	Page 1
1	COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
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4	Special Council Meeting
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7	June 21, 2024, 1:00 p.m.
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10	Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland
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14	COUNCIL MEMBERS:
15	Chuck F. Callahan
16	Keasha Haythe
17	Lynn L. Mielke
18	
19	
20	Reported by
21	Diane Houlihan

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	Page 2		Page 4
1	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS	1	MR. LeCATES: And we have dry conditions.
2		2	We've recently had some rather large
3	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Welcome, Keasha and	3	fires, field fires. One that was over 100
4	Lynn. And I want to welcome everybody here	4	acres and took several hours to contain.
5	today.	5	And with the temperatures coming up and
6	So let's go ahead and start off with the	6	heat indices going to be 105, 106 in the near
7	Pledge of Allegiance of the Flag.	7	future, it's really dangerous for firefighters
8	(Pledge of Allegiance.)	8	to be out in gear when they don't necessarily
9	MR. CALLAHAN: So what we're going to talk	9	have to be, fighting fires that don't
10	about today for a few minutes, we've got some	10	necessarily have to be started.
11	concerns on it's really dry out. And the fire	11	So I'll turn it over to Sonny to
12	departments and EMS and Emergency Services has	12	elaborate.
13	some concerns.	13	MR. CALLAHAN: 2yes, sir.
14	So Brian, would you mind coming on up?	14	CHIEF JONES: Thank you. And thanks for
15	And Sonny, would you mind coming on up?	15	having us.
16	And sort of let's start briefly helping	16	MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Chief.
17	the public understand in Talbot County that	17	CHIEF JONES: So basically right now,
18	we've had several fires now, and we're getting	18	other than what Brian said, speaking of drought
19	a little concerned until it gets rainy again a	19	condition, your moisture content or your
20	little bit.	20	appreciable rainfall is down about
21	So can you help us understand some of your	21	approximately 25 percent from your normal
	Page 3		Page 5
1	concerns?	1	average for this time of year.
2	MR. LeCATES: Sure. So thank you for	2	That decreases the amount of moisture
3	having us and thank you for calling this	3	content in vegetation, which allows fires to
4	special meeting.	4	not only start quickly but to grow rapidly and
5	MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.	5	to grow exponentially before the Emergency
6	MR. LeCATES: On such short notice.	6	Services or fire department personnel even
7	So I was contacted by Chief Jones from the	7	arrive.
8	Easton Volunteer Fire Department to explore the	8	We're requesting this not to try to
9	potential of putting in a burn ban.	9	infringe on the rights of anyone in the county
10	So we've used this as an element in the	10	from doing what they need to do for having open
11	past to be able to stop unnecessary burns for a	11	fires. We're doing it because the risks
12	certain period of time when we're having	12	outweigh the benefits of open fires at this
13	exceedingly dry and hot weather where we are	13	point. The potential for conflagration to
14	worried about ignition sources that would cause	14	occur is much greater because there is such low
15	a much larger incident.	15	moisture content in the vegetation.
16	MR. CALLAHAN: Right, right.	16	Speaking with the regional forester this
17	MR. LeCATES: So that's where we're at now	17	morning, he even indicated in our woods, even
18	with the current forecast of weather	18	though that the plant material is green, that
19	conditions. We are not forecasted to have any	19	the ground underneath of that, the organic
20	significant precipitation in the near future.	20	material is very dry, which a fire can burn
21	MR. CALLAHAN: Right.	21	underground almost unseen and spread rapidly as
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	Page 6		Page 8
1	well, just because there is very little	1	CHIEF JONES: To include bonfires.
2	moisture content.	2	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay, okay.
3	MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. That	3	CHIEF JONES: And things like that.
4	sounds great.	4	Simply because the risk is greater than the
5	So let's so I think there's a few other	5	reward in my opinion because
6	counties that have sort of done this, too.	6	MR. CALLAHAN: And fire pit, that type of
7	CHIEF JONES: It's my understanding that	7	stuff sitting around?
8	last Thursday I believe Worcester and Somerset	8	CHIEF JONES: Yes.
9	enacted a ban.	9	MR. LeCATES: Yes.
10	MR. LeCATES: Yesterday.	10	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
11	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So just a few little	11	MR. LeCATES: But it would not include
12	things.	12	grills for grilling food.
13	So we want to start using common sense for	13	MR. CALLAHAN: Yes. Right.
14	the next several weeks with stuff like that.	14	MR. LeCATES: Or municipal firework
15	We know 4th of July is coming up. So we need	15	displays.
16	to have a little common sense with fireworks	16	MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
17	and that type of stuff.	17	MR. LeCATES: The large expensive displays
18	And we also need to have some common sense	18	that some of our municipalities have already
19	when we're dealing with cookouts and, you know,	19	scheduled, those would still be okay.
20	fires out there, that kind of stuff.	20	MR. CALLAHAN: Be okay to do. Yeah.
21	Are we saying, are we sort of saying just	21	Okay. So that's great, that's great.
	Page 7		Page 9
1	be common sense when it comes to sitting around	1	So okay. So let's go ahead and get Madam
2	a bonfire with your family eating out on the	2	Secretary to go ahead and read the
3	deck or something to that affect?	3	administrative resolution.
4	How do we want to treat that? How do we	4	MS. MORRIS: Administrative resolution to
5	want to tell the public?	5	adopt an emergency burning ban throughout
6	CHIEF JONES: So anytime you have any type	6	Talbot County due to prolonged or unusual
7	of open air fire burning, I'm talking about	7	conditions that are conducive to the easy start
8	someone burning brush or material.	8	and spread of fire.
9	MR. CALLAHAN: Yes.	9	Whereas, pursuant to section 119-6A of the
10	CHIEF JONES: Bonfires, things like that,	10	Talbot County Code, a majority of the County
11	the potential for those embers or ashes to	11	Council of Talbot County may, in their capacity
12	carry quite a distance away and start another	12	as county executive, impose a burning ban at
13	fire is great.	13	any time in any parts of Talbot County or
14	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.	14	throughout the county as a whole based on the
15	CHIEF JONES: At this time because it's so	15	affirmative recommendation and finding of the
16	dry.	16	Burn Ban Committee that prolonged or unusual
17	MR. CALLAHAN: Right.	17	conditions exist that are conducive to the easy
18	CHIEF JONES: It's my understanding that	18	start and spread of fire.
19	the ban would prohibit any outdoor burning	19	And whereas, the county is experiencing
20	whatsoever.	20	abnormally dry conditions with the potential
21	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.	21	for flash drought conditions in portions of the

