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COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Council Meeting

December 12, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chuck F. Callahan

Pete Leshner

Keasha N. Haythe

Lynn L. Mielke

Dave Stepp

Reported by

Diane Houlihan

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<p>1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. I want to welcome</p> <p>4 everybody tonight. Appreciate everybody</p> <p>5 coming.</p> <p>6 So we'll go ahead and stand and say the</p> <p>7 prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance of the</p> <p>8 Flag.</p> <p>9 (Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.)</p> <p>10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Appreciate that.</p> <p>11 Yup. Okay. Start on the agenda tonight.</p> <p>12 Is there any additions or deletions or</p> <p>13 corrections to the agenda tonight? Okay.</p> <p>14 Hearing none, the chair moves that the agenda</p> <p>15 be accepted as unanimous consent. All right.</p> <p>16 Let's move on to the minutes. So the</p> <p>17 minutes of November 28th are before us. Is</p> <p>18 there any additions, deletions, or corrections</p> <p>19 to the minutes? Okay. Hearing none, the chair</p> <p>20 moves that the minutes be accepted as unanimous</p> <p>21 consent.</p>	<p>1 M, zoning upon its annexation will result in</p> <p>2 substantially different uses or substantially</p> <p>3 higher density, exceeding 50 percent, than</p> <p>4 could be granted for proposed development under</p> <p>5 the county's TR zoning. And waiving the</p> <p>6 five-year hold in accordance with section 4-416</p> <p>7 of the Local Government Article of the</p> <p>8 Annotated Code of Maryland.</p> <p>9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you, Madam</p> <p>10 Secretary.</p> <p>11 Mr. Thomas, can you go ahead just give us</p> <p>12 an overview of what they would like to have.</p> <p>13 MR. THOMAS: Sure. So this resolution was</p> <p>14 requested by the Town of Trappe. The town is</p> <p>15 considering annexing certain real property.</p> <p>16 Actually a portion of the subject parcel is</p> <p>17 already located within the town.</p> <p>18 The town wants to apply its industrial</p> <p>19 zoning to this property, which is currently</p> <p>20 zoned town residential under the county zoning.</p> <p>21 Because that zoning will result in</p>
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<p>1 Next on the agenda is the disbursements of</p> <p>2 December 5th and December 12th. We've had a</p> <p>3 chance to look at all the disbursements.</p> <p>4 Everybody okay with that? Okay. Hearing none,</p> <p>5 the chair moves that the disbursements be</p> <p>6 accepted as unanimous consent. Okay.</p> <p>7 Next on the agenda is the introduction of</p> <p>8 numbered resolutions. Madam Secretary, could</p> <p>9 you go ahead and start us off on that, please.</p> <p>10 SECRETARY: A resolution concerning the</p> <p>11 proposed annexation by the Town of Trappe,</p> <p>12 Maryland, the town, of certain real property</p> <p>13 located on the north side of the town, east of</p> <p>14 Maryland highway number 565 and south of</p> <p>15 Backtown Road in the third election district of</p> <p>16 Talbot County, Maryland. Consisting of</p> <p>17 5.125 acres of land, more or less, and being a</p> <p>18 portion of parcel 302. Shown on tax map 54,</p> <p>19 the property. Finding that the property's</p> <p>20 proposed rezoning from Talbot County's town</p> <p>21 resident, TR, zoning to the town's industrial,</p>	<p>1 substantially different uses or a higher</p> <p>2 density than under the county's current zoning,</p> <p>3 the Council has to grant a waiver in order for</p> <p>4 the town to apply that industrial zoning within</p> <p>5 five years. So that's the purpose of the</p> <p>6 resolution.</p> <p>7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.</p> <p>8 MR. THOMAS: And I know that Zach Smith is</p> <p>9 here tonight. He represents the property owner</p> <p>10 that initiated the annexation to the town, and</p> <p>11 he can provide some more specific information</p> <p>12 if you'd like.</p> <p>13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Zach, come on up.</p> <p>14 MR. SMITH: Thank you, Council. For the</p> <p>15 record, Zach Smith. And I do represent Brian</p> <p>16 Halls, who is the owner of the property.</p> <p>17 And just a little bit of context for the</p> <p>18 Council. This parcel, as I think the</p> <p>19 resolution described, is on the north side of</p> <p>20 Trappe, east of 565, south of Backtown Road.</p> <p>21 It's a 38-acre parcel.</p>

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1 The majority of the parcel was annexed
 2 into the town years ago and zoned M industrial.
 3 But a portion of the property, approximately a
 4 five-acre strip, I mean it's five acres, but
 5 it's the area along 565, was not annexed into
 6 the town.
 7 And so what Brian would like to do, what
 8 he's asked the town to do is to annex that
 9 portion of the parcel and to zone it
 10 industrial, consistent with the balance of the
 11 property.
 12 And again, it's just one single parcel,
 13 but the town's boundary up until this point has
 14 bisected the parcel such that 33 acres is in
 15 the town and five acres is outside of the town.
 16 The Town of Trappe has held a public
 17 hearing, and they did vote to annex the
 18 property and to apply the industrial zoning
 19 contingent on the county granting this waiver.
 20 And just to be clear, Brian hopes to do --
 21 currently it's undeveloped land. And what

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1 Brian would like to do is to subdivide it into
 2 approximately 11 industrial lots to locate his
 3 business on one of those lots. He is a site
 4 contractor, and he needs a shop and a storage
 5 yard for his construction business.
 6 And then other lots would be marketed and
 7 available for other similar users.
 8 And when I say industrial, I mean it's
 9 truly light industrial. It's more akin to what
 10 we see on Brooks Drive here in Easton or Talbot
 11 Commerce Park. It's not heavy manufacturing.
 12 Trappe's zoning code doesn't permit that.
 13 I'd also just note that this is the only
 14 land within Trappe that's zoned industrial,
 15 this and one adjacent parcel that fronts on
 16 Backtown Road. That's the only industrial land
 17 in Trappe. And that's the only land that
 18 Trappe's Comprehensive Plan foresees as being
 19 industrial. This is the area.
 20 And I think the town believes it will
 21 provide, you know, job opportunities, desirable

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1 services, and economic activity that will
 2 benefit both the town and the county. I think
 3 those are the reasons that they supported the
 4 annexation.
 5 So that's why we're here. Just seeking
 6 the waiver so that the town can apply the same
 7 zoning that's on the balance of the property.
 8 There's five acres that they've just annexed.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: I see. I see. Okay.
 10 Thank you.
 11 Council, any discussion?
 12 MR. SMITH: Mr. Callahan, could I just add
 13 one additional point?
 14 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes.
 15 MR. SMITH: If you look at the county's
 16 Comprehensive Plan, this area is already shown
 17 as being within the Town of Trappe. The
 18 county's plan doesn't show the division.
 19 And I think that's probably just because
 20 the maps are based upon the parcel data set and
 21 this is part of a single parcel. I think

