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COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Council Meeting

April 18, 2023; 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chuck F. Callahan

Keasha N. Haythe

Lynn L. Mielke

Dave Stepp

Reported by

Diane Houlihan

Page 2

1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

2

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Well, welcome,

4 everybody tonight. We've got a special

5 legislation day this evening.

6 So let's start off by a small prayer and

7 then the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. If

8 you could stand, please.

9 (Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.)

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Appreciate that.

11 All right.

12 First on the agenda, we got the agenda

13 before us, April 11th. Are there any

14 additions, deletions, or corrections to the

15 agenda?

16 MR. STEPP: No.

17 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So that's said, the

18 chair moves that the agenda be accepted as

19 unanimous consent. Okay.

20 Next would be on the disbursements of

21 April 18th. The Council has had a chance to

Page 3

1 take a look at that. Is there any deletions or

2 corrections or amendments to it? Okay.

3 Hearing none, the chair moves that the

4 disbursements be accepted as unanimous consent.

5 Okay.

6 The first up is to introduce of

7 legislation. Madam Secretary, could you go

8 ahead and read the bill into the record,

9 please.

10 SECRETARY: An act to establish the

11 2023-2024 annual budget and appropriation

12 ordinance.

13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So that's good.

14 That was a short one. All right. That's good.

15 So Mr. Stamp and Ms. Sparks, you want to

16 come on up? And Kaitlyn, come on up.

17 And Mr. Stamp, you want to start us off.

18 MR. STAMP: Council, thank you very much

19 for recognizing the staff for the hard work on

20 the budget, and thank you for your

21 participation over the last number of weeks

Page 4

1 working through the budgetary process. It's

2 always very eye-opening to be able to meet with

3 the organizations that deliver services

4 throughout our county. And I just give you a

5 lot of credit for digging in, rolling your

6 sleeves up, and learning a lot.

7 We are presenting tonight and hope that

8 you will introduce the FY2024 proposed general

9 fund budget of \$128,849,000.

10 And I just want to go through a PowerPoint

11 presentation with Martha Sparks, our finance

12 director. I'll open it up by just talking a

13 little bit about our budget strategy, take a

14 moment to talk about that strategy.

15 The first point is that we maintain a

16 strong focus on public safety and education and

17 to utilize the traditional successful practice

18 of conservative budgeting by estimating

19 revenues and expenditures. And that's

20 important. We talked a lot about that this

21 year, and I think that you all have achieved

Page 5

1 that in developing this proposed budget.

2 The second piece is to maintain the

3 investment in our employees, who are the

4 backbone of our service delivery in what has

5 become a highly competitive workforce

6 environment. And I can't stress that enough.

7 We've not seen such a competitive workforce in

8 a number of years. And again, you recognize

9 this and, as a strategy, made sure that you

10 addressed it in the proposed budget.

11 This budget also invests in the core

12 infrastructure projects for public safety in

13 health, education, and the environment. Just

14 take a minute to refer to Talbot County's

15 pillars of resilience, that we try to look at

16 each of these pillars to make sure the budget

17 addresses public safety and health, as well as

18 education, the environment, infrastructure, and

19 economic stability.

20 The other issue that we tried to address

21 in this strategy for this budget is to maintain

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 6</p> <p>1 a healthy fund balance for economic  2 uncertainties in light of the inflationary  3 pressures that we're currently seeing, supply  4 line disruptions, and cost fluctuations, to  5 include the required rainy day fund for  6 unanticipated events.  7 Clearly, you can turn on the TV and see  8 that the economic times are interesting. So  9 it's an important time to maintain a healthy  10 fund balance. And of course, this budget does  11 do that.  12 And then finally, this budget addresses  13 costs associated with State-mandated funding  14 requirements, such as education, required  15 boards, and minimum wage increase.  16 So those are some of the strategies around  17 the budget that is being proposed.  18 And then just to highlight a couple of  19 things that are addressed in the budget that  20 are significant.  21 It provides funding for a new north county</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 8</p> <p>1 roadway enhancements, culvert replacements, and  2 extension of sewer service in an effort to  3 remove dependence on septic systems and  4 connecting failing septic systems.  5 I'm going to turn the presentation over to  6 Martha at this point to walk you through the  7 rest of this.  8 MS. SPARKS: We're good.  9 MR. CALLAHAN: Good?  10 MS. SPARKS: Yeah. Good evening.  11 MS. HAYTHE: Welcome.  12 MS. SPARKS: Thank you. Staff is  13 presenting to Council a balanced general fund  14 budget of \$128,849,000 for the 2024 fiscal  15 year.  16 This budget continues the county's  17 conservative budgeting practices where we  18 underestimate our revenues and overestimate our  19 expenses is what it winds up being. These  20 budget practices have served the county well  21 and have placed us in a healthy financial</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 7</p> <p>1 EMS station and personnel, which will improve  2 response times, as well as funding for the  3 replacement of a computer-aided dispatch  4 software system at the 911 Center. These are  5 key projects that will make a difference in  6 trying to deliver paramedic service within  7 eight minutes 90 percent of the time, which is  8 a goal that our team tries to achieve. And by  9 approving the request, they'll be better apt to  10 be able to do that.  11 It provides funding increases to the  12 volunteer fire departments to address  13 operational costs and support training,  14 personnel retention, and recruitment efforts.  15 In provides a total increase to the Board  16 of Education that includes State-mandated  17 funding for schools, along with additional  18 requests for social workers and a capital  19 project for the Chapel District Elementary  20 School.  21 It provides funding for infrastructure for</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 9</p> <p>1 position.  2 Some of the items in the fiscal year 2024  3 budget include revenues that are two percent  4 over the FY23 property tax revenues in  5 accordance with our Charter, an additional one  6 cent increase to the property tax rate, as  7 authorized by the voters of Talbot County in  8 November 2020 to support public safety  9 expenditures, and a 4.8 cent education  10 supplement to support Talbot County Public  11 Schools budget initiatives.  12 Funding Talbot County Schools \$286,000  13 over the county's mandated adjusted local  14 share, for a total of 50.9 million, an increase  15 of 4.1 million from FY23. An additional  16 \$900,000 has been allocated for school  17 renovations within the capital improvement  18 projects, 1.1 million for capital outlay, or  19 purchases of vehicles and equipment,  20 6.68 million in transfers to capital projects,  21 four percent cost of living adjustment and one</p>

Page 10

1 step for county employees, and additional  
 2 positions were added that focused on public  
 3 safety.  
 4 In our FY24 budget, we've projected a  
 5 13.19 increase in property tax revenues, all  
 6 within the requirements of our Charter, a 9.14  
 7 increase in income tax revenues, increases in  
 8 other local taxes and intergovernmental  
 9 revenues and transfers bring us to an overall  
 10 increase in revenues of 14.42 percent.  
 11 Talbot County receives the majority of its  
 12 revenues from property and income taxes.  
 13 Together they make up 68.2 percent of the  
 14 county's revenues, with 44.1 percent coming  
 15 from property taxes.  
 16 Recordation and transfer taxes are the  
 17 next largest group of county revenues,  
 18 contributing approximately 9.3 percent.  
 19 The county has historically made  
 20 conservative projections of its revenues, and  
 21 this strategy has been successful in producing

Page 11

1 strong reserves.  
 2 Our proposed property tax rate of .7434  
 3 cents for -- .734 for county-owned properties  
 4 includes, as I mentioned earlier, the property  
 5 tax revenues that are two percent over FY23  
 6 revenues. Those prior year revenue levels are  
 7 certified by the State Department of  
 8 Assessments and Taxation.  
 9 That rate also includes an additional one  
 10 cent increase to the property tax rate, as  
 11 authorized by the voters of Talbot County in  
 12 November 2020 to benefit public safety, and the  
 13 4.8 educational supplement to support Talbot  
 14 County schools' budget.  
 15 Our overall property tax rate will  
 16 increase 6.14 cents over FY23, which amounts to  
 17 a nine percent increase. 3.48 percent, or 2.34  
 18 cents, of the increase is part of our county  
 19 real property tax rate. The remaining 5.52  
 20 percent increase is attributable to the  
 21 education supplement.