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	Page 10		Page 12
1	county throughout the month of June and into	1	fact and incorporated by reference as a
2	the month of July.	2	substantive part of this administrative
3	And whereas, the National Climatic Data	3	resolution.
4	Center shows 85 percent of the State of	4	Two, a complete ban on all open air
5	Maryland is experiencing abnormally dry	5	burning is hereby imposed throughout the
6	conditions and portions of the Delmarva	6	county.
7	Peninsula are experiencing moderate drought.	7	Three, during the entire time this burn
8	And whereas, vegetation along Maryland's	8	ban is in effect, no person may allow, permit,
9	Eastern Shore, including in the county, is dry	9	cause, start, or continue, despite a request to
10	and prone to ignition, as the county endures	10	continue, any open air burning.
11	such abnormally dry and drought conditions.	11	Four, as used in this administrative
12	And whereas, the number and scope of	12	resolution, open air burning means burning any
13	recent fire reports and incidents have recently	13	material in the open and in a receptacle other
14	increased, including a single wildfire that	14	than a furnace, incinerator, or other equipment
15	burned over 100 acres and took multiple fire	15	connected to a stack or chimney, including use
16	departments several hours to control.	16	of fireworks, sparklers, or sparkling devices,
17	And whereas, temperatures are forecasted	17	except in lawfully permitted municipal
18	to reach the mid to upper 90s in the coming	18	fireworks displays.
19	days, with heat indices between 100 and 105	19	Five, the burning ban adopted by this
20	degrees possible, which will cause severe	20	administrative resolution shall become
21	stress on individual firefighters wearing full	21	effective on Friday June 21, 2024, at 2 o'clock
	Page 11		Page 13
1	fire gear and on available firefighting	1	p.m. and shall continue for a period of 30 days
2	resources throughout the county.	2	and shall expire on Sunday, July 21, 2024, at 2
3	And whereas, in consideration of the	3	o'clock p.m., unless terminated or extended by
4	foregoing, on June 21, 2024, the committee	4	separate resolution or legislative act before
5	recommended that the County Council impose a	5	that date.
6	burning ban throughout the county for a period	6	Six, as used in this administrative
7	of 30 days.	7	resolution, the term public officer means the
8	Whereas, the exercise of sound and prudent	8	chief code compliance officer, their designees,
9	discretion to protect the public health,	9	Talbot County fire chiefs and their designees.
10	safety, and welfare to conserve firefighting	10	Seven, during the entire time the burning
11	resources and to protect the general public and	11	ban imposed hereunder is in effect, a public
12	their property from such increased risks and	12	officer having reasonable suspicion to believe
13	instances of fires reasonably required the	13	that open air burning is occurring in the
14	County Council to be proactive by immediately	14	county may enter upon the public or private
15	banning open air burning throughout the county	15	property of any person to extinguish the fire
16	in accordance with Section 119-6A of the Talbot	16	and may confiscate any unused fireworks,
17	County Code.	17	sparklers, or sparkling devices, if any such
18	Now, therefore, be it resolved by the	18	materials or devices have been involved with or
19	County Council of Talbot County on this 21st	19	used in violation of the burning ban. Nothing
20	day of June 2024 that, one, the recitals set	20	in this section authorizes any public officer
21	forth above are hereby adopted as findings of	21	to enter any dwelling, structure, or building.