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1 that's probably why.
 2 But importantly, the county's plan, I'm
 3 sure you know, suggests that industrial growth
 4 and development should occur in the towns, in
 5 existing town areas, in the growth areas.
 6 And this is, indeed, a growth area, those
 7 five acres that's shown in Trappe's plan. So I
 8 think the proposal I believe is consistent with
 9 the county Comprehensive Plan as well.
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Great.
 11 MR. SMITH: Thank you.
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: I appreciate you bringing
 13 that up. Okay.
 14 So at this time, this is just introducing
 15 it. So raise our hands.
 16 MR. LESHAR: So introduced by Councils
 17 Callahan, Haythe, Leshar, and Stepp.
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Madam Secretary,
 19 could you go ahead and announce the number and
 20 the public hearing date, please.
 21 SECRETARY: This will be known as

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1 Resolution 352, and the public hearing will be
 2 held on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Great. Okay.
 4 So we got to wait on the public hearing a
 5 little bit.
 6 So I think what we'll probably do here,
 7 can we do some Clay stuff.
 8 MR. STAMP: County manager report, yes,
 9 sir.
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right.
 11 MR. STAMP: Council, good evening. Under
 12 board and committee appointments this evening,
 13 we have a recommendation for your
 14 consideration. This would be the Upper Shore
 15 Aging. Board of Directors requesting the
 16 appointment of Mr. Kevin Moran to that board.
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 18 MR. LESHER: I'll move for the
 19 appointment.
 20 MS. MIELKE: Second.
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and

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1 second to appoint Mr. Moran to the board.
 2 Madam Secretary, could you call the vote.
 3 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.
 5 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.
 6 MR. STEPP: Aye.
 7 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.
 8 MR. LESHNER: Aye.
 9 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.
 10 MS. MIELKE: Aye.
 11 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.
 12 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.
 13 MR. STAMP: And Council, we have a couple
 14 of items.
 15 Mr. Myers, are you here? There we go.
 16 Would you like to come up?
 17 We have two items from the Town of
 18 St. Michaels. They're requesting -- and
 19 Mr. Roy Myers is here. He can speak to this,
 20 serving on the committee.
 21 The Town of St. Michaels is requesting

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1 Council support for a grant request to the
 2 Maryland Department of Natural Resources
 3 Coastal Resiliency Program Outcome 2 Grant.
 4 As you read in your agenda packet, the
 5 Town of St. Michaels is requesting a letter of
 6 support for their grant application to the
 7 Maryland Department of Natural Resources for
 8 coastal resiliency grant for the San Domingo
 9 Creek west side waterfront area for a tidal
 10 gauge under the nature trail bridge.
 11 There will be no county funds required.
 12 And Mr. Myers, you want to add anything on
 13 that?
 14 MR. MYERS: Roy Myers. I'm the chair of
 15 the St. Michaels Climate Change Commission.
 16 I know there -- I was here a couple of
 17 years ago when you gave me a letter of support
 18 for two grants we're just finishing up. So I
 19 very much appreciated that.
 20 The Climate Change Sea Level Commission
 21 was put in place in St. Michaels. It's sort

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1 of like a planning, second planning commission.
 2 And the purpose of it is to pursue grants, to
 3 do concept design, strategies, and actually get
 4 implementation grants to address the projected
 5 stormwater flooding and sea level rise that
 6 St. Michaels is going to see by 2050.
 7 Back in 2020, we did the DNR grant for the
 8 main harbor that identified by 2050 eight areas
 9 in the main harbor would be under water or
 10 underwater every high tide by 2050.
 11 So the goal of our group is to look at
 12 grants over the next five, ten, 15 years to
 13 prepare St. Michaels for the 2050 event.
 14 The way I sort of look at it is if
 15 St. Michaels is going to maintain their
 16 economy and their harbor in 2050, we have to
 17 raise the bulkheads. We have to address that
 18 so the tourists and all in St. Michaels could
 19 still get around the harbor without treading
 20 through water.
 21 We have, we've got a number of grants in

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1 place. I mentioned two years ago we came
 2 before you and got two DNR grants. They're
 3 ones that thanks to your all's support, we got
 4 those grants and we're just finishing them up.
 5 We have, we're actually having the studies
 6 presented to the town commissioners. The first
 7 one was for the West Harbor Road, East Chew
 8 area. And it's looking at raising the
 9 bulkhead, putting storm pumps to handle the
 10 rainwater behind that, and actually creating a
 11 park area down at the end of East Chew as well
 12 as a number of rain gardens to handle the MDE
 13 requirements for stormwater runoff.
 14 So we have that at 30 percent design.
 15 That was presented to the commissioners of
 16 St. Michaels and accepted last Wednesday.
 17 The second grant we have is for the San
 18 Domingo Creek side of St. Michaels. I always
 19 talk about that as the second harbor. If
 20 you're kayakers or that type of thing, if
 21 you're over on that side or you have a kayak

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1 launch where you have the waterman's wharf and
 2 that type of thing. So we had a second grant
 3 from DNR that they landed for us actually
 4 looking at the areas that would be flooded on
 5 the San Domingo side of St. Michaels.
 6 Interestingly enough, one of the areas
 7 that would be flooded most is Grace Street,
 8 where Talbot County actually has one of their
 9 sewer pumping stations. So we might be in our
 10 planning actually protecting some of your
 11 resources.
 12 Out of that study, it was recommended two
 13 things for immediate action, immediate
 14 implementation.
 15 The first is the bulkhead and Back Creek
 16 Park is failing. It needs repair. The
 17 recommendation was to convert that to a living
 18 shoreline. So our one grant request, the
 19 Outcome 3 Grant request to DNR, is to actually
 20 do the final design of the living shoreline in
 21 that area, do the permitting, and actually

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1 construction of a living shoreline. So the
 2 whole area there would then be a living
 3 shoreline on San Domingo Creek in that area.
 4 So that's the first grant request and a letter
 5 of support we're asking from you.
 6 The second was a very interesting
 7 strategy. If you've walked the nature trail
 8 back in that area, you know it goes across a
 9 bridge. The best strategy that was coming up
 10 was to actually put a tide gate under that
 11 bridge. So when sea level rise and storm surge
 12 comes up, the tide gate would keep water from
 13 flooding all the streets, including Grace Street
 14 and all that would be north of that.
 15 That is a big undertaking. And we asked
 16 for Bay Land to give us a proposal to do an
 17 additional assessment to actually do the
 18 modeling of what the rainwater and tide would
 19 all work with the tide gauge, the impact on the
 20 living shorelines and the impact.
 21 And so the second grant, which is an

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1 Outcome 2 Grant, is actually to do an
 2 additional assessment of that tide gate because
 3 the effort to do that would be a significant --
 4 I mean the projection is like \$2 million to do
 5 everything associated with that. So we're
 6 asking for an assessment of that.
 7 So what we're looking at now is we got the
 8 two grants that you supported before. We've
 9 done the grants. We're now going to the next
 10 phase, and I'm really asking for your support
 11 for a letter of support to proceed with both of
 12 those.
 13 We actually have the grant written. So
 14 it's going in, it will be going in Thursday by
 15 midnight. It's already ready to go, and we're
 16 hoping for your letters of support so we can
 17 proceed in that area.
 18 MR. STAMP: Council, you do have their
 19 request for both grants in your packet.
 20 And so if you'd like to move on both
 21 items, you can do so.