Page 12

1 The county tax bill for a home with a  
 2 property assessment of 300,000 will increase  
 3 from \$2,046 to \$2,230, which is an \$184  
 4 increase, \$144 of which is attributable to the  
 5 education supplement. And we have provided a  
 6 sample of what this homeowner's tax bill would  
 7 look like.  
 8 To provide context with the rest of the  
 9 State of Maryland in FY23, our county property  
 10 tax rate of 68 cents was the lowest in the 23  
 11 counties and Baltimore City. And that chart is  
 12 going to be interesting to see for FY24 to see  
 13 how the other counties shake out because they  
 14 are also experiencing increased funding for  
 15 their education in accordance with the Maryland  
 16 Blueprint.  
 17 In 2024, the income tax will remain  
 18 unchanged at 2.4 percent. In comparison to  
 19 other counties, Talbot County has the second  
 20 lowest income tax rate in 2023.  
 21 Fitch Ratings best describes Talbot

Page 13

1 County's income tax revenues when it said  
 2 income taxes are a higher percentage of  
 3 revenues than is true for most Maryland Talbot  
 4 Counties -- Maryland counties. This is  
 5 partially due to the very low tax environment  
 6 compared with the rest of the State, which  
 7 provides incentive for a small number of high  
 8 income earners with second homes to declare  
 9 their income in the county.  
 10 Talbot County's income tax revenues are  
 11 volatile and difficult to predict due to the  
 12 small percentage of high wage earners that  
 13 claim Talbot County as their home.  
 14 Our FY24 budget represents a moderate  
 15 increase in projections at 31 million.  
 16 Recordation and transfer taxes in FY21 and  
 17 FY22, Talbot County experienced its highest  
 18 levels of recordation and transfer tax  
 19 revenues. However, in FY 23 these revenues  
 20 have moved to more normal levels. And our FY24  
 21 budget projections for these taxes have

Page 14

1 slightly increased but still follow our  
 2 conservative budgeting methodology.  
 3 Overall, education expenditures for Talbot  
 4 County represent 43.7 percent of its budget,  
 5 and Talbot County schools represent  
 6 42.1 percent of those expenditures. The  
 7 Chesapeake College expenditures are the  
 8 difference there.  
 9 Mandatory funding of the Maryland  
 10 Blueprint For Schools saw a \$4.8 million  
 11 increase over the last year. In addition to  
 12 the mandated funding, Talbot County has  
 13 included an additional \$286,000 for three  
 14 social workers.  
 15 By moving the increase in school funding  
 16 to the educational supplement, the county is  
 17 providing a more structurally balanced budget.  
 18 We will not be relying on fund balance to plug  
 19 those, that difference in our budget.  
 20 900,000 has also been included for capital  
 21 projects requests for school renovations at

Page 15

1 Chapel Elementary.  
 2 And also, included as part of the  
 3 sheriff's budget is the cost for school  
 4 resource, three school resource officers, or  
 5 SROs.  
 6 Public safety accounts for 23.8 percent of  
 7 the budget, with general government at  
 8 12.8 percent.  
 9 1.1 million in capital outlay requests are  
 10 included in this budget. The original capital  
 11 outlay requests from the departments totaled  
 12 3.5 million. This was reduced through a  
 13 combination of cuts to the requests and the  
 14 determination that some of these purchases  
 15 could be made with FY23 budget appropriations  
 16 through the fourth quarter transfer process.  
 17 Also included in this budget is  
 18 6.8 million for transfers to capital  
 19 improvement projects.  
 20 Personnel actions that were taken in this  
 21 budget include a four percent cost of living

Page 16

1 adjustment and one step for employees. And  
 2 additional positions were added to increase  
 3 governmental services with an emphasis on  
 4 public safety.  
 5 Also included in the increase in operating  
 6 expenses is the debt service for our new public  
 7 safety building and new Health Department,  
 8 which totaled \$1.9 million. So that's  
 9 3.37 percent of the increase in our operating  
 10 expenses.  
 11 Fund balance. Total fund balance rainy  
 12 day funds and discretionary fund balance. The  
 13 fund balance at the end of June 30, 2022, was  
 14 68.3 million, with 14.9 million designated as  
 15 rainy day reserves. These reserves give the  
 16 county less exposure to the risks associated  
 17 with revenue and expenditure volatility,  
 18 particularly in times of inflation or  
 19 recession.  
 20 We are currently experiencing elevated  
 21 levels of inflation, and those increases are

Page 17

1 included in this budget.  
 2 This strong fund balance is a result of  
 3 the county's conservative budgeting methods,  
 4 and those conservative budgeting methods were  
 5 the guidance for staff and the formulation of  
 6 the budget that you have before you.  
 7 And I'd like to end with what professional  
 8 financial analysts have to say about Talbot  
 9 County's budgeting methods.  
 10 In September of 2022, we were rated by  
 11 Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings as  
 12 a part of our process to go through a bond  
 13 issuance for the public safety building and the  
 14 Health Department building.  
 15 And Moody's said financially, the county  
 16 is very strong and the management team is  
 17 generally conservative in its budgeting. They  
 18 noted our credit strengths were low long-term  
 19 liabilities with a manageable long-term capital  
 20 plan and that we had a very strong reserve  
 21 position. And as a result, Moody's upgraded

Page 18

1 the county's bond rating to AA1, which that's  
 2 not easily done.

3 In Fitch's ratings on September 4, 2022,  
 4 Fitch's assessment of the county's financial  
 5 resilience as being in the highest category is  
 6 based on the combined strength of its fund  
 7 balance position, its ample expenditure  
 8 flexibility, and its strong ability to adjust  
 9 revenues through policy action to  
 10 counterbalance its historically volatile  
 11 revenues. The county typically increases its  
 12 property tax levy by the full amount allowed  
 13 annually under the county, and both property  
 14 and income tax rates remain the lowest in the  
 15 State.

16 MR. STAMP: So Council, that completes our  
 17 presentation on the proposed FY24 budget. And  
 18 we look forward to you moving forward with this  
 19 budget hopefully.

20 Again, thank you from staff, thank you  
 21 very much for your diligence and your help

Page 19

1 getting to where we were today.

2 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's good. So I  
 3 guess at this time, raise your hand if you  
 4 would like to go ahead and introduce the  
 5 legislation.

6 Madam Secretary, could you go ahead and  
 7 announce the bill number and the public hearing  
 8 date and time and location, please.

9 SECRETARY: Yes. This will be known as  
 10 Bill Number 1529, and the public hearings will  
 11 be held on Tuesday, May 2nd, at two p.m. in the  
 12 Bradley Meeting Room and at seven p.m. in the  
 13 Easton Elementary School Cafeteria located at  
 14 307 Glenwood Avenue in Easton.

15 MR. CALLAHAN: Great. Good job.

16 At this time, I would like to commend the  
 17 Finance Department, Martha, you and your team,  
 18 Kaitlyn. In the last, what, four, five months,  
 19 nonstop. Getting us, preparing us. I can't  
 20 thank you guys enough for your professionalism.  
 21 I know you worried night after night, but

Page 20

1 you did a phenomenal job for us. You dug in.  
 2 You taught us. It was a learning curve in your  
 3 part, too, a learning curve for us to all gel  
 4 together. And you've knocked it out of the  
 5 park. That's for sure.

6 And I really appreciate your hard work,  
 7 both of you and your whole team. Your whole  
 8 team is not here, but you have, what, another  
 9 ten people behind you, ten, 12 people behind  
 10 you that makes us all look good. So I want to  
 11 thank you.

12 And Mr. Stamp, your team, too. You were  
 13 with us the whole time and brought us up to  
 14 speed. We got through it. You know, we're at  
 15 the finish line here. So you guys have done a  
 16 great job.

17 Council, any, any other words?

18 MS. MIELKE: You've said it all.

19 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.

20 MS. HAYTHE: I just echo what you said.  
 21 Thank you for making this first budget process.

Page 21

1 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay, then.

2 MS. SPARKS: Thank you.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: You're welcome. Thank you.

4 MR. STAMP: County manager report.

5 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. You got it.

6 MR. STAMP: So Council, under county  
 7 manager report this evening, we have a request  
 8 for approval of fourth quarter budget transfers  
 9 for fiscal year 2022-2023.

10 And again, Martha Sparks is here to  
 11 present that to you for your approval.

12 MS. SPARKS: So in accordance with section  
 13 615 of the Talbot County Charter, transfers  
 14 between agencies of the county government and  
 15 within the same fund of the current expense  
 16 budget may be made only during the last quarter  
 17 of the fiscal year and only on the  
 18 recommendation of the county manager and with  
 19 the approval of Council.

20 So we have been working with the county  
 21 manager through this process, and this

Page 22

1 transfer, fourth quarter transfer specifically  
 2 deals with capital outlay.  
 3 And many of these capital outlay requests  
 4 that we're making came out of the FY24 budget  
 5 discussions. These were items that were  
 6 identified as items that could be purchased  
 7 with FY23 funding within our current  
 8 appropriations.  
 9 So a special note. What I found when we  
 10 reviewed the capital budget, we actually found  
 11 some items in FY23 that were spent -- that were  
 12 not spent. Some were purchased in FY22. So  
 13 that budgeted item was still in FY23. So we  
 14 found approximately \$600,000 that we could put  
 15 towards this task just within the capital  
 16 outlay items. So that's why some of these look  
 17 different.  
 18 In Emergency Services, they had an  
 19 ambulance that was in that capital outlay  
 20 budget that was actually paid for with ARPA  
 21 funds. So that actually helped pay for some of

Page 23

1 their heart monitors and vehicles that they had  
 2 requested in the '24 budget.  
 3 Some of these adjustments are also related  
 4 to requests throughout the year for contingency  
 5 funds. They are also -- this is our way of  
 6 moving those budgets to those line items where  
 7 they need to go.  
 8 In the end, we are using, we are using an  
 9 additional \$600,504 from our capital outlay.  
 10 And there was approximately \$85,000 that came  
 11 from the capital outlay in finance that was not  
 12 being used.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Okay, then.  
 14 MS. HAYTHE: Need a motion?  
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup, we need a motion.  
 16 MS. HAYTHE: Motion to approve the fourth  
 17 quarter expenditures.  
 18 You said fourth quarter, right?  
 19 MS. SPARKS: Fourth quarter transfers.  
 20 MS. MIELKE: Second.  
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and

Page 24

1 second it to go ahead and transfer the fourth  
 2 quarter transfers. Madam Secretary, could you  
 3 call the vote, please.  
 4 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 6 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.  
 7 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 8 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 9 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 10 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.  
 11 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 12 MR. STAMP: That completes your county  
 13 manager report for this evening. Thank you,  
 14 Council.  
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. Thank you.  
 16 Appreciate it.  
 17 MS. SPARKS: Thank you.  
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Good job. Okay.  
 19 Next is public comment. Do we have a  
 20 sign-up sheet out there?  
 21 MS. MORRIS: We did. I don't know if

Page 25

1 anybody signed up.  
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Yes, sir, come on  
 3 up.  
 4 MR. DENNIS: Thank you, Mr. President.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, sir.  
 6 MR. DENNIS: It's good to see you again  
 7 for the second time today.  
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Good seeing you.  
 9 MR. DENNIS: Members of the Council.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.  
 11 MR. DENNIS: Mr. Stamp. My name is Tom  
 12 Dennis.  
 13 I sent a letter to you, along with Scott  
 14 Kane, dealing with solar energy.  
 15 But I'd like to start by commending the  
 16 county manager and our budget person here,  
 17 having cut my teeth in government on capital  
 18 budgeting for a town manager long before most  
 19 people in here were born. So thank you.  
 20 And the Moody and the Fitch ratings says  
 21 everything to me. We're on track. So it's

Page 26

1 very positive.