Page 14 1 Eight, this administrative resolution is supported to amendment or modification, including a cxtension or termination by a separate as resolution or legislative act of the Council, as may be reasonably required from time to time. 7 And be it further resolved that this administrative resolution shall take effect on price, and administrative resolution shall take effect on a formation of the fire service, own are out there monitoring the fire service, who are out there monitoring the fire service, our Emergency Services Mr. Stamp, would you like to say a few words? Name, CALLAHAN: Okay. All right. Kasaha, Keasha, do you have anything to say? MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. MR. CALLAHAN: Ok		-		
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MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's great. MR. LeCATES: I don't have anything else to add. Thank you, sir. MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's great. MR. Thomas, would you like to say anything? MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So at this time, is MR. THOMAS: I don't have anything further there a motion?	15	And it's before you. The matter is before	15	MR. CALLAHAN: No. I appreciate that.
18 Mr. Thomas, would you like to say 19 anything? 19 MR. THOMAS: I don't have anything further 20 there a motion? 18 to add. Thank you, sir. 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So at this time, is there a motion?	16	you at hand.	16	And Brian.
anything? 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So at this time, is MR. THOMAS: I don't have anything further 20 there a motion?	17	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's great.	17	MR. LeCATES: I don't have anything else
20 MR. THOMAS: I don't have anything further 20 there a motion?	18	Mr. Thomas, would you like to say	18	to add. Thank you, sir.
	19	anything?	19	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So at this time, is
21 to add. 21 MS. MIELKE: So moved.	20	MR. THOMAS: I don't have anything further	20	there a motion?
	21	to add.	21	MS. MIELKE: So moved.

	Talbot County C	Council Meeting June 21, 2024
	Page 18	
1	MR. CALLAHAN: Is there a second?	
2	MS. HAYTHE: Second.	
3	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and	
4	second to go ahead and approve the	
5	administrative resolution as presented.	
6	Madam Secretary, could you call the vote.	
7	MS. MORRIS: Mr. Callahan.	
8	MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.	
9	MS. MORRIS: Ms. Mielke.	
10	MS. MIELKE: Aye.	
11	MS. MORRIS: Ms. Haythe.	
12	MS. HAYTHE: Aye.	
13	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Other than that,	
14	that's basically the end of the meeting.	
15	And we really appreciate the good work	
16	you're doing.	
17	MR. LeCATES: Thank you.	
18	CHIEF JONES: Thank you.	
19	MR. LeCATES: We appreciate the support.	
20	MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you.	
21	(Meeting concluded at: 1:13 p.m.)	
3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	STATE OF MARYLAND I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland, County of Baltimore City, do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot County Council Audio, personally appeared before me at the time and place herein set according to law, was interrogated by counsel. I further certify that the examination was recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed from my stenographic notes to the within printed matter by means of computer-assisted transcription in a true and accurate manner. I further certify that the stipulations contained herein were entered into by counsel in my presence. I further certify that I am not of counsel to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel, nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way interested in the outcome of this action. AS WITNESS my hand Notorial Seal this 25th day of June, 2024, at Easton, MD. Diane Houlihan Notary Public	
20	My commission expires September 16, 2025	
21		