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Do we want to move
 2 on each one or both? Do we do both? Okay.
 3 MS. HAYTHE: I make a motion to approve
 4 both letters of support.
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 6 MS. MIELKE: Second.
 7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and
 8 second to go ahead and support both grant
 9 applications. Madam Secretary, could you call
 10 the vote.
 11 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.
 13 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.
 14 MR. STEPP: Aye.
 15 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.
 16 MR. LESHNER: Aye.
 17 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.
 18 MS. MIELKE: Aye.
 19 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.
 20 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Great.

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1 MR. MYERS: Thank you so much.
 2 MR. LESHNER: Can I ask just one follow-up
 3 question?
 4 MR. MYERS: Sure.
 5 MR. LESHNER: I presume that this tide gate
 6 underneath the covered bridge, that's
 7 essentially taking advantage of the existing,
 8 the old railroad grate as a dike, an embankment
 9 area. So protecting all the areas behind that
 10 other old railroad grate?
 11 MR. MYERS: Right, right. There would be
 12 some work on various sections of the nature
 13 trail because what we're trying to do is raise
 14 the whole area like a dam up to five feet above
 15 mean sea level. So there are some areas of the
 16 nature trail we'd have to raise as well.
 17 But that will be the strategy. The nature
 18 trail and under the covered bridge would all be
 19 like the dike with a tide gate underneath that
 20 would keep the sea storm surge and sea level
 21 rise from going up into that area.

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1 MR. LESHNER: For anything that's under
 2 five feet?
 3 MR. MYERS: Right.
 4 MR. LESHNER: Which heaven help us if we
 5 have one bigger than that.
 6 MR. MYERS: You're right.
 7 One of the problems we have is that if you
 8 have what's projected as a foot, one foot to
 9 1.7 feet increase in sea level rise by 2050,
 10 and then you put, you know, like a major storm
 11 or hurricane, the hurricane, some of the
 12 hurricanes have been five feet above that. So
 13 you get up then to six and a half, seven feet.
 14 Well, most of St. Michaels is only about
 15 eight feet above mean sea level.
 16 So if we get the sea level rise that is
 17 projected in 2050, 2070, and 2121, and then you
 18 have a major hurricane on top of it,
 19 St. Michaels is going to have a tough time. I
 20 mean you're just going to have to live through
 21 it and then come back and clean up efforts.

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1 MR. LESHNER: Thank you. Thank you for all
 2 your diligent work on this project. I think
 3 it's some of most exciting work that's going on
 4 preparing for the impacts of climate change and
 5 what St. Michaels is doing, what Oxford is
 6 doing. Both really significant efforts. So
 7 thank you.
 8 MR. MYERS: Thank you. I appreciate your
 9 support.
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you. Okay.
 11 MR. STAMP: Council, we have one more
 12 request here from the Pickering Creek Audubon
 13 Center. They're requesting a letter of support
 14 for an application for Maryland Department of
 15 Natural Resources Grant Outcome 3 Grant.
 16 As you read in your packet, they're
 17 requesting a letter of support for their grant
 18 application for a living shoreline project.
 19 You have that letter in your packet.
 20 There are no county funds that are
 21 required. And again, they're looking for your

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1 support in their submittal.

2 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Is there a motion?

3 MR. LESHAR: I'll move for the letter of

4 support for Pickering Creek.

5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

6 MS. HAYTHE: Second.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and

8 a second to go ahead and give a support letter

9 to Pickering Creek grant. Madam Secretary,

10 could you call the vote, please.

11 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

12 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

13 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

14 MR. STEPP: Aye.

15 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshar.

16 MR. LESHAR: Aye.

17 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

18 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

19 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

20 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

21 MR. STAMP: And finally, Council, just

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1 under announcements, I want to mention the

2 county offices will be closed on Monday,

3 December 25th, Tuesday, December 26th, and

4 Monday, January 1st.

5 And that concludes your county manager

6 report.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's great.

8 Appreciate it. Good job. All right.

9 We're way ahead of schedule here.

10 MR. LESHAR: Want to do public comments?

11 MR. CALLAHAN: We can. Yes, sir. Do we

12 have anybody out there? If not, I see the

13 sheriff. He can talk for a little.

14 SHERIFF GAMBLE: I haven't signed up.

15 MR. CALLAHAN: Hey, Frank, in the back,

16 you want to come on up?

17 MR. GUNSALLUS: Sure.

18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah.

19 MR. GUNSALLUS: Hello. My name is Frank

20 Gunsallus. I'm a resident of Easton. I'm also

21 the Town Council president, and I'm here in

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1 my -- not in that capacity. I'm here from

2 Easton Rotary Club.

3 We have Operation Christmas Spirit that

4 will be on Christmas Day, and we also have some

5 prep work that is in advance. Namely, on

6 Christmas Eve, which is a Sunday, I have 2,100

7 pounds of chicken that I need help cutting. So

8 if there is anyone in the public who would like

9 to assist me and Jordan Lloyd with that work,

10 you can call me at (443)786-6949.

11 And if you know anyone who will need a hot

12 meal on Christmas Day or a jacket or some toys

13 for their children, they can get that at Easton

14 Fire Department between 11 and one p.m.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. Appreciate it.

17 Good job.

18 MS. MORRIS: Nobody else.

19 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Anybody else want to

20 come on up, say how good we're doing?

21 MR. LESHAR: We can go to Council comments

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1 if you want.

2 SHERIFF GAMBLE: You haven't opened up

3 Black Dog Alley comments yet, right?

4 MR. CALLAHAN: No, sir.

5 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Okay.

6 MR. CALLAHAN: We have a few minutes to

7 go.

8 MS. HAYTHE: That's what we're waiting on.

9 MR. CALLAHAN: That's what we're waiting

10 on.

11 I'm sorry, Mr. Leshar. What did you say?

12 MR. LESHAR: We can proceed to Council

13 comments.

14 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. Sure. So Mr. Stepp,

15 you want to start for us?

16 MR. STEPP: I will just carry over from

17 prayer from earlier. Just wanted to wish

18 everyone a very Merry Christmas. Stay safe,

19 stay happy, stay healthy, enjoy times with

20 friends and family. And we're looking forward

21 to serving you in '24.