2 I'd like to share with you just a little

3 bit of background before I get into the

4 substance of the letter so you understand.

5 MR. CALLAHAN: I'll give you three to four

6 minutes now. So we got...

7 MR. DENNIS: I could do this pretty quick,

8 Chuck.

9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Yeah. I'm with you.

10 MR. DENNIS: I'm a former utility

11 executive with Southern California Edison and

12 American Electric Power. Southern California

13 Edison has more solar deployed than all other

14 utilities in the country combined. I spent

15 most of my career focusing on this.

16 The purpose of the letter was to throw out

17 to you the notion of incorporating solar energy

18 into our system. It's here. This is not a

19 political thing. This is about economics. And

20 the cost of solar energy is coming down and

21 coming down quickly.

Page 27

1 The administration in Annapolis is

2 embarking on a very aggressive program to

3 deploy renewables. There's grant money out

4 there, not only at the State level but also at

5 the federal level.

6 It doesn't happen overnight. I think what

7 both Scott and I -- and so you know, I have no

8 financial interest in this at all other than to

9 get the county budget to recognize that there

10 are real substantial savings here.

11 You'd have to do a feasibility study. I

12 got a call into Hugh Grunden over at Easton

13 Utilities because they would have to be

14 involved in this.

15 But there are a wealth of opportunities,

16 not just in our schools, public buildings, the

17 Community Center. So I would urge you to give

18 this very serious consideration.

19 And in the letter, I mentioned that the

20 governor is moving out aggressively and he uses

21 this theme that he doesn't want to let anybody

Page 28

1 left behind here. For us to sit back and watch

2 what other counties do, we'll be left behind.

3 So again, I urge you to consider this.

4 Whether it's a task force, whatever. I'm happy

5 to be as helpful as I can, not only here, but

6 in Annapolis talking with people who are

7 involved in this to get grant money.

8 And the same thing for community solar

9 because there are people in this county and

10 others who really would like to have the

11 benefits of solar but they either don't own

12 their home or they can't afford it. Okay.

13 So that's the pitch, for whatever it's

14 worth. I'm happy to answer any questions. But

15 again, I'd urge you to do this.

16 And since I'm retired, Mr. President, I

17 have a lot of time on my hands and I am bored

18 to tears. So you're likely to see me here on a

19 variety of issues. So thank you for the

20 opportunity.

21 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. And I

Page 29

1 appreciate the opportunity to work with you and

2 you coming to us and give us this opportunity.

3 I really appreciate it. We'll be in touch.

4 MR. DENNIS: That's cool. Thank you.

5 MS. HAYTHE: And I think that e-mail just

6 came today, right? Did you just send it today?

7 MR. DENNIS: I sent it yesterday.

8 MS. HAYTHE: Oh, yesterday. Okay. So I

9 read it today. So I just have to go through

10 and do my due diligence and just read through

11 it, but I think you're absolutely right in

12 regards to solar.

13 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.

14 MS. HAYTHE: So we'll definitely take that

15 into consideration.

16 MR. DENNIS: Thank you so much.

17 MS. HAYTHE: Thank you for coming tonight.

18 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Dennis. I

19 appreciate it.

20 MR. DENNIS: Thank you for your time.

21 MR. CALLAHAN: Anybody else? Jess, you're



Page 30	Page 32
<p>1 good? Okay. All right.</p> <p>2 So we'll end it on Council comment.</p> <p>3 Mr. Stepp, you good?</p> <p>4 MR. STEPP: I'll just echo your thanks</p> <p>5 from earlier, Chuck, and just thank everyone</p> <p>6 for their work. It's nice to see when we're</p> <p>7 able to keep our budget number where it is,</p> <p>8 with inflation being at the percentage that it</p> <p>9 is. We are nowhere near there if you exclude</p> <p>10 out the mandated State requirements.</p> <p>11 So kudos to everyone who has done that.</p> <p>12 Kudos to Council. It's great to see. So thank</p> <p>13 you all.</p> <p>14 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah, yeah, yup.</p> <p>15 MS. MIELKE: Kudos, again, to staff and</p> <p>16 our leadership. And I just want to say that</p> <p>17 you guys hit it out of the park, just like Babe</p> <p>18 Ruth did 100 years ago today on the opening of</p> <p>19 Yankee Stadium.</p> <p>20 MR. CALLAHAN: That's cool.</p> <p>21 MS. HAYTHE: Yeah. I just want to say the</p>	<p>1 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. And I'll just end it,</p> <p>2 too, and with my colleagues. It was, you know,</p> <p>3 your first budget. And I really want to</p> <p>4 commend you guys. You've done a great job.</p> <p>5 You really did, because it's hard. It's a lot.</p> <p>6 It's a lot of mental thought process going</p> <p>7 through this. And you guys really did a great</p> <p>8 job, and I'm proud of you. That's for sure.</p> <p>9 And, you know, once again, I'm going to</p> <p>10 toot your horn. You guys did a great job.</p> <p>11 MS. SPARKS: Thank you.</p> <p>12 MR. CALLAHAN: And I hate to tell you to</p> <p>13 go quickly. But, but you did a good job. You</p> <p>14 did a really good job.</p> <p>15 And Mr. Stamp, like you said, your staff</p> <p>16 is phenomenal.</p> <p>17 MR. STAMP: So if I might, very quickly.</p> <p>18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah, sure.</p> <p>19 MR. STAMP: So Ms. Haythe talked about the</p> <p>20 importance of communications and open</p> <p>21 communication.</p>
Page 31	Page 33
<p>1 same thing. Just kudos to the staff and</p> <p>2 everyone that got us through this budget</p> <p>3 session, especially for the new Council</p> <p>4 members. I truly appreciated it and really did</p> <p>5 a deep dive into the budget.</p> <p>6 So thank you for your time and all your</p> <p>7 hard work and your hard nights. I know that</p> <p>8 you were up working on this stuff.</p> <p>9 But it was good that I had an opportunity</p> <p>10 to see the ribbon cutting today for the new</p> <p>11 trail for the Town of Easton. I was able to</p> <p>12 attend that. And it just reminds me of the</p> <p>13 open communication and partnership that can</p> <p>14 improve upon and become even better with this</p> <p>15 Council and our municipalities. So it was</p> <p>16 really great to be there with Mayor Willey and</p> <p>17 Al Silverstein and Ron Engle and Megan Cook as</p> <p>18 well and just to see the good work that they're</p> <p>19 doing in the Town of Easton regarding our</p> <p>20 trails.</p> <p>21 That's all I have.</p>	<p>1 So we'll have Sarah Kilmon come back at</p> <p>2 our next Council meeting for an official</p> <p>3 welcome, but we do have Sarah Kilmon here.</p> <p>4 She's our new communications manager and public</p> <p>5 information officer. And her sole purpose is</p> <p>6 to increase and improve communication with the</p> <p>7 public but also with other jurisdictions. So I</p> <p>8 look forward to that opportunity.</p> <p>9 Thank Council for opening the door to</p> <p>10 that. She'll be back at the next meeting for</p> <p>11 an official introduction.</p> <p>12 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good.</p> <p>13 MS. HAYTHE: I was jumping for joy at the</p> <p>14 ribbon cutting when she was there. It felt so</p> <p>15 good to have somebody there taking pictures.</p> <p>16 MR. CALLAHAN: You were a big part of</p> <p>17 that.</p> <p>18 MS. HAYTHE: Holding my purse for me.</p> <p>19 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good. Okay.</p> <p>20 Mr. Stepp, you want to go ahead and close us</p> <p>21 out.</p>


Page 34

1 MR. STEPP: Certainly. The County  
 2 Council's next meeting will be held on Tuesday,  
 3 April 25th, beginning at six p.m. The Council  
 4 will be convening in open session at 4:30 p.m.  
 5 and then adjourning into closed session to  
 6 discuss real estate, legal, and professional  
 7 matters, as listed on the statement for closing  
 8 that meeting.  
 9 Therefore, is there a motion to adjourn  
 10 this meeting and reconvene as noted?  
 11 MS. MIELKE: So moved.  
 12 MS. HAYTHE: Second.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and  
 14 second to adjourn. Madam Secretary.  
 15 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 17 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.  
 18 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 19 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 20 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 21 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

