



For Immediate Release

Easton, MD – May 10, 2023

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Talbot County Council Meeting Highlights, May 9, 2023

The Talbot County Council started off their May 9th legislative day with a work session with the Local Delegation: Senator Johnny Mautz, Delegate Chris Adams, and Delegate Tom Hutchinson. During this session, the Council received an update on issues from the 2023 Legislative Session.

Following the work session, the Council held their regular meeting at 6:00 p.m.; all Council members in attendance.

Proclamation – Correctional Officers and Employees Week - Leadership from the Department of Corrections accepted a proclamation recognizing May 7 –13, 2023 as “Correctional Officers and Employees Week”. The special designation, initially established by President Ronald Reagan in 1984, recognizes employees from across the country, and our county, who work “quietly behind the walls” providing the greatest level of impact and support to the inmate population.

Department of Corrections Employee of the Year for 2022 - Along with the proclamation, the Council also recognized the Talbot County Department of Corrections 2022 Correctional Employee of the Year, Corporal Andrew Minner, for his commitment to the profession, determination and positive attitude.

“Talbot County is extremely fortunate to have such a sincere and dedicated officer on staff,” said Terry Kokolis, Director for Department of Corrections. “Cpl. Minner always represents himself in a professional manner that not only speaks well of him but also reflects, in a positive light, the staff of the department.”

Proclamation – National Travel and Tourism Week – May 7 – 13, 2023 - The County also celebrated another department in the County government, providing a proclamation for National Travel and Tourism Week to Director of Economic Development and Tourism, Cassandra Vanhooser and Captain Judy Bixler, Chair, Talbot County Tourism Board and Chair, Maryland Tourism Development Board.

Other Business:

- Mid-Shore Behavioral Health provided their annual update on behavioral health matters noting that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Mid-Shore Behavioral Health serves as the County's Core Service Agency with the mission to continually improve the provision of behavioral health services for residents of Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties through effective coordination of care in collaboration with consumers, their natural support systems, providers and the community at large.

Kathryn Dilley, Executive Director, noted that The Mid-Shore Planning Collaborative, comprised of five counties in the region (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's and Talbot), is working to create a more formalized structure for regional resources and the crisis response system.

In the last two years, additional funding has been provided to address the child and adolescent population and their behavioral health needs through their mobile response and stabilization services, a special division within their crisis response system.

In FY 24, Mid-Shore Behavioral Health will be supporting Channel Marker in developing a regional suicide prevention coalition as well as a regional support network for those impacted by suicide. They also were awarded a grant to address firearms safety with first responders and community members in crisis and will be distributing gun locks for households with firearms present.

Shannon Joyce, Behavioral Health Coordinator, provided updates on programs within Talbot County.

Mid-Shore Behavioral Health continues to be an important asset for the county and region. Following the presentation, the Council voted unanimously to designate Mid-Shore Behavioral Health, Inc. as the County's Core Service Agency for the management of the public behavioral health system for the five counties, and to enter into a Letter of Agreement for same for FY24. To view the entire update, go to: [Talbot County Council Meeting 5 9 2023 \(granicus.com\)](#) - Item VIII.

- A public hearing was held on [Resolution No. 342](#), which proposes changing the zoning for two parcels of land that are being annexed by the Town of Easton near Easton Point. The proposed rezoning would change the zoning of the properties from Talbot County's Limited Industrial ("LI") to Easton's Mixed-Use Waterfront ("MXW") zoning upon annexation. Town Planner for the Town of Easton, Lynn Thomas, stated that the properties are intended to be used for a waterfront park and to spur outdoor activity in the area. At the conclusion of the public hearing, upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 342.
- [Resolution No. 339](#) is proposed to amend the Talbot County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan to allow properties in and around the Villages of Bar Neck and Fairbank in Tilghman to receive "S-1" immediate priority status for sewer service from the Region V (Tilghman) Wastewater System. "We know we have some septic systems that are in

trouble down in Tilghman...and the wastewater treatment plant will allow for a better standard of treatment,” said Council Vice President Lesh. “This is appropriate for the health of the Bay, the health of us in Talbot County, and [the legislation] is an important step to provide access to the wastewater treatment system.” Upon motion by Mr. Lesh, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 339.

- Jessica Morris, Assistant County Manager, noted that the County has several vacancies on various boards and committees. Citizens interested in serving may contact the County Manager’s Office at 410-770-8010 or visit the County’s website for further information or to make application.
- Dana Newman, Director, Talbot County Free Library, requested two Letters of Support and a Letter of Certification all for the St. Michaels library branch renovation project. The first support letter was to verify the County would provide matching funds, which are included in the upcoming budget. The second support letter was to provide support for the library’s application for the FY25 Maryland Library Capital Grant Program. The library also requested a Letter of Certification for a USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Program grant, which is a technical document that shows the County certifies the library is uniquely able to offer this service to the area. All three requests were approved unanimously.

There were no public comments during the meeting.

The next legislative meeting of the County Council will be held on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 beginning at 6:00 p.m. On Tuesday, May 16th, the Council will hold final budget deliberations beginning at 3:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room followed by a 5:00 p.m. meeting with the Board of Education at the Board’s offices located at 12 Magnolia Street in Easton.

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Department of Corrections staff led by Director Terry Kokolis accept “National Correctional Officer and Employees Week” Proclamation from Council Vice President Pete Leshner. From left: Sgt. L. Murray, Captain J. Hughes, Cpl. V. Cephas (back), Inmate Programs Coordinator A. Tondin (front), Council Vice President Leshner, Director of Department of Corrections Terry Kokolis, Sgt. P. Tue (back), 2022 Employee of the Year Cpl. Minner; and Lt. T. Lally.



Cpl. Minner accepts his Certificate of Recognition from the Council, honoring the announcement of “Talbot County Department of Corrections 2022 Employee of the Year” From left: Rhona Bishoff, mother of Cpl. Minner, Corporal Andrew J. Minner, and Council Member Dave Stepp



Tourism leaders for our community receive proclamation for National Travel and Tourism Week. From left: Krista Boothby, Manager of Talbot Economic Development and Tourism, Council Member Keasha Haythe, Captain Judy Bixler, Chair of Talbot County Tourism Board and Chair of the Maryland Tourism Development Board, and Cassandra Vanhooser, Director of Economic Development and Tourism.