[100 - capacity]

1	9	amount 5:2	believe 6:8
100 4:3 10:15	90s 10:18	anytime 7:6	13:12 15:12
10:19		appeared 19:3	benefits 5:12
105 4:6 10:19	a	appreciable	bit 2:20
106 4:6	able 3:11	4:20 17:6,14	bonfire 7:2
119-6a 9:9	abnormally	appreciate	bonfires 7:10
11:16	9:20 10:5,11	16:16 17:15	8:1
1362 19:15	above 11:21	18:15,19	brian 2:14 4:18
16 19:19	accordance	approaching	17:16
1:00 1:7	11:16	17:3	briefly 2:16
1:13 18:21	accurate 19:7	approve 18:4	brush 7:8
2	acres 4:4 10:15	approximately	building 13:21
	act 13:4 14:4	4:21	burn 3:9 5:20
2 12:21 13:2	action 19:12	arrive 5:7	9:16 12:7 15:8
14:9	actually 17:2	ashes 7:11	burned 10:15
2024 1:7 11:4	add 15:21	assisted 19:7	burning 7:7,8
11:20 12:21	16:15 17:18	audio 19:3	7:19 9:5,12
13:2 14:9,12	administrative	authorizes	11:6,15 12:5
14:15,20 19:13	9:3,4 12:2,11	13:20	12:10,12,12,19
2025 19:19	12:20 13:6	available 11:1	13:10,13,19
21 1:7 11:4	14:1,8 18:5	14:13,16	burns 3:11
12:21 13:2	adopt 9:5	average 5:1	c
14:9,12,15	adopted 11:21	aye 18:8,10,12	call 18:6
21st 11:19	12:19 14:14	b	callahan 1:15
14:19	affect 7:3	back 17:7	2:3,9 3:5,16,21
25 4:21	affirmative	baltimore 19:2	4:13,16 6:3,11
25th 19:13	9:15	ban 3:9 6:9	7:9,14,17,21
2yes 4:13	aforesaid 14:10	7:19 9:5,12,16	8:2,6,10,13,16
3	ahead 2:6 9:1,2	11:6 12:4,8,19	8:20 14:21
30 11:7 13:1	18:4	13:11,19 15:8	15:17 16:1,5
4	air 7:7 11:15	17:8	16:10,14 17:4
4th 6:15 17:3	12:4,10,12	banning 11:15	17:9,12,15,19
8	13:13	based 9:14	18:1,3,7,8,13
_	allegiance 2:7,8 allow 12:8	basically 4:17	18:20
85 10:4		18:14	calling 3:3
	allows 5:3	basis 15:7	capacity 9:11
	amendment		
	14:2		

[carry - employee]