Page 35

1 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good. Good job.  
 3 Thanks a lot. Appreciate everything.  
 4 MS. SPARKS: Thank you.  
 5 (Meeting concluded at: 6:32 p.m.)  
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Page 36

1 STATE OF MARYLAND  
 2 I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and  
 3 for the State of Maryland, County of Baltimore City,  
 4 do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot  
 5 County Council Audio, personally appeared before me  
 6 at the time and place herein set according to law,  
 7 was interrogated by counsel.  
 8  
 9 I further certify that the examination was  
 10 recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed  
 11 from my stenographic notes to the within printed  
 12 matter by means of computer-assisted transcription  
 13 in a true and accurate manner.  
 14  
 15 I further certify that the stipulations  
 16 contained herein were entered into by counsel in my  
 17 presence.  
 18  
 19 I further certify that I am not of counsel  
 20 to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel,  
 21 nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way  
 interested in the outcome of this action.  
 AS WITNESS my hand Notarial Seal this 20th  
 day of April, 2023, in Eastern MD  
  
 Diane Houlihan  
 Notary Public  
 My commission expires September 16, 2025

<b>1</b>	<b>23.8</b> 15:6	<b>68.3</b> 16:14	<b>added</b> 10:2
<b>1.1</b> 9:18 15:9	<b>24</b> 23:2	<b>6:00</b> 1:7	16:2
<b>1.9</b> 16:8	<b>25th</b> 34:3	<b>6:32</b> 35:5	<b>addition</b> 14:11
<b>100</b> 30:18	<b>286,000</b> 9:12	<b>7</b>	<b>additional</b> 7:17
<b>11th</b> 2:13	14:13	<b>734</b> 11:3	9:5,15 10:1
<b>12</b> 20:9	<b>2nd</b> 19:11	<b>7434</b> 11:2	11:9 14:13
<b>12.8</b> 15:8	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	16:2 23:9
<b>128,849,000</b>	<b>3.37</b> 16:9	<b>85,000</b> 23:10	<b>additions</b> 2:14
4:9 8:14	<b>3.48</b> 11:17	<b>9</b>	<b>address</b> 5:20
<b>13.19</b> 10:5	<b>3.5</b> 15:12	<b>9.14</b> 10:6	7:12
<b>1362</b> 36:15	<b>30</b> 16:13	<b>9.3</b> 10:18	<b>addressed</b> 5:10
<b>14.42</b> 10:10	<b>300,000</b> 12:2	<b>90</b> 7:7	6:19
<b>14.9</b> 16:14	<b>307</b> 19:14	<b>900,000</b> 9:16	<b>addresses</b> 5:17
<b>144</b> 12:4	<b>31</b> 13:15	14:20	6:12
<b>1529</b> 19:10	<b>4</b>	<b>911</b> 7:4	<b>adjourn</b> 34:9
<b>16</b> 36:20	<b>4</b> 18:3	<b>a</b>	34:14
<b>18</b> 1:7	<b>4.1</b> 9:15	<b>aa1</b> 18:1	<b>adjourning</b>
<b>184</b> 12:3	<b>4.8</b> 9:9 11:13	<b>ability</b> 18:8	34:5
<b>18th</b> 2:21	14:10	<b>able</b> 4:2 7:10	<b>adjust</b> 18:8
<b>2</b>	<b>42.1</b> 14:6	30:7 31:11	<b>adjusted</b> 9:13
<b>2,046</b> 12:3	<b>43.7</b> 14:4	<b>absolutely</b>	<b>adjustment</b>
<b>2,230</b> 12:3	<b>44.1</b> 10:14	29:11	9:21 16:1
<b>2.34</b> 11:17	<b>4:30</b> 34:4	<b>accepted</b> 2:18	<b>adjustments</b>
<b>2.4</b> 12:18	<b>5</b>	3:4	23:3
<b>2020</b> 9:8 11:12	<b>5.52</b> 11:19	<b>accordance</b> 9:5	<b>administration</b>
<b>2022</b> 16:13	<b>50.9</b> 9:14	12:15 21:12	27:1
17:10 18:3	<b>6</b>	<b>accounts</b> 15:6	<b>afford</b> 28:12
<b>2022-2023</b> 21:9	<b>6.14</b> 11:16	<b>accurate</b> 36:7	<b>agencies</b> 21:14
<b>2023</b> 1:7 12:20	<b>6.68</b> 9:20	<b>achieve</b> 7:8	<b>agenda</b> 2:12,12
36:13	<b>6.8</b> 15:18	<b>achieved</b> 4:21	2:15,18
<b>2023-2024</b> 3:11	<b>600,000</b> 22:14	<b>act</b> 3:10	<b>aggressive</b> 27:2
<b>2024</b> 8:14 9:2	<b>600,504</b> 23:9	<b>action</b> 18:9	<b>aggressively</b>
12:17	<b>615</b> 21:13	36:12	27:20
<b>2025</b> 36:20	<b>68</b> 12:10	<b>actions</b> 15:20	<b>ago</b> 30:18
<b>20th</b> 36:13	<b>68.2</b> 10:13	<b>actually</b> 22:10	<b>ahead</b> 3:8 19:4
<b>23</b> 12:10 13:19		22:20,21	19:6 24:1
			33:20

<p><b>aided</b> 7:3  <b>al</b> 31:17  <b>allegiance</b> 2:7,9  <b>allocated</b> 9:16  <b>allowed</b> 18:12  <b>ambulance</b>                  22:19  <b>amendments</b>                  3:2  <b>american</b>                  26:12  <b>amount</b> 18:12  <b>amounts</b> 11:16  <b>ample</b> 18:7  <b>analysts</b> 17:8  <b>annapolis</b> 27:1                  28:6  <b>announce</b> 19:7  <b>annual</b> 3:11  <b>annually</b> 18:13  <b>answer</b> 28:14  <b>anybody</b> 25:1                  27:21 29:21  <b>appeared</b> 36:3  <b>appreciate</b>                  2:10 20:6                  24:16 29:1,3                  29:19 35:3  <b>appreciated</b>                  31:4  <b>appropriation</b>                  3:11  <b>appropriations</b>                  15:15 22:8  <b>approval</b> 21:8                  21:11,19  <b>approve</b> 23:16</p>	<p><b>approving</b> 7:9  <b>approximately</b>                  10:18 22:14                  23:10  <b>april</b> 1:7 2:13                  2:21 34:3                  36:13  <b>apt</b> 7:9  <b>arpa</b> 22:20  <b>assessment</b>                  12:2 18:4  <b>assessments</b>                  11:8  <b>assisted</b> 36:7  <b>associated</b> 6:13                  16:16  <b>attend</b> 31:12  <b>attributable</b>                  11:20 12:4  <b>audio</b> 36:3  <b>authorized</b> 9:7                  11:11  <b>avenue</b> 19:14  <b>aye</b> 24:5,7,9,11                  34:16,18,20                  35:1</p>	<p><b>balanced</b> 8:13                  14:17  <b>baltimore</b>                  12:11 36:2  <b>based</b> 18:6  <b>beginning</b> 34:3  <b>benefit</b> 11:12  <b>benefits</b> 28:11  <b>best</b> 12:21  <b>better</b> 7:9                  31:14  <b>big</b> 33:16  <b>bill</b> 3:8 12:1,6                  19:7,10  <b>bit</b> 4:13 26:3  <b>blueprint</b>                  12:16 14:10  <b>board</b> 7:15  <b>boards</b> 6:15  <b>bond</b> 17:12                  18:1  <b>bored</b> 28:17  <b>born</b> 25:19  <b>bradley</b> 19:12  <b>bring</b> 10:9  <b>brought</b> 20:13  <b>budget</b> 3:11,20                  4:9,13 5:1,10                  5:11,16,21                  6:10,12,17,19                  8:14,16,20 9:3                  9:11 10:4                  11:14 13:14,21                  14:4,17,19                  15:3,7,10,15                  15:17,21 17:1                  17:6 18:17,19                  20:21 21:8,16</p>	<p>22:4,10,20                  23:2 25:16                  27:9 30:7 31:2                  31:5 32:3  <b>budgetary</b> 4:1  <b>budgeted</b> 22:13  <b>budgeting</b> 4:18                  8:17 14:2 17:3                  17:4,9,17                  25:18  <b>budgets</b> 23:6  <b>building</b> 16:7                  17:13,14  <b>buildings</b> 27:16</p>
	<b>b</b>		<b>c</b>
	<p><b>babe</b> 30:17  <b>back</b> 28:1 33:1                  33:10  <b>backbone</b> 5:4  <b>background</b>                  26:3  <b>balance</b> 6:1,10                  14:18 16:11,11                  16:12,13 17:2                  18:7</p>		<p><b>cafeteria</b> 19:13  <b>california</b>                  26:11,12  <b>call</b> 24:3 27:12  <b>callahan</b> 1:15                  2:3,10,17 3:13                  8:9 19:2,15                  20:19 21:1,3,5                  23:13,15,21                  24:4,5,15,18                  25:2,5,8,10                  26:5,9 28:21                  29:13,18,21                  30:14,20 32:1                  32:12,18 33:12                  33:16,19 34:13                  34:15,16 35:2  <b>capital</b> 7:18                  9:17,18,20                  14:20 15:9,10                  15:18 17:19                  22:2,3,10,15</p>