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Leshner.
 2 MR. LESHER: Last week, several of us were
 3 down at the Maryland Association of Counties
 4 conference in Cambridge, their winter
 5 conference, which I'll characterize as, of
 6 those that I've attended, perhaps the most
 7 productive yet.
 8 We had an impromptu meeting after the Mid
 9 Shore Resource Council lunch with Council
 10 members from Caroline, Kent, and Queen Anne's
 11 to discuss the future of the Mid-Shore II
 12 landfill at Ridgely and whether its life could
 13 be extended another seven to ten years,
 14 something that we discussed just two weeks ago
 15 when Maryland Environmental Service was before
 16 us. So some good coordination among the
 17 counties, communication among the counties
 18 there.
 19 I learned details about the State's
 20 proposed \$3 billion transportation funding cut,
 21 which includes holding shared highway user

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1 revenues to present levels rather than the
 2 graduated restoration funds over the next three
 3 years that had been negotiated with the
 4 previous administration and the legislature.
 5 That, of course, is going to pinch Talbot
 6 County and every other local jurisdiction, both
 7 counties and municipalities. That's something
 8 that we will be paying attention to and will
 9 have to adjust our plans come budget time.
 10 And finally, we were updated on the
 11 Blueprint for Education funding requirements
 12 between now and fiscal 34, which is
 13 significant, a 32 percent increase for Talbot
 14 County, it's different for every local
 15 jurisdiction, above the prior mandate. So an
 16 even greater pinch will be felt in some
 17 jurisdictions like Baltimore City and Prince
 18 George's County. Still, significant impacts on
 19 Talbot County. And knowing these in advance,
 20 what the landscape looks like, will better help
 21 us to prepare.

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Great. Good job.
 2 Yup.
 3 MS. MIELKE: I would just like to commend
 4 our county for its generosity and everything
 5 that it does in this holiday season. Whether
 6 it's from Hog Neck, who had a Christmas party
 7 and had collected presents to donate to those
 8 in need, to what President Gunsallus mentioned
 9 that the Easton Rotary Club does. We should be
 10 very proud of what all our organizations do.
 11 And this is a wonderful county to live in.
 12 I'm so grateful, and I hope that the citizens
 13 are grateful as well.
 14 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. Thank you.
 15 Appreciate that.
 16 MS. HAYTHE: This is our last meeting,
 17 right?
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes.
 19 MS. HAYTHE: We won't be back until 2024?
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.
 21 MS. HAYTHE: Oh, my goodness. So I just

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1 want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a
 2 Happy New Year. I know this may -- during the
 3 holidays, sometimes families have hardships.
 4 But we have great resources here in Talbot
 5 County.
 6 So everyone that's here this evening, I
 7 just want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a
 8 Happy New Year. And we'll see you in 2024.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: And I'll jump on that with
 10 my colleagues, too. Like you say, it's been a
 11 great year. It's been our first year together,
 12 and we've all survived it so far. You know, so
 13 we're good. And we've all done a good job.
 14 I appreciate this year with you,
 15 Mr. Stamp, guiding us. And your staff has been
 16 top notch. That's for sure. And you've guided
 17 us. You've helped us. The staff has been
 18 phenomenal.
 19 Susan, Jess, Patrick, I'll get you, you've
 20 been great. We've had some tough subjects, and
 21 we still got a few things to get settled. And

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1 you've really done a good job. And I know
 2 sometimes that getting to the finish line is
 3 tough. And you've done a great job getting us
 4 there. So I really appreciate the effort and
 5 the hard work and nights that you do to get us
 6 there. That's for sure.
 7 And since I got the mike here, I
 8 appreciate Mike and Ray, all that you do
 9 through the year. You got a tough job. That's
 10 for sure. I appreciate everything.
 11 And I'll put a salute to the Sheriff out
 12 there. You work hard for us. You keep us
 13 safe. I can't thank you enough for protecting
 14 us up here every couple of weeks. And that's a
 15 big deal, too. And not only that, you just
 16 protecting and being there for the public. We
 17 couldn't ask for a better Sheriff's Department.
 18 You guys are top notch. You're the best. I
 19 appreciate everything you're doing for us.
 20 That's for sure.
 21 Okay. We're close. Get ready. We got a

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1 few more minutes here, and we'll go ahead and
 2 start on the public hearing.
 3 MS. HAYTHE: Three minutes.
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: So we got a couple of
 5 things tonight on the public hearing.
 6 We got Resolution 351, which deals with,
 7 it's going to deal with Black Dog Alley and
 8 traffic. And then we have Bill 1550, which is
 9 going to help Trappe with their liquor license
 10 and getting them where they need to be, too.
 11 So you want to go ahead and get started or
 12 we want to wait just a second?
 13 MR. LESHER: You want to call it 6:30?
 14 MS. MIELKE: It's 6:30 somewhere.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. I got you. All
 16 right.
 17 So Madam Secretary, could you go ahead and
 18 get us started, then, if you would, please, on
 19 Resolution 351.
 20 SECRETARY: Resolution Number 351, a
 21 resolution to establish a vehicle weight limit

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1 on Black Dog Alley pursuant to Maryland Code
 2 Annotated, transportation section 25-102A11,
 3 and Chapter 134 of the Talbot County Code, road
 4 maintenance, in order to reroute heavy truck
 5 through traffic.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Mr. Thomas, you want
 7 to give us a little bit of overview of sort of
 8 like what we were talking about so people
 9 understand that the sheriff is not going to
 10 drive them crazy writing tickets out and all
 11 that stuff.
 12 So help them understand what we're trying
 13 to achieve here, please.
 14 MR. THOMAS: Sure. So this resolution
 15 would establish a weight limit of 70,000 gross
 16 combination weight rating and gross vehicle
 17 weight rating on Black Dog Alley.
 18 This is primarily intended to prevent
 19 heavy truck through traffic.
 20 There are several exceptions, such as for
 21 government vehicles, agricultural vehicles,

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1 emergency vehicles, vehicles owned by property
 2 owners that live along Black Dog Alley or whose
 3 properties are only accessible by Black Dog
 4 Alley, and any vehicles providing services to
 5 those residents. So it's not a complete
 6 prohibition on the vehicles that have weight
 7 higher.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Sure.
 9 MR. THOMAS: And I think as we've
 10 discussed, part of the problem stems from the
 11 fact that a lot of these vehicles that are
 12 traveling through Easton use apps like Waze or
 13 Apple Maps or Goggle Maps that are routing them
 14 down Black Dog Alley. And that heavy truck
 15 traffic is causing damage to the roadway, and
 16 that's really what the main thing of this bill
 17 is designed to prevent because the road isn't
 18 equipped to handle that kind of traffic.
 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. Exactly. Well, I
 20 appreciate that.
 21 Do you want to mention anything?

