planning, Housing, and Zoning (PHZ), gave an overview of the County's role in reviewing an annexation proposal to assess the zoning by the 5-year rule and to determine consistency with the Kent County Comprehensive Plan and the Land Use Ordinance, if applicable. Annexation documentation from the Town of Betterton and comments from the Maryland Department of Planning were included for the Board's information. The Kent County Planning Commission met to review the Town of Betterton's proposed annexation of the property owned by C. Henry Price II, Post No 246, American Legion, located at 11 Sixth Avenue, Betterton. A letter of recommendation from the Planning Commission dated May 2, 2024, was available for review. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the annexation as proposed and granted a five-year zoning waiver to the Town of Betterton.

Commissioner Fithian asked Mr. Mackey about the process of a text amendment to permit storage and lock businesses in the Industrial and Employment Center Districts in Massey.

Rob Tracey, Associate Planner of PHZ, requested approval to proceed with a public hearing process for agricultural land preservation districts. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to proceed with the public hearing process to review and approve five agricultural preservation district applications.

PUBLIC WORKS

Water and Wastewater Division: Dan Mattson, Director of Public Works, discussed an allocation transfer. The Division received a request for a water and sewer allocation for a single-family residence to be transferred from the property located at 05-006988 (Tax Map 46 Parcel 53) to the property located at 06-000319 (Tax Map 46 Parcel 116). Discussion took place. This item was tabled pending the prospective buyer's confirmation of their intent to purchase the property.

Mr. Mattson discussed another request for one sewer allocation for a single-family lot on Louisiana Avenue in Tolchester Estates after combining Tax Maps 035B Parcels 759 and 761 into a single parcel. The parcels are in the Delineated Development Area. An allocation is available at this location as there is capacity in the sewer system and treatment facility. The allocation fee is \$11,800.00. Staff recommends approval. Discussion took place. On a motion

made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved one sewer allocation for a single-family residence to occupy a single lot combining Parcels 759 and 761 on Tax Map 35B, conditional on payment of the allocation fee and approval of a Public Works Agreement.

Fleet Management: Mr. Mattson requested a vehicle order in advance of the final FY2025 budget approval. Staff have been working with Enterprise Fleet Management (EFM) to confirm specifics for all proposed vehicle replacement orders under the FY2025 Budget. Two (2) OES vehicles are proposed to be replaced under the FY2025 budget. EFM identified a current supply of suitable vehicles that are available now. Including aftermarket modifications via BlueTech, each Tahoe is \$78,692.41 per Open-End (Equity) Lease Rate Quote No. 7920551. The total cost for both vehicles is \$157,384.82. The monthly payments will not begin until delivery to the County in FY2025. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the order of two (2) 2024 Chevrolet Tahoes per the submitted quotes.

Mr. Mattson gave an update on the Clark Road project and pier repair updates for Betterton and Bogles Wharf. The Department's contractual employee started on May 1st. The OES proposed building bid packet will be finalized in a week.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Jim Miller, Director, Jennifer White, Business Partner of Human Resources, and Mr. Mattson requested approval to hire the recommended candidate to fill the Deputy Director of Public Works vacancy. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved a conditional offer of employment to the recommended candidate.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Shelley Heller, County Administrator, on behalf of Jennifer Hizer, Assistant Director of Government Grants, Washington College (WAC), requested support letters for two applications for the Innovation Hub project. WAC desires ongoing support from Maryland Technology Development and support from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. If awarded, the funds will be instrumental in facilitating the next phase of planning necessary to bring the project to fruition, located at 800 High Street in Chestertown. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved and signed the letters of support as drafted.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Price recommended Mr. Miller reach out to KRM for leadership training resources.

LETTERS FOR SIGNATURE

The Commission on Aging (COA) currently has two member vacancies due to the resignation of Erlena C. Linthicum and Darlene J. Stouts. The Commissioners signed thank you letters to both outgoing members for their service to the COA.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The procedures for public comment were in effect. Mike Waal offered comments regarding Kirwan funding.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS

A copy of the ARPA Spend Plan outlining the approved expenditures to date was provided to the Commissioners for informational purposes.

CONTINGENCY FUND

The FY2024 Contingency balance as of May 7, 2024, is \$159,252.00. The FY2024 use of Fund Balance is \$128,225.00.

At 11:06 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Nickerson and seconded by Commissioner Fithian, the Commissioners unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, May 21, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

May 14, 2024 BUDGET WORK SESSION

On May 14, 2024, a budget work session was held at 1:00 p.m. and attended by Commissioners Ronald H. Fithian, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price. Shelley L. Heller, County Administrator, and Pat Merritt, Chief Finance Officer, Office of Finance, were also present.

During the session, Paul Rickert, Area Extension Director, University of Maryland Extension, Kent County Office; Richard Keaveny, Executive Director, and Michael Wessel, Deputy Director, Animal Care Shelter for Kent County, requested funding for FY2025.

Dr. Karen Couch, Superintendent of Kent County Public Schools (KCPS), stated the total funding request is \$20,382,670.00 which is an increase of \$728,113.00 over the FY2024 budget figure; \$173,573.00 is the Minimum Local Appropriation with \$554,540.00 additional funding. The Commissioners were agreeable to the request. Further discussions included relocating the Board of Elections and the Board of Education offices to the Worton campus.

Pat Merritt, Chief Finance Officer, Office of Finance, and Dan Mattson, Director of Public Works, presented fiscal recommendations regarding the enterprise fleet management

Regular Session Minutes

May 14, 2024

Page 6 of 6

program. Ms. Merritt also discussed changes, recurring cost reduction options, and targeted fund balance. Measures to balance the budget were further discussed. The work session concluded at 2:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

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

May 14, 2024

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, 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, May 7, 2024.

At 11:06 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, May 21, 2024, 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