<p>22:19 23:9,11 25:17 <b>career</b> 26:15 <b>category</b> 18:5 <b>cent</b> 9:6,9 11:10 <b>center</b> 7:4 27:17 <b>cents</b> 11:3,16 11:18 12:10 <b>certainly</b> 34:1 <b>certified</b> 11:7 <b>certify</b> 36:3,5,8 36:10 <b>chair</b> 2:18 3:3 <b>chambers</b> 1:10 <b>chance</b> 2:21 <b>chapel</b> 7:19 15:1 <b>chart</b> 12:11 <b>charter</b> 9:5 10:6 21:13 <b>chesapeake</b> 14:7 <b>chuck</b> 1:15 26:8 30:5 <b>city</b> 12:11 36:2 <b>claim</b> 13:13 <b>clearly</b> 6:7 <b>close</b> 33:20 <b>closed</b> 34:5 <b>closing</b> 34:7 <b>colleagues</b> 32:2 <b>college</b> 14:7 <b>combination</b> 15:13 <b>combined</b> 18:6 26:14</p>	<p><b>come</b> 3:16,16 25:2 33:1 <b>coming</b> 10:14 26:20,21 29:2 29:17 <b>commend</b> 19:16 32:4 <b>commending</b> 25:15 <b>comment</b> 24:19 30:2 <b>commission</b> 36:20 <b>communicati...</b> 31:13 32:21 33:6 <b>communicati...</b> 32:20 33:4 <b>community</b> 27:17 28:8 <b>compared</b> 13:6 <b>comparison</b> 12:18 <b>competitive</b> 5:5 5:7 <b>completes</b> 18:16 24:12 <b>computer</b> 7:3 36:7 <b>concluded</b> 35:5 <b>connecting</b> 8:4 <b>consent</b> 2:19 3:4 <b>conservative</b> 4:18 8:17 10:20 14:2 17:3,4,17</p>	<p><b>consider</b> 28:3 <b>consideration</b> 27:18 29:15 <b>contained</b> 36:9 <b>context</b> 12:8 <b>contingency</b> 23:4 <b>continues</b> 8:16 <b>contributing</b> 10:18 <b>convening</b> 34:4 <b>cook</b> 31:17 <b>cool</b> 29:4 30:20 <b>core</b> 5:11 <b>corrections</b> 2:14 3:2 <b>cost</b> 6:4 9:21 15:3,21 26:20 <b>costs</b> 6:13 7:13 <b>council</b> 1:1,4 1:10,14 2:21 3:18 8:13 18:16 20:17 21:6,19 24:14 25:9 30:2,12 31:3,15 33:2,9 34:3 36:3 <b>council's</b> 34:2 <b>counsel</b> 36:4,9 36:10,11 <b>counterbalance</b> 18:10 <b>counties</b> 12:11 12:13,19 13:4 13:4 28:2 <b>country</b> 26:14 <b>county</b> 1:1,1 4:4 6:21 8:20</p>	<p>9:7,10,12 10:1 10:11,17,19 11:3,11,14,18 12:1,9,19 13:9 13:13,17 14:4 14:5,12,16 16:16 17:15 18:11,13 21:4 21:6,13,14,18 21:20 24:12 25:16 27:9 28:9 34:1 36:2 36:3 <b>county's</b> 5:14 8:16 9:13 10:14 13:1,10 17:3,9 18:1,4 <b>couple</b> 6:18 <b>course</b> 6:10 <b>credit</b> 4:5 17:18 <b>culvert</b> 8:1 <b>current</b> 21:15 22:7 <b>currently</b> 6:3 16:20 <b>curve</b> 20:2,3 <b>cut</b> 25:17 <b>cuts</b> 15:13 <b>cutting</b> 31:10 33:14</p>
			<b>d</b>
			<p><b>date</b> 19:8 <b>dave</b> 1:18 <b>day</b> 2:5 6:5 16:12,15 36:13</p>

<b>dealing</b> 25:14 <b>deals</b> 22:2 <b>debt</b> 16:6 <b>declare</b> 13:8 <b>deep</b> 31:5 <b>definitely</b> 29:14 <b>deletions</b> 2:14 3:1 <b>deliver</b> 4:3 7:6 <b>delivery</b> 5:4 <b>dennis</b> 25:4,6,9 25:11,12 26:7 26:10 29:4,7 29:16,18,20 <b>department</b> 11:7 16:7 17:14 19:17 <b>departments</b> 7:12 15:11 <b>dependence</b> 8:3 <b>deploy</b> 27:3 <b>deployed</b> 26:13 <b>describes</b> 12:21 <b>designated</b> 16:14 <b>determination</b> 15:14 <b>developing</b> 5:1 <b>diane</b> 1:21 36:2 36:16 <b>difference</b> 7:5 14:8,19 <b>different</b> 22:17 <b>difficult</b> 13:11 <b>digging</b> 4:5	<b>diligence</b> 18:21 29:10 <b>director</b> 4:12 <b>disbursements</b> 2:20 3:4 <b>discretionary</b> 16:12 <b>discuss</b> 34:6 <b>discussions</b> 22:5 <b>dispatch</b> 7:3 <b>disruptions</b> 6:4 <b>district</b> 7:19 <b>dive</b> 31:5 <b>doing</b> 31:19 <b>door</b> 33:9 <b>due</b> 13:5,11 29:10 <b>dug</b> 20:1	<b>education</b> 4:16 5:13,18 6:14 7:16 9:9 11:21 12:5,15 14:3 <b>educational</b> 11:13 14:16 <b>effort</b> 8:2 <b>efforts</b> 7:14 <b>eight</b> 7:7 <b>either</b> 28:11 <b>electric</b> 26:12 <b>elementary</b> 7:19 15:1 19:13 <b>elevated</b> 16:20 <b>embarking</b> 27:2 <b>emergency</b> 22:18 <b>emphasis</b> 16:3 <b>employee</b> 36:11 <b>employees</b> 5:3 10:1 16:1 <b>ems</b> 7:1 <b>energy</b> 25:14 26:17,20 <b>engle</b> 31:17 <b>enhancements</b> 8:1 <b>entered</b> 36:9 <b>environment</b> 5:6,13,18 13:5 <b>equipment</b> 9:19 <b>especially</b> 31:3 <b>establish</b> 3:10	<b>estate</b> 34:6 <b>estimating</b> 4:18 <b>evening</b> 2:5 8:10 21:7 24:13 <b>events</b> 6:6 <b>everybody</b> 2:4 <b>examination</b> 36:5 <b>exclude</b> 30:9 <b>executive</b> 26:11 <b>expenditure</b> 16:17 18:7 <b>expenditures</b> 4:19 9:9 14:3,6 14:7 23:17 <b>expense</b> 21:15 <b>expenses</b> 8:19 16:6,10 <b>experienced</b> 13:17 <b>experiencing</b> 12:14 16:20 <b>expires</b> 36:20 <b>exposure</b> 16:16 <b>extension</b> 8:2 <b>eye</b> 4:2
	<b>e</b>		
	<b>e</b> 29:5 <b>earlier</b> 11:4 30:5 <b>earners</b> 13:8,12 <b>easily</b> 18:2 <b>easton</b> 1:10 19:13,14 27:12 31:11,19 36:13 <b>echo</b> 20:20 30:4 <b>economic</b> 5:19 6:1,8 <b>economics</b> 26:19 <b>edison</b> 26:11 26:13		
			<b>f</b>
			<b>f</b> 1:15 <b>failing</b> 8:4 <b>feasibility</b> 27:11 <b>federal</b> 27:5 <b>felt</b> 33:14 <b>finally</b> 6:12 <b>finance</b> 4:11 19:17 23:11