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1 MR. LESHER: Well, just clarifying
 2 questions. So one of those exceptions,
 3 Mr. Thomas, is for agricultural vehicles.
 4 So somebody is harvesting soybeans off a
 5 field anywhere in that part of the county,
 6 they'll, not heading back out to the highways
 7 ultimately, but they'll need to use Black Dog
 8 Alley to get to where they're going. Such
 9 vehicles, though they would clearly be over the
 10 weight limit, are clearly exempted from this
 11 provision?
 12 MR. THOMAS: Yes. The resolution, it
 13 precisely says the following vehicles are
 14 exempt from the weight limit set forth.
 15 Vehicles, one of them is vehicles engaged in
 16 agricultural production or operations.
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So I'll go ahead at
 18 this point and open the public hearing. So
 19 I'll give individuals three minutes to come on
 20 up and talk about the bill. And if you're
 21 representing somebody, I'll give you five

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1 minutes.
 2 So at this stage, does anybody over here
 3 to my left want to come up and talk about the
 4 bill? Yeah. Come on up. Yes, sir.
 5 Resolution. I'm sorry.
 6 MR. SHORTALL: (Inaudible.) when he
 7 speaks.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Sure. Excuse me one
 9 second. I'm sorry. What did you say?
 10 Okay. Go ahead.
 11 MR. SHORTALL: I'm Keith Shortall. I live
 12 off Black Dog Alley. I farm off Black Dog
 13 Alley. All my equipment is on Black Dog Alley.
 14 So I kind of see what goes by all the time.
 15 The agriculture exemption that you
 16 described covers me fine. I hope I don't get
 17 stopped every time I'm going back and forth to
 18 the farm by my friendly sheriff's deputy asking
 19 me where I'm going because really that's the
 20 can of worms is how do you enforce this. It's
 21 not real easy to pick out which trucks are

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1 hauling from the field and which ones are just
 2 taking the shortcut.
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, sir.
 4 MR. SHORTALL: During harvest season,
 5 obviously I think there's four of us that farm
 6 ground on Black Dog Alley and we use it
 7 regularly.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 9 MR. SHORTALL: The rest of the year, one
 10 thing that does happen on Black Dog Alley that
 11 is probably detrimental to the road is all of
 12 the grain that is hauled through Black Dog
 13 Alley that comes from the Port of Baltimore
 14 heading to Hurlock or vice versa back and
 15 forth.
 16 If you notice, I mean the ten months of
 17 the year that we're not harvesting something,
 18 there's a lot of agricultural products being
 19 moved and trucks down to the road. So I don't
 20 know how that, you know, affects this.
 21 I think you already mentiond the GPS just

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1 guides you down the road anyway.
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 3 MR. SHORTALL: Also, signage placement. I
 4 mean if you do something, you're going to have
 5 to put some kind of obvious signage really
 6 before you get on Black Dog Alley. I mean it
 7 needs to be on Dover Road, it needs to be on
 8 Route 50 because once I turn on Black Dog Alley
 9 with a tractor-trailer, I'm not backing up.
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. That's a good point.
 11 MR. SHORTALL: And the last thing I wanted
 12 to mention was the road in front of Eric
 13 Harvey's place is the hot spot for accidents.
 14 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 15 MR. SHORTALL: The read is too narrow.
 16 There's no shoulder. The white line that the
 17 county paints down the edge doesn't really keep
 18 you out of the ditch. And irregardless of what
 19 you do with this, the work that needs to be
 20 done on Black Dog Alley still needs to happen.
 21 I know it's been surveyed. It's been

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<p>1 talked about for years, but I'm not sure where 2 it's at in the process. 3 And I know that you mentioned with the 4 government scaling back on transportation 5 funds, that may push it back further yet. I 6 don't know. 7 MR. CALLAHAN: Thanks. I appreciate your 8 comments. 9 MR. SHORTALL: Yup. 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. 11 Anybody else? 12 Mike, you and Ray, can you come up here 13 for a second and just kind of, if you don't 14 mind, comment for the public on sort of our 15 intent with the signs and sort of what we're 16 going to do to prepare people and drivers. 17 MR. CLARKE: Very quickly. Just to advise 18 the Council and the general public as well that 19 the county actually has initiated design of 20 Black Dog Alley. Wallace, Montgomery & 21 Associates has been doing design. We're</p>	<p>1 to work with the State, State Highway 2 Administration. But we are going to try and 3 seek federal funding for this project. 4 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's great. 5 MR. CLARKE: And then the other thing, we 6 did have, just so Council is aware, we did have 7 a work session with the Sheriff's Office, EMS, 8 the Roads Department, and Department of Public 9 Works on October 24th. 10 And ultimately, as far as the signage is 11 concerned, we'll do everything we can. We'll 12 get the signage up working with Brian Moore and 13 I think Mike. 14 MR. MERTAUGH: Right. So yeah. 15 Ordinarily, there's like advance signage. 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. 17 MR. MERTAUGH: So we work with or Brian's 18 office will work with State Highway 19 Administration because there will have to be 20 advance signs on State roads. 21 But as a rule, it's usually not an issue.</p>
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<p>1 roughly about 40 percent complete. 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. 3 MR. CLARKE: What we have done is looked 4 at designing Black Dog Alley from Dover Road to 5 Matthewstown Road, 328 and I think it's 331. 6 So that's been done. 7 What we now are trying to do is getting a 8 property mosaic to identify where we need a 9 right-of-way. 10 And then once we have that information, I 11 think we are going to come before the County 12 Council during the budget session and look at 13 doing phases for Black Dog Alley. Pretty much 14 doing the southern section first. So we'll be 15 presenting that to you during the budget 16 process. 17 In addition to that, we're going to have 18 to go through the final design for permitting 19 for that phase. And then at the same time, we 20 are going to look to potential federal funding 21 for this. We have been advised that we've got</p>	<p>1 We all follow the same standards for signage. 2 So it should not be a problem. 3 MR. CALLAHAN: So is this 60 days or 90 4 days? 5 MR. THOMAS: Because it's a resolution, it 6 will take effect immediately upon adoption. 7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right. So okay. 8 Any other questions, Council? 9 MR. LESHAR: And we do have an existing 10 restriction just like this on another road 11 nearby? 12 MR. MERTAUGH: Right. So we have an 13 identical restriction basically on Dover Neck 14 Road by the landfill. And then we have on 15 Chilcutt Road, which runs into Dover Neck Road, 16 it's actually 10,000-pound gross vehicle weight 17 restriction. Those have been in place for 18 seven years I believe. 19 And I think after there was -- from input 20 I've had from the Sheriff's Office, you know, 21 there's an initial educational period, if you</p>

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1 will. And really it hasn't been that onerous
 2 an effort since.
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Great.
 4 Anything else from Council?
 5 MS. HAYTHE: Just one question in regards
 6 to where the signs will be placed to alert the
 7 drivers that may be coming down the road.
 8 MR. MERTAUGH: So they'll be -- of course,
 9 we have essentially three main intersections
 10 along the corridor. So there will be advance
 11 signing.
 12 We'll have to check with State Highway.
 13 Very likely it will be on Route 50 up by the
 14 airport before people come onto the road at
 15 Airport Road.
 16 We'll have to have advance signage on
 17 Matthewstown Road and Dover Road because those
 18 are also major routes where trucks can come on
 19 there. And I think that's where most of the
 20 advance signage will be. I might be missing
 21 one, but basically the road --

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1 MS. HAYTHE: Chapel Road.
 2 MR. MERTAUGH: Chapel. I'm sorry. I knew
 3 there was other one.
 4 Basically it's to give trucks the
 5 opportunity to not commit and then get stuck.
 6 That's the goal of the advance signage.
 7 MS. HAYTHE: Thank you.
 8 MR. MERTAUGH: You're welcome.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Any other questions?
 10 Okay. All right.
 11 Appreciate it, guys. Thank you.
 12 MR. MERTAUGH: Thank you.
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Anybody else would
 14 like to come up and comment on this? Yeah.
 15 Come on up, Sheriff.
 16 SHERIFF GAMBLE: So I know I sent this to
 17 Council earlier.
 18 Black Dog is our most accident prone road
 19 in the county.
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 21 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Outside of the town