carry 7:12	compliance	15:13 16:7	devices 12:16
cause 3:14	13:8	19:3	13:17,18
10:20 12:9	computer 19:7	counsel 19:4,9	diane 1:21 19:2
center 10:4	concerned 2:19	19:10,11	19:16
certain 3:12	concerns 2:11	counties 6:6	discretion 11:9
certainly 17:5	2:13 3:1	county 1:1,1	displays 8:15
certify 19:3,5,8	concluded	2:17 5:9 9:6,10	8:17 12:18
19:10	18:21	9:10,11,12,13	distance 7:12
chambers 1:10	condition 4:19	9:14,19 10:1,9	doing 5:10,11
chief 3:7 4:14	conditions 3:19	10:10 11:2,5,6	18:16
4:16,17 6:7 7:6	4:1 9:7,17,20	11:14,15,17,19	drought 4:18
7:10,15,18 8:1	9:21 10:6,11	11:19 12:6	9:21 10:7,11
8:3,8 13:8 17:2	conducive 9:7	13:9,14 14:11	dry 2:11 3:13
17:5,10,13	9:17	14:12,14,15,19	4:1 5:20 7:16
18:18	confiscate	16:7 19:2,3	9:20 10:5,9,11
chiefs 13:9	13:16	current 3:18	due 9:6
chimney 12:15	conflagration	d	duties 16:7
chuck 1:15	5:13	dangerous 4:7	dwelling 13:21
city 19:2	connected	data 10:3 15:12	e
climatic 10:3	12:15	date 13:5	eastern 10:9
0.10	1110		
code 9:10	conserve 11:10	dav 11:20	easton 1:10 3:8
11:17 13:8	consideration	day 11:20 14:19 19:13	easton 1:10 3:8 19:13
11:17 13:8 come 15:13	consideration 11:3	14:19 19:13	19:13
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7	14:19 19:13 days 10:19	19:13 easy 9:7,17
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9	14:19 19:13 days 10:19	19:13 easy 9:7,17
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16 11:4 15:8	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16 cookouts 6:19	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6 department	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12 element 3:10
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16 11:4 15:8 common 6:13	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16 cookouts 6:19 copies 14:13	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6 department 3:8 5:6 15:9	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12 element 3:10 embers 7:11
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16 11:4 15:8 common 6:13 6:16,18 7:1	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16 cookouts 6:19 copies 14:13 correct 16:10	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6 department 3:8 5:6 15:9 departments	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12 element 3:10 embers 7:11 emergency
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16 11:4 15:8 common 6:13 6:16,18 7:1 community	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16 cookouts 6:19 copies 14:13 correct 16:10 council 1:1,4	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6 department 3:8 5:6 15:9 departments 2:12 10:16	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12 element 3:10 embers 7:11 emergency 2:12 5:5 9:5
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16 11:4 15:8 common 6:13 6:16,18 7:1 community 16:17	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16 cookouts 6:19 copies 14:13 correct 16:10 council 1:1,4 1:10,14 9:11	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6 department 3:8 5:6 15:9 departments 2:12 10:16 designees 13:8	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12 element 3:10 embers 7:11 emergency 2:12 5:5 9:5 15:10
11:17 13:8 come 15:13 17:7 comes 7:1 coming 2:14,15 4:5 6:15 10:18 16:16 commission 19:19 committee 9:16 11:4 15:8 common 6:13 6:16,18 7:1 community	consideration 11:3 contacted 3:7 contain 4:4 contained 19:9 content 4:19 5:3,15 6:2 continue 12:9 12:10 13:1 control 10:16 cookouts 6:19 copies 14:13 correct 16:10 council 1:1,4	14:19 19:13 days 10:19 11:7 13:1 dealing 6:19 deck 7:3 decreases 5:2 degrees 10:20 delmarva 10:6 department 3:8 5:6 15:9 departments 2:12 10:16 designees 13:8 13:9	19:13 easy 9:7,17 eating 7:2 effect 12:8 13:11 14:8 effective 12:21 eight 14:1 elaborate 4:12 element 3:10 embers 7:11 emergency 2:12 5:5 9:5 15:10 emphasize 16:6

[ems - indices]

ems 2:12	fighting 4:9	future 3:20 4:7	hereunder
enacted 6:9	finding 9:15	g	13:11
endures 10:10	findings 11:21	gear 4:8 11:1	hesitate 17:7
enjoy 17:11	fire 2:11 3:8	general 11:11	holiday 17:3,11
enter 13:14,21	5:6,20 7:7,13	getting 2:18	hope 17:13
entered 19:9	8:6 9:8,18	given 14:18	hopefully
entire 12:7	10:13,15 11:1	go 2:6 9:1,2	16:19
13:10	13:9,15 15:6	18:4	hot 3:13
equipment	15:10	going 2:9 4:6	houlihan 1:21
12:14	firefighters 4:7	16:18	19:2,16
everybody 2:4	10:21 16:9	good 14:21	hours 4:4
examination	firefighting	18:15	10:16
19:5	11:1,10	great 6:4 7:13	i
exceedingly	fires 2:18 4:3,3	8:21,21 14:18	ignition 3:14
3:13	4:9 5:3,11,12	15:17	10:10
except 12:17	6:20 11:13	greater 5:14	immediately
executive 9:12	firework 8:14	8:4	11:14
exercise 11:8	fireworks 6:16	green 5:18	impose 9:12
exist 9:17	12:16,18 13:16	grilling 8:12	11:5
expensive 8:17	five 12:19	grills 8:12	imposed 12:5
experiencing	flag 2:7	ground 5:19	13:11
9:19 10:5,7	flash 9:21	grow 5:4,5	incident 3:15
expire 13:2	food 8:12	guys 16:16	incidents 10:13
expires 19:19	forecast 3:18		incinerator
explore 3:8	forecasted 3:19	h	12:14
exponentially	10:17	hand 15:16	include 8:1,11
5:5	foregoing 11:4	19:13	including 10:9
extended 13:3	forester 5:16	hands 14:18	10:14 12:15
extension 14:3	forestry 15:9	haythe 1:16	14:2
extinguish	forth 11:21	16:4 18:2,11	incorporated
13:15	four 12:11	18:12	12:1
f	friday 12:21	health 11:9	increased
f 1:15	14:9	15:9	10:14 11:12
fact 12:1	full 10:21	hearing 15:2	indicated 5:17
family 7:2	furnace 12:14	heat 4:6 10:19	indices 4:6
field 4:3	further 14:7	help 2:21	10:19
	15:20 19:5,8	helping 2:16	
	19:10		