<p><b>financial</b> 8:21 17:8 18:4 27:8 <b>financially</b> 17:15 <b>finish</b> 20:15 <b>fire</b> 7:12 <b>first</b> 2:12 3:6 4:15 20:21 32:3 <b>fiscal</b> 8:14 9:2 21:9,17 <b>fitch</b> 12:21 17:11 25:20 <b>fitch's</b> 18:3,4 <b>five</b> 19:18 <b>flag</b> 2:7 <b>flexibility</b> 18:8 <b>fluctuations</b> 6:4 <b>focus</b> 4:16 <b>focused</b> 10:2 <b>focusing</b> 26:15 <b>follow</b> 14:1 <b>force</b> 28:4 <b>former</b> 26:10 <b>formulation</b> 17:5 <b>forward</b> 18:18 18:18 33:8 <b>found</b> 22:9,10 22:14 <b>four</b> 9:21 15:21 19:18 26:5 <b>fourth</b> 15:16 21:8 22:1 23:16,18,19 24:1</p>	<p><b>full</b> 18:12 <b>fund</b> 4:9 6:1,5 6:10 8:13 14:18 16:11,11 16:12,13 17:2 18:6 21:15 <b>funding</b> 6:13 6:21 7:2,11,17 7:21 9:12 12:14 14:9,12 14:15 22:7 <b>funds</b> 16:12 22:21 23:5 <b>further</b> 36:5,8 36:10 <b>fy</b> 13:19 <b>fy2024</b> 4:8 <b>fy21</b> 13:16 <b>fy22</b> 13:17 22:12 <b>fy23</b> 9:4,15 11:5,16 12:9 15:15 22:7,11 22:13 <b>fy24</b> 10:4 12:12 13:14,20 18:17 22:4</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>g</b></p> <p><b>gel</b> 20:3 <b>general</b> 4:8 8:13 15:7 <b>generally</b> 17:17 <b>getting</b> 19:1,19 <b>give</b> 4:4 16:15 26:5 27:17 29:2</p>	<p><b>glenwood</b> 19:14 <b>go</b> 3:7 4:10 17:12 19:4,6 23:7 24:1 29:9 32:13 33:20 <b>goal</b> 7:8 <b>going</b> 8:5 12:12 32:6,9 <b>good</b> 3:13,14 8:8,9,10 19:2 19:15 20:10 24:18 25:6,8 30:1,3 31:9,18 32:13,14 33:12 33:15,19 35:2 35:2 <b>government</b> 15:7 21:14 25:17 <b>governmental</b> 16:3 <b>governor</b> 27:20 <b>grant</b> 27:3 28:7 <b>great</b> 19:15 20:16 30:12 31:16 32:4,7 32:10 <b>group</b> 10:17 <b>grunden</b> 27:12 <b>guess</b> 19:3 <b>guidance</b> 17:5 <b>guys</b> 19:20 20:15 30:17 32:4,7,10</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>h</b></p> <p><b>hand</b> 19:3 36:13 <b>hands</b> 28:17 <b>happen</b> 27:6 <b>happy</b> 28:4,14 <b>hard</b> 3:19 20:6 31:7,7 32:5 <b>hate</b> 32:12 <b>haythe</b> 1:16 8:11 20:20 23:14,16 24:10 24:11 29:5,8 29:14,17 30:21 32:19 33:13,18 34:12,21 35:1 <b>health</b> 5:13,17 16:7 17:14 <b>healthy</b> 6:1,9 8:21 <b>hearing</b> 3:3 19:7 <b>hearings</b> 19:10 <b>heart</b> 23:1 <b>held</b> 19:11 34:2 <b>help</b> 18:21 <b>helped</b> 22:21 <b>helpful</b> 28:5 <b>high</b> 13:7,12 <b>higher</b> 13:2 <b>highest</b> 13:17 18:5 <b>highlight</b> 6:18 <b>highly</b> 5:5 <b>historically</b> 10:19 18:10</p>
--	---	---	---

<b>hit</b> 30:17	<b>incorporating</b> 26:17	<b>investors</b> 17:11	<b>kudos</b> 30:11,12 30:15 31:1
<b>holding</b> 33:18	<b>increase</b> 6:15 7:15 9:6,14	<b>invests</b> 5:11	<b>I</b>
<b>home</b> 12:1 13:13 28:12	10:5,7,10	<b>involved</b> 27:14 28:7	<b>I</b> 1:17
<b>homeowner's</b> 12:6	11:10,16,17,18	<b>issuance</b> 17:13	<b>largest</b> 10:17
<b>homes</b> 13:8	11:20 12:2,4	<b>issue</b> 5:20	<b>law</b> 36:4
<b>hope</b> 4:7	13:15 14:11,15	<b>issues</b> 28:19	<b>leadership</b> 30:16
<b>hopefully</b> 18:19	16:2,5,9 33:6	<b>item</b> 22:13	<b>learning</b> 4:6 20:2,3
<b>horn</b> 32:10	<b>increased</b> 12:14 14:1	<b>items</b> 9:2 22:5 22:6,11,16 23:6	<b>left</b> 28:1,2
<b>houlihan</b> 1:21 36:2,16	<b>increases</b> 7:11 10:7 16:21 18:11	<b>j</b>	<b>legal</b> 34:6
<b>hugh</b> 27:12	<b>inflation</b> 16:18 16:21 30:8	<b>jess</b> 29:21	<b>legislation</b> 2:5 3:7 19:5
<b>i</b>	<b>inflationary</b> 6:2	<b>job</b> 19:15 20:1 20:16 24:18 32:4,8,10,13 32:14 35:2	<b>letter</b> 25:13 26:4,16 27:19
<b>identified</b> 22:6	<b>information</b> 33:5	<b>joy</b> 33:13	<b>level</b> 27:4,5
<b>importance</b> 32:20	<b>infrastructure</b> 5:12,18 7:21	<b>jumping</b> 33:13	<b>levels</b> 11:6 13:18,20 16:21
<b>important</b> 4:20 6:9	<b>initiatives</b> 9:11	<b>june</b> 16:13	<b>levy</b> 18:12
<b>improve</b> 7:1 31:14 33:6	<b>interest</b> 27:8	<b>jurisdictions</b> 33:7	<b>liabilities</b> 17:19
<b>improvement</b> 9:17 15:19	<b>interested</b> 36:12	<b>k</b>	<b>light</b> 6:2
<b>incentive</b> 13:7	<b>interesting</b> 6:8 12:12	<b>kaitlyn</b> 3:16 19:18	<b>likely</b> 28:18
<b>include</b> 6:5 9:3 15:21	<b>intergovernm...</b> 10:8	<b>kane</b> 25:14	<b>line</b> 6:4 20:15 23:6
<b>included</b> 14:13 14:20 15:2,10 15:17 16:5 17:1	<b>interrogated</b> 36:4	<b>keasha</b> 1:16	<b>listed</b> 34:7
<b>includes</b> 7:16 11:4,9	<b>introduce</b> 3:6 4:8 19:4	<b>keep</b> 30:7	<b>little</b> 4:13 26:2
<b>income</b> 10:7,12 12:17,20 13:1 13:2,8,9,10 18:14	<b>introduction</b> 33:11	<b>key</b> 7:5	<b>living</b> 9:21 15:21
	<b>investment</b> 5:3	<b>kilmon</b> 33:1,3	<b>local</b> 9:13 10:8
		<b>knocked</b> 20:4	<b>located</b> 19:13
		<b>know</b> 19:21 20:14 24:21 27:7 31:7 32:2 32:9	<b>location</b> 19:8
		<b>known</b> 19:9	<b>long</b> 17:18,19 25:18
			<b>look</b> 3:1 5:15 12:7 18:18 20:10 22:16



<p>33:8  <b>lot</b> 4:5,6,20                  28:17 32:5,6                  35:3  <b>low</b> 13:5 17:18  <b>lowest</b> 12:10,20                  18:14  <b>lynn</b> 1:17</p>	<p><b>manner</b> 36:7  <b>martha</b> 4:11                  8:6 19:17                  21:10  <b>maryland</b> 1:1                  1:10 12:9,15                  13:3,4 14:9                  36:1,2</p>	<p><b>minute</b> 5:14  <b>minutes</b> 7:7                  26:6  <b>moderate</b>                  13:14  <b>moment</b> 4:14  <b>money</b> 27:3                  28:7  <b>monitors</b> 23:1  <b>months</b> 19:18  <b>moody</b> 25:20  <b>moody's</b> 17:11                  17:15,21  <b>morris</b> 24:21  <b>motion</b> 23:14                  23:15,16,21                  34:9,13  <b>moved</b> 13:20                  34:11  <b>moves</b> 2:18 3:3  <b>moving</b> 14:15                  18:18 23:6                  27:20  <b>municipalities</b>                  31:15</p>	<p><b>night</b> 19:21,21  <b>nights</b> 31:7  <b>nine</b> 11:17  <b>nonstop</b> 19:19  <b>normal</b> 13:20  <b>north</b> 6:21  <b>notary</b> 36:2,17  <b>note</b> 22:9  <b>noted</b> 17:18                  34:10  <b>notes</b> 36:6  <b>notion</b> 26:17  <b>notorial</b> 36:13  <b>november</b> 9:8                  11:12  <b>nowheres</b> 30:9  <b>number</b> 3:21                  5:8 13:7 19:7                  19:10 30:7</p>
<b>m</b>	<p><b>matter</b> 36:7  <b>matters</b> 34:7  <b>mayor</b> 31:16  <b>md</b> 36:13  <b>means</b> 36:7  <b>meet</b> 4:2  <b>meeting</b> 1:4                  19:12 33:2,10                  34:2,8,10 35:5  <b>megan</b> 31:17  <b>members</b> 1:14                  25:9 31:4  <b>mental</b> 32:6  <b>mentioned</b>                  11:4 27:19  <b>methodology</b>                  14:2  <b>methods</b> 17:3,4                  17:9  <b>mielke</b> 1:17                  20:18 23:20                  24:8,9 30:15                  34:11,19,20  <b>million</b> 9:14,15                  9:18,20 13:15                  14:10 15:9,12                  15:18 16:8,14                  16:14  <b>minimum</b> 6:15</p>	<b>n</b>	<b>o</b>
<p><b>madam</b> 3:7                  19:6 24:2                  34:14  <b>made</b> 5:9 10:19                  15:15 21:16  <b>mail</b> 29:5  <b>maintain</b> 4:15                  5:2,21 6:9  <b>majority</b> 10:11  <b>make</b> 5:16 7:5                  10:13  <b>makes</b> 20:10  <b>making</b> 20:21                  22:4  <b>manageable</b>                  17:19  <b>management</b>                  17:16  <b>manager</b> 21:4                  21:7,18,21                  24:13 25:16,18                  33:4  <b>mandated</b> 6:13                  7:16 9:13                  14:12 30:10  <b>mandatory</b>                  14:9</p>	<p><b>n</b> 1:16  <b>name</b> 25:11  <b>named</b> 36:3  <b>near</b> 30:9  <b>need</b> 23:7,14                  23:15  <b>new</b> 6:21 16:6                  16:7 31:3,10                  33:4  <b>nice</b> 30:6</p>	<p><b>officer</b> 33:5  <b>officers</b> 15:4  <b>official</b> 33:2,11  <b>oh</b> 29:8  <b>okay</b> 2:3,10,17                  2:19 3:2,5,13                  19:2 21:1                  23:13,13,21                  24:18 25:2                  26:9 28:12                  29:8 30:1                  33:19 34:13  <b>once</b> 32:9  <b>open</b> 4:12                  31:13 32:20                  34:4</p>	