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1 jurisdictions.
 2 MR. MERTAUGH: See if I can get that up.
 3 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Thanks, Mike.
 4 And Mr. Shortall, obviously he lives there
 5 and he knows better than I because I just see
 6 the data and he sees it every day, but that
 7 section between 331, as we all know, and Mike,
 8 they talked about, is our most accident prone
 9 outside of intersections. The other one are
 10 all the intersections that we've had accidents
 11 at the various intersections with Matthewstown,
 12 Chapel, 309, and, of course, 331.
 13 But the ones that are just running right
 14 off the road are in that stretch from 331,
 15 Dover Road, up to about the development where
 16 the housing developments start, right in front
 17 of the Harvey place.
 18 And that's where you'll see us quite
 19 often. So you really want to slow down there
 20 because we're there.
 21 And Mr. Shortall was right in that I

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1 stopped a car for doing 70 past me in a double
 2 yellow line on there. And when I stopped him,
 3 I asked him where he was going, he was going to
 4 the beach from Baltimore because it's sending
 5 him around Easton. And I said you're going to
 6 the beach on this road. And he said oh, yeah,
 7 that's the way the computer sent me.
 8 My other concern is, and I know that it's
 9 priority for Council, once that hospital gets
 10 built, I'm sorry, once the hospital gets built,
 11 you're going to have all the south Caroline
 12 traffic coming that way. All their ambulances
 13 coming out of south Caroline, all the workers,
 14 all the visitors are going to take Black Dog to
 15 there.
 16 So when we do the improvements, we really
 17 have to take into account that you're going to
 18 have more emergency vehicles on that road now
 19 then than you ever will have. So we really
 20 probably need to -- and I know that Council is
 21 going to move forward with it, but that's just

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1 my comment. We really need to attack this
 2 thing before that starts.
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. Before, yeah. Okay.
 4 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Yeah. That's all I have.
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Good job. Thank you.
 6 SHERIFF GAMBLE: And you can see by that
 7 handout that I gave you where the accidents
 8 occur the most.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 10 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Thanks.
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. Thank you.
 12 Anybody else would like to come up and
 13 comment on it?
 14 MR. TRAX: Mr. Callahan.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, sir. Come on up.
 16 MR. TRAX: I'm John Trax. And I live on
 17 Black Dog Alley, and my family has lived on
 18 Black Dog Alley for over 100 years, my
 19 ancestors.
 20 Anyway, I'm also known as the
 21 self-proclaimed mayor of Black Dog Alley

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1 because at one time the original Black Dog
 2 Alley ended at our farm. Not too many people
 3 know that. But it began on Denton Road or at
 4 that point where the McCartys live, and it
 5 actually dead-ended at the Trax Farm. Anyway,
 6 a little bit of history. It doesn't hurt
 7 anyone.
 8 I fully support this resolution. I would
 9 like to add to it that I would like to see the
 10 proposed or the studied expansion of that
 11 section of Black Dog Alley to hurry up and have
 12 it in place as soon as possible because that's
 13 going to help with the traffic. I don't think
 14 it will slow down the traffic. Perhaps we
 15 could add some speed pumps.
 16 I go out to get the mail each day, and I
 17 certainly am careful about looking both ways
 18 twice to make sure no one is coming on either
 19 side before I go to the mailbox, even though
 20 the mailbox is set back from the road a good
 21 distance. But I'm very concerned about that.

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1 And the prospect of, of course, the
 2 widening of that road and making it safer.
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 4 MR. TRAX: Would encourage more traffic
 5 and higher speed because that's a straight
 6 stretch from Dover Road to Matthewstown Road.
 7 So I would like to see this bill passed,
 8 and I would like to urge a speed-up of the
 9 expansion and consideration on my thoughts
 10 about how to deal with the speed on that road.
 11 So I thank you for the time. I appreciate
 12 the opportunity, Mr. Callahan.
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. Appreciate it.
 14 MS. HAYTHE: Thank you.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup, yup. Thank you.
 16 Okay.
 17 Anybody else?
 18 MR. SHORTALL: Can I ask a follow-up
 19 question?
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Come on up.
 21 MR. SHORTALL: It wasn't addressed by the

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1 sheriff, but what is the plan to enforce this?
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Tickets.
 3 MR. SHORTALL: Like what kind of a ticket?
 4 SHERIFF GAMBLE: I'm happy to answer.
 5 So we would obviously start with an
 6 educational period in the beginning, you know,
 7 and try to inform people.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Sheriff, could you come up
 9 and just address that, please. I appreciate
 10 that.
 11 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Sure. So thanks for the
 12 question.
 13 So there would be an educational period in
 14 the beginning to try to educate people on this.
 15 The State Police also has a truck enforcement
 16 unit. We would notify them of that as well,
 17 what's going on. There will be an educational
 18 thing.
 19 What you bring up about the
 20 tractor-trailers coming out of Baltimore, I was
 21 unaware of that, that they're using it as a

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1 cut-through. So I think, I mean depending how
 2 exactly it's written, it could be difficult to
 3 enforce that with a truck coming out of the
 4 Port of Baltimore.
 5 MR. SHORTALL: You can't tell the
 6 difference between me and --
 7 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Right, right. I mean we
 8 would know in June.
 9 MR. SHORTALL: Right.
 10 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Somebody is spilling corn
 11 out of the back of their truck, it's like this
 12 is not one of our guys. So I think that would
 13 be a challenge.
 14 Do you know how much traffic you see from
 15 there, from the port?
 16 MR. SHORTALL: You probably don't want to
 17 know.
 18 There was one company, which is not
 19 hauling now I found out, they were running four
 20 trucks a day, two loads. Two loads a day, four
 21 trucks a day. So eight round trips through

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1 there. There was another one I know that runs
 2 at least two trips a day through there and
 3 probably some others also. So there's at
 4 least --
 5 SHERIFF GAMBLE: They're going down to the
 6 chicken places in Salisbury?
 7 MR. SHORTALL: They're bringing organic
 8 corn from the Port of Baltimore to the feed
 9 mill in Hurlock.
 10 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Hurlock.
 11 MR. SHORTALL: Is what it is.
 12 But I mean in all fairness, I mean there's
 13 lots of grain that comes from Wye Mills and
 14 goes somewhere. I mean all of the grain mills
 15 around the shore are moving grain from one
 16 place to the other. A lot of that does come
 17 through one way or another.
 18 SHERIFF GAMBLE: I think that would be a
 19 challenge to enforce in what I've seen in the
 20 resolution. But I haven't read every word of
 21 what it will say.