[individual - p.m.]

individual	lawfully 12:17	meeting 1:4 3:4	need 5:10 6:15
10:21	lecates 3:2,6,17	14:12,15 15:11	6:18
infringe 5:9	4:1 6:10 8:9,11	18:14,21	normal 4:21
instances 11:13	8:14,17 17:17	meetings 14:16	notary 19:2,17
interested	18:17,19	members 1:14	notes 19:6
19:12	legislative 13:4	mid 10:18	notice 3:6
interrogated	14:4	mielke 1:17	notorial 19:13
19:4	letting 16:17	16:6,11 17:21	number 10:12
introduced	life 16:12,13	18:9,10	15:7,8
14:11	little 2:19,20	mind 2:14,15	0
involved 13:18	6:1,11,16	minutes 2:10	o'clock 12:21
j	lord 14:20	moderate 10:7	13:3 14:9
job 14:21	low 5:14	modification	occur 5:14
jones 3:7 4:14	lynn 1:17 2:4	14:2	occurring
4:17 6:7 7:6,10	m	moisture 4:19	13:13
7:15,18 8:1,3,8	madam 9:1	5:2,15 6:2	officer 13:7,8
17:2,5,10,13	14:21 18:6	monitoring	13:12,20 15:9
18:18	made 15:8	15:6	officials 15:11
july 6:15 10:2	majority 9:10	month 10:1,2	okay 2:3 6:11
13:2 17:3	manner 19:7	morning 5:17	7:14,21 8:2,2
june 1:7 10:1	maryland 1:1	morris 9:4 18:7	8:10,19,20,21
11:4,20 12:21	1:10 10:5 19:1	18:9,11	9:1 14:21
14:9,12,15,19	19:2	motion 17:20	15:17 16:1,5
19:13	maryland's	18:3	17:19 18:3,13
k	10:8	moved 17:21	open 5:10,12
keasha 1:16 2:3	material 5:18	multiple 10:15	7:7 11:15 12:4
16:2,2	5:20 7:8 12:13	municipal 8:14	12:10,12,13
kind 6:20	materials	12:17	13:13
know 6:15,19	13:18	municipalities	opinion 8:5
16:17,17	matter 15:15	8:18	organic 5:19
10.17,17	19:7	n	outcome 19:12
1	md 19:13	named 19:3	outdoor 7:19
l 1:17	means 12:12	national 10:3	outweigh 5:12
large 4:2 8:17	13:7 19:7	near 3:20 4:6	p
larger 3:15	mechanism	necessarily 4:8	p.m. 1:7 13:1,3
law 19:4	15:14	4:10	14:9 18:21
			11.7 10.21

[part - several]