<p><b>opening</b> 4:2 30:18 33:9</p> <p><b>operating</b> 16:5 16:9</p> <p><b>operational</b> 7:13</p> <p><b>opportunities</b> 27:15</p> <p><b>opportunity</b> 28:20 29:1,2 31:9 33:8</p> <p><b>ordinance</b> 3:12</p> <p><b>organizations</b> 4:3</p> <p><b>original</b> 15:10</p> <p><b>outcome</b> 36:12</p> <p><b>outlay</b> 9:18 15:9,11 22:2,3 22:16,19 23:9 23:11</p> <p><b>overall</b> 10:9 11:15 14:3</p> <p><b>overestimate</b> 8:18</p> <p><b>overnight</b> 27:6</p> <p><b>own</b> 28:11</p> <p><b>owned</b> 11:3</p>	<p>33:16</p> <p><b>partially</b> 13:5</p> <p><b>participation</b> 3:21</p> <p><b>particularly</b> 16:18</p> <p><b>parties</b> 36:11 36:11</p> <p><b>partnership</b> 31:13</p> <p><b>pay</b> 22:21</p> <p><b>people</b> 20:9,9 25:19 28:6,9</p> <p><b>percent</b> 7:7 9:3 9:21 10:10,13 10:14,18 11:5 11:17,17,20 12:18 14:4,6 15:6,8,21 16:9</p> <p><b>percentage</b> 13:2,12 30:8</p> <p><b>person</b> 25:16</p> <p><b>personally</b> 36:3</p> <p><b>personnel</b> 7:1 7:14 15:20</p> <p><b>phenomenal</b> 20:1 32:16</p> <p><b>pictures</b> 33:15</p> <p><b>piece</b> 5:2</p> <p><b>pillars</b> 5:15,16</p> <p><b>pitch</b> 28:13</p> <p><b>place</b> 36:4</p> <p><b>placed</b> 8:21</p> <p><b>plan</b> 17:20</p> <p><b>please</b> 2:8 3:9 19:8 24:3</p> <p><b>pledge</b> 2:7,9</p>	<p><b>plug</b> 14:18</p> <p><b>point</b> 4:15 8:6</p> <p><b>policy</b> 18:9</p> <p><b>political</b> 26:19</p> <p><b>position</b> 9:1 17:21 18:7</p> <p><b>positions</b> 10:2 16:2</p> <p><b>positive</b> 26:1</p> <p><b>power</b> 26:12</p> <p><b>powerpoint</b> 4:10</p> <p><b>practice</b> 4:17</p> <p><b>practices</b> 8:17 8:20</p> <p><b>prayer</b> 2:6,9</p> <p><b>predict</b> 13:11</p> <p><b>preparing</b> 19:19</p> <p><b>presence</b> 36:9</p> <p><b>present</b> 21:11</p> <p><b>presentation</b> 4:11 8:5 18:17</p> <p><b>presenting</b> 4:7 8:13</p> <p><b>president</b> 25:4 28:16</p> <p><b>pressures</b> 6:3</p> <p><b>pretty</b> 26:7</p> <p><b>printed</b> 36:6</p> <p><b>prior</b> 11:6</p> <p><b>proceedings</b> 2:1</p> <p><b>process</b> 4:1 15:16 17:12 20:21 21:21 32:6</p>	<p><b>producing</b> 10:21</p> <p><b>professional</b> 17:7 34:6</p> <p><b>professionali...</b> 19:20</p> <p><b>program</b> 27:2</p> <p><b>project</b> 7:19</p> <p><b>projected</b> 10:4</p> <p><b>projections</b> 10:20 13:15,21</p> <p><b>projects</b> 5:12 7:5 9:18,20 14:21 15:19</p> <p><b>properties</b> 11:3</p> <p><b>property</b> 9:4,6 10:5,12,15 11:2,4,10,15 11:19 12:2,9 18:12,13</p> <p><b>proposed</b> 4:8 5:1,10 6:17 11:2 18:17</p> <p><b>proud</b> 32:8</p> <p><b>provide</b> 12:8</p> <p><b>provided</b> 12:5</p> <p><b>provides</b> 6:21 7:11,15,21 13:7</p> <p><b>providing</b> 14:17</p> <p><b>public</b> 4:16 5:12,17 9:8,10 10:2 11:12 15:6 16:4,6 17:13 19:7,10 24:19 27:16 33:4,7 36:2,17</p>
<b>p</b>			
<p><b>p.m.</b> 1:7 19:11 19:12 34:3,4 35:5</p> <p><b>paid</b> 22:20</p> <p><b>paramedic</b> 7:6</p> <p><b>park</b> 20:5 30:17</p> <p><b>part</b> 11:18 15:2 17:12 20:3</p>			

<p><b>purchased</b> 22:6 22:12</p> <p><b>purchases</b> 9:19 15:14</p> <p><b>purpose</b> 26:16 33:5</p> <p><b>purse</b> 33:18</p> <p><b>put</b> 22:14</p>	<p>31:4,16 32:3,5 32:7,14</p> <p><b>receives</b> 10:11</p> <p><b>recession</b> 16:19</p> <p><b>recognize</b> 5:8 27:9</p> <p><b>recognizing</b> 3:19</p> <p><b>recommenda...</b> 21:18</p> <p><b>reconvene</b> 34:10</p> <p><b>record</b> 3:8</p> <p><b>recording</b> 10:16 13:16,18</p> <p><b>recorded</b> 36:6</p> <p><b>recruitment</b> 7:14</p> <p><b>reduced</b> 15:12</p> <p><b>refer</b> 5:14</p> <p><b>regarding</b> 31:19</p> <p><b>regards</b> 29:12</p> <p><b>related</b> 23:3 36:11</p> <p><b>relying</b> 14:18</p> <p><b>remain</b> 12:17 18:14</p> <p><b>remaining</b> 11:19</p> <p><b>reminds</b> 31:12</p> <p><b>remove</b> 8:3</p> <p><b>renewables</b> 27:3</p> <p><b>renovations</b> 9:17 14:21</p> <p><b>replacement</b> 7:3</p>	<p><b>replacements</b> 8:1</p> <p><b>report</b> 21:4,7 24:13</p> <p><b>reported</b> 1:20</p> <p><b>represent</b> 14:4 14:5</p> <p><b>represents</b> 13:14</p> <p><b>request</b> 7:9 21:7</p> <p><b>requested</b> 23:2</p> <p><b>requests</b> 7:18 14:21 15:9,11 15:13 22:3 23:4</p> <p><b>required</b> 6:5,14</p> <p><b>requirements</b> 6:14 10:6 30:10</p> <p><b>reserve</b> 17:20</p> <p><b>reserves</b> 11:1 16:15,15</p> <p><b>resilience</b> 5:15 18:5</p> <p><b>resource</b> 15:4,4</p> <p><b>response</b> 7:2</p> <p><b>rest</b> 8:7 12:8 13:6</p> <p><b>result</b> 17:2,21</p> <p><b>retention</b> 7:14</p> <p><b>retired</b> 28:16</p> <p><b>revenue</b> 11:6 16:17</p> <p><b>revenues</b> 4:19 8:18 9:3,4 10:5 10:7,9,10,12 10:14,17,20</p>	<p>11:5,6 13:1,3 13:10,19,19 18:9,11</p> <p><b>reviewed</b> 22:10</p> <p><b>ribbon</b> 31:10 33:14</p> <p><b>right</b> 2:11 3:14 23:18 29:6,11 30:1</p> <p><b>risks</b> 16:16</p> <p><b>roadway</b> 8:1</p> <p><b>rolling</b> 4:5</p> <p><b>ron</b> 31:17</p> <p><b>room</b> 19:12</p> <p><b>ruth</b> 30:18</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>s</b></p> <p><b>safety</b> 4:16 5:12,17 9:8 10:3 11:12 15:6 16:4,7 17:13</p> <p><b>sample</b> 12:6</p> <p><b>sarah</b> 33:1,3</p> <p><b>savings</b> 27:10</p> <p><b>saw</b> 14:10</p> <p><b>says</b> 25:20</p> <p><b>school</b> 7:20 9:16 14:15,21 15:3,4 19:13</p> <p><b>schools</b> 7:17 9:11,12 11:14 14:5,10 27:16</p> <p><b>scott</b> 25:13 27:7</p> <p><b>seal</b> 36:13</p> <p><b>second</b> 5:2 12:19 13:8</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>q</b></p>			
<p><b>quarter</b> 15:16 21:8,16 22:1 23:17,18,19 24:2</p> <p><b>questions</b> 28:14</p> <p><b>quick</b> 26:7</p> <p><b>quickly</b> 26:21 32:13,17</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>r</b></p>			
<p><b>rainy</b> 6:5 16:11 16:15</p> <p><b>raise</b> 19:3</p> <p><b>rate</b> 9:6 11:2,9 11:10,15,19 12:10,20</p> <p><b>rated</b> 17:10</p> <p><b>rates</b> 18:14</p> <p><b>rating</b> 18:1</p> <p><b>ratings</b> 12:21 17:11 18:3 25:20</p> <p><b>read</b> 3:8 29:9 29:10</p> <p><b>real</b> 11:19 27:10 34:6</p> <p><b>really</b> 20:6 28:10 29:3</p>			