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1 MR. SHORTALL: I mean it's obvious when
 2 the UPS tractor-trailer comes through, he's not
 3 delivering to anybody along Black Dog.
 4 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Right.
 5 MR. SHORTALL: Those things are obvious.
 6 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Right. And I think it's
 7 going to probably be the more obvious stuff
 8 that we would be able to enforce.
 9 MR. SHORTALL: And there's a ton of,
 10 excuse the pun, but there's a ton of dump truck
 11 traffic.
 12 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Yes, there is.
 13 MR. SHORTALL: A lot of dump truck traffic
 14 on that road.
 15 SHERIFF GAMBLE: There is a lot of dump
 16 truck. We had an accident with a dump truck in
 17 the ditch right there at the Harvey place as
 18 well.
 19 And I think we're out there a lot. That's
 20 probably our most worked road for the Sheriff's
 21 Office. I didn't bring those numbers of how

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1 many times we're out there, but we're out there
 2 a lot.
 3 MR. SHORTALL: (Inaudible.)
 4 SHERIFF GAMBLE: That's right.
 5 So I think it's going to be an educational
 6 thing. I think the deputies might be stopping
 7 some of those trucks, some of those grain
 8 trucks in the off season saying hey.
 9 I think we'd have to sit down and talk as
 10 a staff and talk to the law office about, okay,
 11 does this fit. It's through traffic.
 12 MR. SHORTALL: Right. Yeah, it's through
 13 traffic.
 14 SHERIFF GAMBLE: So I think the spirit of
 15 the law is in the right place. We might not be
 16 able to cite every single one of those. I
 17 probably don't want to be on record as saying
 18 all that. But we certainly can discourage it.
 19 MR. SHORTALL: I mean I think you enforce
 20 it a little bit.
 21 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Yeah.

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1 (Cross talk.)

2 SHERIFF GAMBLE: We had the same issue,

3 Council, on Dover Neck when we first did that.

4 There was an educational period. We went out

5 there and worked it. MSP went out there and

6 worked it, educated the truck drivers. And now

7 we're not seeing the complaints from the

8 neighbors, hey, these trucks are coming down

9 here. So I think it --

10 MR. CALLAHAN: This is step one. This is

11 step one on something that we're all going to

12 work together on. We know there's a problem.

13 We're not going to lock anybody up. So --

14 SHERIFF GAMBLE: Well, we might lock some

15 people up.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: Not me, please.

17 SHERIFF GAMBLE: But not for driving on

18 the road.

19 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right, Sheriff.

20 I appreciate it.

21 One more thing, Mr. Trax.

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1 MR. TRAX: Does the resolution --

2 MR. CALLAHAN: Wait a minute now. You're

3 going to have to come up because people can't

4 hear you.

5 MR. TRAX: Also, there's a lot of trash

6 trucks that go through Black Dog Alley at that

7 section because they're going to the, well,

8 going to the landfill for the transfer, a lot

9 of them.

10 And I'm wondering whether or not trash

11 trucks are included or excluded by exception?

12 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. Okay.

13 So at this time, I think it's eligible to

14 vote, Madam Secretary. Yup.

15 MR. MERTAUGH: Could I just make a quick

16 comment about the grain trucks that aren't

17 local?

18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes.

19 MR. MERTAUGH: Is that the road is going

20 to be posted with a weight limit. And the

21 folks that aren't from here aren't going to

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1 know about these exceptions.

2 They have CDL licenses, which obviously

3 they want to protect their livelihood.

4 So I suspect that a lot of these folks --

5 I mean they may figure it out. But for the

6 most part, they're not going to use the road if

7 they're overweight.

8 And trash trucks, no trash truck is going

9 to fit under that weight limit. So I think

10 they'll be excluded by that also.

11 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

12 MR. LESHHER: Unless they're doing pickups

13 from --

14 MR. MERTAUGH: Exactly. They're providing

15 a service. Exactly right. So I just wanted to

16 mention that.

17 MR. CALLAHAN: No. I appreciate that,

18 Mike. Thank you.

19 Okay.

20 MS. GHEZI: Mr. President, may I make a

21 comment?

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: Sure. Come on up.

2 MS. GHEZI: I apologize. This is the

3 public comment section; is that correct?

4 MR. CALLAHAN: No, no. This is on the

5 resolution.

6 MS. HAYTHE: Black Dog Alley.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.

8 MS. GHEZI: Thank you. I'll come back.

9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Anybody else? Okay.

10 Madam Secretary, okay. First, I want to

11 close the public hearing. Okay. And...

12 MR. LESHHER: If this is eligible for vote,

13 you can simply call for the roll.

14 MR. CALLAHAN: All right. Madam

15 Secretary, could you, first of all, where are

16 you, call for the roll. Thank you.

17 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

18 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

19 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

20 MR. STEPP: Aye.

21 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshher.

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1 MR. LESHER: Aye.
 2 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.
 3 MS. MIELKE: Aye.
 4 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.
 5 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right. Madam
 7 Secretary, could you go ahead and read the Bill
 8 1550. That would be great.
 9 SECRETARY: Bill Number 1550, a bill to
 10 amend Chapter 11 of the Talbot County Code,
 11 alcoholic beverages, regarding the issuance of
 12 class E, beer, wine, and liquor licenses for
 13 urban locations.
 14 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Mr. Thomas, would
 15 you go ahead and just give us an overview on
 16 that, please, for the public to help understand
 17 that.
 18 MR. THOMAS: Yes. This bill creates an
 19 exception to the market test that's provided
 20 for in section 118 of the county code for
 21 off-sale licenses. So this would allow a class

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1 E alcohol dispensary in a municipality that
 2 does not already have one.
 3 The only municipality would be affected by
 4 this at the moment is Trappe because they're
 5 the only municipality in the county that
 6 doesn't already have a class E alcohol
 7 dispensary.
 8 This market study ties the availability of
 9 these off-sale licenses to the population. And
 10 I think in Trappe, they have -- there might be
 11 two current class E licenses that I think are
 12 gas stations. So this would allow the town to
 13 have a liquor store that would sell beer, craft
 14 beer, fine wines, that sort of thing that the
 15 residents would otherwise have to travel to
 16 Cambridge or Easton to get.
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: I got you. Okay. That's
 18 great. Okay.
 19 So I'll go ahead and open this up, public
 20 hearing for 1550. So would anybody like to
 21 come on up on this side, on my left here? Come

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1 up, talk about it? No. Yes, sir, come up.
 2 MR. SULLIVAN: Make sure my legs didn't
 3 fall asleep.
 4 Mike Sullivan, commissioner, Town of
 5 Trappe.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, sir.
 7 MR. SULLIVAN: I've been sent here to
 8 basically express our pleasure with this
 9 resolution. We want to welcome it.
 10 Our town is certainly in need of any
 11 commercial development, and we're hoping to see
 12 this as just the beginning of that. As we get
 13 more of a population that can sustain these
 14 businesses, we're hoping that they will last.
 15 I've been here 20 years, and I've seen a
 16 few come and go. And it's basically they just
 17 don't have enough citizenry in the town to
 18 support it.
 19 But I also, in the 20 years I've been
 20 there, I'm getting tired of constantly having
 21 to drive to Easton or Cambridge in order to buy

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1 basic things. Obviously liquor is not one of
 2 the main things that I'm looking for. I don't
 3 even drink. But you know, it's a start.
 4 And I think hopefully this will be the
 5 beginning of many more businesses coming in.
 6 We're starting to get a lot of interest in the
 7 town, and we're really pleased to see that
 8 happening.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Good. Thank you.
 10 Appreciate it. Okay.
 11 MR. SULLIVAN: Any questions?
 12 MR. LESHER: Just thank you for expressing
 13 an opinion on behalf of the town. When we're
 14 addressing a bill that primarily impacts a
 15 municipality, this is quality of life issue,
 16 it's good to hear that. Thank you.
 17 MR. SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you.
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Thanks a lot. Okay.
 19 Anybody else would like to comment? Okay.
 20 Anybody here on my right here want to
 21 comment? Okay. All right.

