



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

March 12, 2024

Present – President Chuck Callahan, Vice President Pete Leshner, Keasha N. Haythe, Lynn L. Mielke, Dave Stepp, County Manager Clay Stamp, and County Attorney Patrick Thomas.

- I. Agenda – The Agenda of Tuesday, March 12, 2024, was brought forward for approval. Mr. Stepp made a motion to add to the County Manager’s Report, *Letter of Support for Trappe Volunteer Fire Department for Congressionally Directed Spending for Assistance with Building a New Firehouse*; the motion was seconded by Ms. Haythe. The Council approved the Agenda of Tuesday, March 12, 2024, as amended, by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
Mr. Stepp - Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

- II. Minutes - Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, February 13, 2024.

- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, March 5, 2024, and Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

- IV. Council Recognition of Cadet Philip Horner, Easton Composite Squadron, MD-079, Civil Air Patrol – Maryland Wing – The Clerk read a certificate of recognition into the record which spoke of the accomplishment of Cadet Philip Horner, recent recipient of the Civil Air Patrol, United States Air Force Auxiliary’s Brigadier General Billy Mitchell Award for excellence in the areas of leadership, aerospace, fitness and character, and his promotion from Cadet Chief Master Sergeant to Cadet 2nd Lieutenant. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the certificate of recognition by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe - Aye

Prior to presentation of the certificate of recognition, Lt. Col. Ramon “Archie” DeJesus, Easton Composite Squadron Commander, Civil Air Patrol, U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, briefed the Council on the history of the Brigadier General Billy Mitchell Award, named after Billy Mitchell who is considered the father of the modern Air Force because of his passion and vision for air power for the United States. Lt. Col. DeJesus stated that the Civil Air Patrol has been active in Talbot County since the 1950s, promoting aerospace education in the development of young leaders; adults can participate in an emergency services program. Council members congratulated Cadet Horner on his outstanding accomplishment and for his inspiration to other youth.

Mr. Stepp presented the Certificate of Recognition to Cadet Horner.

V. Update from Breezeline – Tami Allen, Regional Director, Business Operations, Breezeline – Ms. Allen briefed the Council on recent work Breezeline has been conducting within their cable system located in Talbot County, including proactively replacing older power supplies in neighborhoods, building out more fiber to homes, and upgrading equipment. She stated that the system upgrades have resulted in a ten percent reduction in service-related calls. She stated that various payment options are now available to subscribers including payment through Western Union locations in Walmart, Walgreens Pharmacies and some grocery stores; on-line and via telephone payment options are also available. Ms. Allen stated that subscribers can now more easily obtain or return equipment through Breezeline’s “drop-ship” program through UPS, with the drop-ship program soon to become available through the U.S. Postal Service. She outlined several of Breezeline’s contributions to the communities it serves, included providing Internet access to 1,250 low-and moderate-income families in Maryland, donation of over \$500,000 to community events and the same amount in courtesy services, and a reduction of the company’s carbon footprint through the use of electric vehicles. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Allen regarding citizens’ concerns related to gaps in service. Ms. Allen outlined Breezeline’s progress toward strengthening the network and thereby expanding the bandwidth to reduce the service gaps. Council members also noted citizens’ concerns regarding the removal of WBOC in Salisbury from the Breezeline channel lineup, emphasizing that Talbot County is more connected to the Salisbury (MD) market than to the Baltimore (MD) market; Council requested that a response from Breezeline on the matter be provided to County Manager, Clay Stamp.

VI. Presentation of Delmarva Community Transit’s FY2025 Annual Transportation Plan – Keith Adkins, Deputy Director, Delmarva Community Services, Inc.; Andrea Waters, Transportation Grants Specialist, Delmarva Community Services, Inc.; Henry Teet, Transportation Operations Manager, Delmarva Community Transit for Caroline, Kent, and Talbot counties– Ms. Waters briefed the Council on Delmarva Community Transit’s annual transportation grant application to Maryland Department of Transportation for FY2025 funding under the Federal Transit Act. The grant application includes operating and capital funding requests as well as the sources of all funding received through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). She stated that the FY25 Plan includes a Capital request in the sum of \$113,149 for the replacement of a bus, as well as preventive maintenance in the sum of \$30,000; the federal and State portions total \$101,834 and \$27,000, respectively; the local shares total \$11,315 and \$3,000, respectively. Ms. Waters stated that total federal and State funding requested is \$1,138,913; local matching funding requested from the participating counties totals \$439,345 for a grand total of \$1,578,258. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Waters. Delmarva Community Transit also provides mobility on demand services in Talbot County, as well as transportation services for senior citizens on behalf of Upper Shore Aging, Inc. Council members expressed their appreciation to Delmarva Community Transit for the services they provide. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved Delmarva Community Transit’s FY2025 Annual Transportation Plan as presented by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