<p>23:20 24:1 25:7 34:12,14 <b>secretary</b> 3:7 3:10 19:6,9 24:2,4,6,8,10 34:14,15,17,19 34:21 <b>section</b> 21:12 <b>see</b> 6:7 12:12 12:12 25:6 28:18 30:6,12 31:10,18 <b>seeing</b> 6:3 25:8 <b>seen</b> 5:7 <b>send</b> 29:6 <b>sent</b> 25:13 29:7 <b>september</b> 17:10 18:3 36:20 <b>septic</b> 8:3,4 <b>serious</b> 27:18 <b>served</b> 8:20 <b>service</b> 5:4 7:6 8:2 16:6 17:11 <b>services</b> 4:3 16:3 22:18 <b>session</b> 31:3 34:4,5 <b>set</b> 36:4 <b>seven</b> 19:12 <b>sewer</b> 8:2 <b>shake</b> 12:13 <b>share</b> 9:14 26:2 <b>she'll</b> 33:10 <b>sheet</b> 24:20 <b>sheriff's</b> 15:3 <b>short</b> 3:14</p>	<p><b>sign</b> 24:20 <b>signature</b> 36:15 <b>signed</b> 25:1 <b>significant</b> 6:20 <b>silverstein</b> 31:17 <b>sir</b> 25:2,5 <b>sit</b> 28:1 <b>six</b> 34:3 <b>sleeves</b> 4:6 <b>slightly</b> 14:1 <b>small</b> 2:6 13:7 13:12 <b>social</b> 7:18 14:14 <b>software</b> 7:4 <b>solar</b> 25:14 26:13,17,20 28:8,11 29:12 <b>sole</b> 33:5 <b>somebody</b> 33:15 <b>southern</b> 26:11 26:12 <b>sparks</b> 3:15 4:11 8:8,10,12 21:2,10,12 23:19 24:17 32:11 35:4 <b>special</b> 2:4 22:9 <b>specifically</b> 22:1 <b>speed</b> 20:14 <b>spent</b> 22:11,12 26:14 <b>sros</b> 15:5</p>	<p><b>stability</b> 5:19 <b>stadium</b> 30:19 <b>staff</b> 3:19 8:12 17:5 18:20 30:15 31:1 32:15 <b>stamp</b> 3:15,17 3:18 18:16 20:12 21:4,6 24:12 25:11 32:15,17,19 <b>stand</b> 2:8 <b>start</b> 2:6 3:17 25:15 <b>state</b> 6:13 7:16 11:7 12:9 13:6 18:15 27:4 30:10 36:1,2 <b>statement</b> 34:7 <b>station</b> 7:1 <b>stenographic</b> 36:6 <b>stenographic...</b> 36:6 <b>step</b> 10:1 16:1 <b>stepp</b> 1:18 2:16 24:6,7 30:3,4 33:20 34:1,17 34:18 <b>stipulations</b> 36:8 <b>strategies</b> 6:16 <b>strategy</b> 4:13 4:14 5:9,21 10:21 <b>strength</b> 18:6 <b>strengths</b> 17:18</p>	<p><b>stress</b> 5:6 <b>strong</b> 4:16 11:1 17:2,16 17:20 18:8 <b>structurally</b> 14:17 <b>study</b> 27:11 <b>stuff</b> 31:8 <b>substance</b> 26:4 <b>substantial</b> 27:10 <b>successful</b> 4:17 10:21 <b>supplement</b> 9:10 11:13,21 12:5 14:16 <b>supply</b> 6:3 <b>support</b> 7:13 9:8,10 11:13 <b>sure</b> 5:9,16 20:5 32:8,18 <b>system</b> 7:4 26:18 <b>systems</b> 8:3,4</p>
			<b>t</b>
			<p><b>take</b> 3:1 4:13 5:14 29:14 <b>taken</b> 15:20 <b>talbot</b> 1:1 5:14 9:7,10,12 10:11 11:11,13 12:19,21 13:3 13:10,13,17 14:3,5,12 17:8 21:13 36:3 <b>talk</b> 4:14</p>

<p><b>talked</b> 4:20 32:19 <b>talking</b> 4:12 28:6 <b>task</b> 22:15 28:4 <b>taught</b> 20:2 <b>tax</b> 9:4,6 10:5,7 11:2,5,10,15 11:19 12:1,6 12:10,17,20 13:1,5,10,18 18:12,14 <b>taxation</b> 11:8 <b>taxes</b> 10:8,12 10:15,16 13:2 13:16,21 <b>team</b> 7:8 17:16 19:17 20:7,8 20:12 <b>tears</b> 28:18 <b>teeth</b> 25:17 <b>tell</b> 32:12 <b>ten</b> 20:9,9 <b>term</b> 17:18,19 <b>thank</b> 3:18,20 8:12 18:20,20 19:20 20:11,21 21:2,3 24:13 24:15,15,17 25:4,19 28:19 28:21 29:4,16 29:17,18,20 30:5,12 31:6 32:11 33:9 35:4 <b>thanks</b> 30:4 35:3</p>	<p><b>theme</b> 27:21 <b>thing</b> 26:19 28:8 31:1 <b>things</b> 6:19 <b>think</b> 4:21 27:6 29:5,11 <b>thought</b> 32:6 <b>three</b> 14:13 15:4 26:5 <b>throw</b> 26:16 <b>time</b> 6:9 7:7 19:3,8,16 20:13 25:7 28:17 29:20 31:6 36:4 <b>times</b> 6:8 7:2 16:18 <b>today</b> 19:1 25:7 29:6,6,9 30:18 31:10 <b>together</b> 10:13 20:4 <b>tom</b> 25:11 <b>tonight</b> 2:4 4:7 29:17 <b>toot</b> 32:10 <b>total</b> 7:15 9:14 16:11 <b>totaled</b> 15:11 16:8 <b>touch</b> 29:3 <b>towards</b> 22:15 <b>town</b> 25:18 31:11,19 <b>track</b> 25:21 <b>traditional</b> 4:17</p>	<p><b>trail</b> 31:11 <b>trails</b> 31:20 <b>training</b> 7:13 <b>transcribed</b> 36:6 <b>transcript</b> 2:1 <b>transcription</b> 36:7 <b>transfer</b> 10:16 13:16,18 15:16 22:1,1 24:1 <b>transfers</b> 9:20 10:9 15:18 21:8,13 23:19 24:2 <b>tried</b> 5:20 <b>tries</b> 7:8 <b>true</b> 13:3 36:7 <b>truly</b> 31:4 <b>try</b> 5:15 <b>trying</b> 7:6 <b>tuesday</b> 19:11 34:2 <b>turn</b> 6:7 8:5 <b>tv</b> 6:7 <b>two</b> 9:3 11:5 19:11 <b>typically</b> 18:11</p>	<p><b>under</b> 18:13 21:6 <b>underestimate</b> 8:18 <b>understand</b> 26:4 <b>upgraded</b> 17:21 <b>urge</b> 27:17 28:3,15 <b>used</b> 23:12 <b>uses</b> 27:20 <b>using</b> 23:8,8 <b>utilities</b> 26:14 27:13 <b>utility</b> 26:10 <b>utilize</b> 4:17</p>
			<b>v</b>
			<p><b>variety</b> 28:19 <b>vehicles</b> 9:19 23:1 <b>volatile</b> 13:11 18:10 <b>volatility</b> 16:17 <b>volunteer</b> 7:12 <b>vote</b> 24:3 <b>voters</b> 9:7 11:11</p>
		<b>u</b>	<b>w</b>
		<p><b>unanimous</b> 2:19 3:4 <b>unanticipated</b> 6:6 <b>uncertainties</b> 6:2 <b>unchanged</b> 12:18</p>	<p><b>wage</b> 6:15 13:12 <b>walk</b> 8:6 <b>want</b> 3:15,17 4:10 20:10 27:21 30:16,21 32:3 33:20</p>

[watch - yup]

Page 12

<p><b>watch</b> 28:1  <b>way</b> 23:5 36:11  <b>we've</b> 2:4 5:7  10:4  <b>wealth</b> 27:15  <b>weeks</b> 3:21  <b>welcome</b> 2:3  8:11 21:3 33:3  <b>willey</b> 31:16  <b>winds</b> 8:19  <b>witness</b> 36:13  <b>words</b> 20:17  <b>work</b> 3:19 20:6  29:1 30:6 31:7  31:18  <b>workers</b> 7:18  14:14  <b>workforce</b> 5:5  5:7  <b>working</b> 4:1  21:20 31:8  <b>worried</b> 19:21  <b>worth</b> 28:14</p>	
<b>y</b>	
<p><b>yankee</b> 30:19  <b>yeah</b> 8:10 26:9  30:14,14,21  32:18  <b>year</b> 4:21 8:15  9:2 11:6 14:11  21:9,17 23:4  <b>years</b> 5:8 30:18  <b>yesterday</b> 29:7  29:8  <b>yup</b> 20:19 21:5  23:15 25:10  29:13 30:14</p>	