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1 So I'll go ahead and close the public
 2 hearing on that. And Madam Secretary, is this
 3 eligible?
 4 SECRETARY: If you bring it to third
 5 reader.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 7 MR. LESHER: So the ordinary order would
 8 send this to third reader at our next meeting.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That sounds good.
 10 So we'll put that on the agenda for the next
 11 meeting. That will be great. Okay. All
 12 right. That's it on that. Okay. Yup.
 13 So I think we've wrapped everything up,
 14 but we have one lady out here.
 15 We did Council comment a little while ago
 16 because we were ahead of schedule. So you're
 17 welcome to come up here.
 18 MS. GHEZI: Okay.
 19 MR. LESHER: Reopening public comment?
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes.
 21 MS. GHEZI: Thank you for that

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1 opportunity.
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. No problem.
 3 MS. GHEZI: Mr. President, Council
 4 President. For the record, my name is Lisa
 5 Maria Ghezi, and I reside at 7218 Maxmore Creek
 6 Drive in Easton.
 7 And I'd like to express my concern for the
 8 removal of Bill Anderson from the Public Works
 9 Advisory Board.
 10 I first got to know Bill ten years ago in
 11 2013 when he and I were just becoming bee
 12 keepers actually. We had a few years under our
 13 belt, and I got to know him from a personal
 14 side. I had never known him otherwise.
 15 Little did I know at that time that Bill's
 16 background was in environmental law. And I
 17 first found out not only was he an
 18 environmental lawyer in Washington, but an
 19 excellent and well-respected lawyer.
 20 In fact, I learned this from the husband
 21 of a long-term friend of mine, an

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1 ophthalmologist in Washington, D.C. And he had
 2 worked with Bill on many matters in Washington.
 3 He was actually considered a Super Lawyer,
 4 before retirement, of course. You might be
 5 asking yourself what is that. Sounds like
 6 Superman. You might be right in thinking that.
 7 Super Lawyers is a rating service of
 8 outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice
 9 areas who have attained a high degree of peer
 10 recognition and professional development.
 11 The patented section of the process, of
 12 Super Lawyers that is, includes independent
 13 research, peer nominations, and peer
 14 evaluations.
 15 So an environmental lawyer in Talbot
 16 County. What a win for the county. Someone
 17 who has the expertise to understand the ins and
 18 outs of our county sewerage.
 19 Believe me, Mr. Anderson never thought of
 20 this as a glorious position. In fact, I've
 21 heard many comments from people in this

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1 industry. Nobody ever wants to do this kind of
 2 work. Well, Bill felt very dedicated to it and
 3 very much dedicated himself to it.
 4 A little bit of Bill's background. He's
 5 been working with the Clean Water Act since
 6 1973. And with this, participated in its
 7 development, judicial interpretations, and
 8 implementations ever since.
 9 He served on the Council of the American
 10 Bar Association. Also, a section of that, the
 11 section on the environment, energy, and
 12 resources, and co-chaired the committee on
 13 international environmental law.
 14 He graduated from UNC, the John F. Kennedy
 15 School of Government, and Harvard Law School.
 16 Talbot County, what a win.
 17 He's listed among the best lawyers in
 18 America. He and his wife, Jane, have served
 19 the county. I'm sorry, he and his wife Jane
 20 have lived here over 33 years. And we all know
 21 what spouses do in support. And we know how

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<p>1 much Bill has given to the county. And I want 2 to say thank you to his wife Jane as well. 3 But what I want to share with you is -- 4 MR. CALLAHAN: And I'm going to need you 5 to wrap it up if you can. 6 MS. GHEZI: Yeah. Thank you. I have 7 about 30 seconds. 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. 9 MS. GHEZI: He's demonstrated loyalty and 10 dedication. He's not a self-serving 11 individual. He cares about his county's 12 actions, and he is a very dedicated servant and 13 knowledgeable in this area. 14 If I had anybody to pick for my team, I 15 would pick Bill Anderson to be on my team 16 because he would help guide to a better 17 outcome. 18 Talbot County Council made an excellent 19 decision in nominating him to be on the Public 20 Works Advisory Board in 2014, 2018, and again 21 in 2022.</p>	<p>1 second to go ahead and adjourn. Madam 2 Secretary, could you call the vote. 3 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan. 4 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye. 5 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp. 6 MR. STEPP: Aye. 7 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner. 8 MR. LESHER: Aye. 9 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke. 10 MS. MIELKE: Aye. 11 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe. 12 MS. HAYTHE: Aye. 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thanks a lot. 14 Appreciate it. 15 MS. HAYTHE: Merry Christmas. 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Merry Christmas. 17 (Meeting concluded at: 7:01 p.m.) 18 19 20 21</p>
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<p>1 What really concerns me now is that the 2 County Council chose to remove Mr. Anderson 3 from his seat in the last couple of weeks. Why 4 is that? 5 Thank you. 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. Appreciate it. 7 Okay. 8 Mr. Leshner, you want to go ahead and... 9 MR. LESHER: Wrap us up? 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. 11 MR. LESHER: The County Council's next 12 meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 9th, 13 beginning at six o'clock p.m. The Council will 14 be convening in open session at 4:30 p.m. and 15 then adjoining into closed session, as listed 16 on the statement for closing that meeting. 17 Therefore, is there a motion to adjourn 18 this meeting and reconvene as noted? 19 MR. STEPP: So moved. 20 MS. HAYTHE: Second. 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. We got a motion and</p>	<p>1 STATE OF MARYLAND 2 I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland, County of Baltimore City, 3 do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot County Council Audio, personally appeared before me 4 at the time and place herein set according to law, was interrogated by counsel. 5 I further certify that the examination was 6 recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed from my stenographic notes to the within printed 7 matter by means of computer-assisted transcription in a true and accurate manner. 8 I further certify that the stipulations 9 contained herein were entered into by counsel in my presence. 10 I further certify that I am not of counsel 11 to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel, nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way 12 interested in the outcome of this action. 13 AS WITNESS my hand Notorial Seal this 18th day of December, 2023, at Easton, MD. 14 15  16 _____ Diane Houlihan Notary Public 17 18 19 My commission expires September 16, 2025 20 21</p>

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