part 12:2	proceedings	reasonable	reviewed 15:12
parties 19:11	2:1	13:12	reward 8:5
19:11	prohibit 7:19	reasonably	right 3:16,16
parts 9:13	prolonged 9:6	11:13 14:5	3:21 4:17 7:17
past 3:11	9:16	recent 10:13	8:13,16 16:1
peninsula 10:7	prone 10:10	recently 4:2	16:14
people 17:10	properly 17:10	10:13	rights 5:9
percent 4:21	property 11:12	receptacle	risk 8:4
10:4	13:15	12:13	risks 5:11
period 3:12	protect 11:9,11	recitals 11:20	11:12
11:6 13:1	prudent 11:8	recommenda	rural 16:12,12
permit 12:8	15:12	9:15	S
permitted	public 2:17 7:5	recommended	safety 11:10
12:17	11:9,11 13:7	11:5	16:8,16
person 12:8	13:11,14,20	recorded 19:6	saying 6:21,21
13:15	14:13,17 16:8	reference 12:1	scheduled 8:19
personally 19:3	19:2,17	regional 5:16	scope 10:12
personnel 5:6	pursuant 9:9	regular 15:7	seal 14:18
pit 8:6	putting 3:9	related 19:11	19:13
place 19:4	\mathbf{q}	relief 15:13	second 18:1,2,4
plant 5:18	questions 15:2	repeal 17:8	secretary 9:2
pledge 2:7,8	16:4	reported 1:20	15:1 18:6
point 5:13	quickly 5:4	reports 10:13	section 9:9
portions 9:21	17:3	request 12:9	11:16 13:20
10:6	quite 7:12	15:5	sense 6:13,16
possible 10:20	r	requesting 5:8	6:18 7:1
potential 3:9		required 11:13	separate 13:4
5:13 7:11 9:20	rain 16:19 17:6	14:5	14:3
precipitation	17:14 rainfall 4:20	resolution 9:3	september
3:20		9:4 12:3,12,20	19:19
presence 19:9	rainy 2:19	13:4,7 14:1,4,8	service 15:6,10
presented 18:5	rapidly 5:4,21 rather 4:2	18:5	services 2:12
preserve 16:8	rather 4:2 reach 10:18	resolved 11:18	5:6 15:10
printed 19:6	read 9:2	14:7	set 11:20 19:4
private 13:14	realize 17:2	resources 11:2	seven 13:10
proactive	really 2:11 4:7	11:11	several 2:18
11:14	16:15 18:15	responders 16:11	4:4 6:14 10:16
		1611	1

[severe - witness]

severe 10:20	state 10:4 19:1	thank 3:2,3	understanding
shore 10:9	19:2	4:14,16 17:18	6:7 7:18
short 3:6	stenographic	18:17,18,20	unnecessary
shows 10:4	19:6	thanks 4:14	3:11
sic 14:16	stenographic	things 6:12	unseen 5:21
signature	19:6	7:10 8:3	unused 13:16
19:15	stipulations	think 6:5	unusual 9:6,16
significant 3:20	19:8	thomas 15:18	upper 10:18
simply 8:4	stop 3:11	15:20	use 12:15
single 10:14	stress 10:21	three 12:7	used 3:10
sir 4:13 6:3,3	structure 13:21	thursday 6:8	12:11 13:6,19
17:9,18	stuff 6:14,17,20	time 3:12 5:1	using 6:13
sitting 7:1 8:7	8:7	7:15 9:13 12:7	V
six 13:6	subject 14:2	13:10 14:5,6	vegetation 5:3
somerset 6:8	substantive	17:19 19:4	5:15 10:8
sonny 2:15	12:2	today 2:5,10	violation 13:19
4:11	sunday 13:2	took 4:4 10:15	volunteer 3:8
sort 2:16 6:6,21	support 18:19	transcribed	vote 18:6
sound 11:8	sure 3:2 16:20	19:6	
sounds 6:4	suspicion 13:12	transcript 2:1	W
sources 3:14	t	transcription	want 2:4 6:13
sparklers	take 14:8	19:7	7:4,5
12:16 13:17	talbot 1:1 2:17	treat 7:4	way 16:12
sparkling	9:6,10,11,13	true 19:7	19:11
12:16 13:17	11:16,19 13:9	try 5:8	we've 2:10,18
speaking 4:18	14:11,14,19	turn 4:11	3:10 4:2
5:16	19:3	two 12:4 15:8	wearing 10:21
special 1:4 3:4	talk 2:9	type 6:17 7:6	weather 3:13
14:12,15	talking 7:7	8:6	3:18
spread 5:21 9:8	tell 7:5	u	weeks 6:14
9:18	temperatures	under 14:18	welcome 2:3,4
stack 12:15	4:5 10:17	underground	welfare 11:10
stamp 15:3,5	term 13:7	5:21	whatsoever
start 2:6,16 5:4	terminated	underneath	7:20
6:13 7:12 9:7	13:3	5:19	wildfire 10:14
9:18 12:9	13.3		wildlife 16:12
7.10 12.7	termination	understand	• • • • •
started 4:10	termination 14:3	understand 2:17,21	witness 19:13

[woods - yup]

woods 5:17 worcester 6:8 words 15:4 16:21 work 18:15 worried 3:14

y

yeah 8:20 16:14 17:2,4 17:12 year 5:1 14:19 yesterday 6:10 yup 3:5