- Mr. Callahan - Aye
- Mr. Stepp – Aye
- Mr. Leshner – Aye
- Ms. Mielke – Aye
- Ms. Haythe – Aye

VII. Introduction of Numbered Resolutions:

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO RECLASSIFY AND REMAP CERTAIN REAL PROPERTIES LOCATED AT

BLUEBERRY ACRES LANE, TAX MAP 32, PARCEL 171, 7634 WALES LANE, TAX MAP 32, PARCEL 156, 7590 WALES LANE, TAX MAP 32, PARCEL 163, AND 7596 WALES LANE, ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 32, PARCEL 179, FROM UNPROGRAMMED TO “S-1” IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Engineer, Ray Clarke, stated that his office had received an application from a property owner on Wales Lane to be connected to the sewer service area and that his office had subsequently worked with the other property owners identified in the proposed resolution to bring them into the sewer service area. Mr. Clarke stated that the County is currently in the process of extending sewer to Blueberry Acres, which is adjacent to Wales Lane, and his office is working to obtain an easement with a property owner on Blueberry Acres to bring sewer service to the parcels outlined in the proposed resolution. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Clarke who advised that one of the lots has a failing septic system. The resolution was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 354. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO RECLASSIFY AND REMAP CERTAIN REAL PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 6362 BELLEVUE ROAD, ROYAL OAK, MARYLAND, SHOWN ON TAX MAP 40 AS PARCEL 67, AND THE ADJOINING LOT, SHOWN ON TAX MAP 40 AS PARCEL 40, RESPECTIVELY, FROM UNPROGRAMMED TO “S-1” IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Engineer, Ray Clarke, stated that his office had received an application from the property owner of the lots outlined in the proposed resolution. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Clarke who advised that the Public Works Agreement for the sewer service will allocate only one sewer tap per lot. The resolution was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 355. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601. At Council’s request, Mr. Clarke will provide additional information on subject parcels prior to the public hearing.

VIII. Introduction of Legislation:

A BILL TO AWARD 8.348 ACRES OF SUPPLEMENTAL GROWTH ALLOCATION TO THE TOWN OF EASTON AND TO IMPOSE CERTAIN CONDITIONS, RESTRICTIONS, AND LIMITATIONS ON ITS USE was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that in 2022, Tom Cohee and Lot 16, LLC submitted a request to the Town of Easton for a growth allocation for approximately eight (8) acres of real property at 28580 Marys Court from Resource Conservation Area to Intensely Developed Area. He stated that the Town of Easton has used all its available growth allocation and is requesting that the County grant supplemental growth allocation so that the Town can approve the request. Mr. Thomas stated that the County currently has 462 acres in supplemental growth allocation remaining to allocate to the towns for supplemental requests. He stated that the Town and County Planning Commissions held a joint public hearing in September 2022 regarding the matter and specific request from Tom Cohee and Lot 16, LLC and recommended that their respective legislative bodies approve the request. He stated that the County Council and the Town Council held a joint public hearing in April 2023, and in January 2024, the Town Council approved Ordinance No. 807 which granted the request, upon the condition that the County Council award the supplemental growth allocation. Council discussion ensued with Brennan Tarleton, Talbot County Planning Officer. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1551. A public hearing was

scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 11 OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE (ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES) FOR THE PURPOSE OF GENERALLY EXEMPTING THOMPSON PARK, LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF EASTON, FROM THE 500-FOOT PUBLIC PARK SETBACK REQUIREMENT FOR NEW OFF-SALE LICENSES was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the request for the legislation was made by Zach Smith on behalf of his client, Blue Point Hospitality. Mr. Thomas stated that the County's current alcoholic beverages code prohibits new off-sale alcoholic beverage licensed establishments within 500 feet of schools, correctional facilities, and parks, with the exception of Thompson Park in Easton, but only for Class I alcohol dispensary bistros such as The Wardroom. Mr. Thomas stated the proposed legislation would delete the reference to a Class I alcohol dispensary bistro and would permit any off-sale establishment within 500 of Thompson Park, not just the existing one. Mr. Smith outlined the reason for the request in further detail. He stated that he had spoken with officials from the Town of Easton and anticipates a letter of support from the Town prior to the County's public hearing on the legislation. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Smith and Mr. Thomas. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1552. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

IX. Eligible for Vote:

Resolution No. 338, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN (CWSP) FOR CONSISTENCY WITH DISCHARGE PERMIT NO. 19-DP-3460, ISSUED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON OCTOBER 27, 2022 AND TO REQUIRE THAT ANY FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE NEW LAKESIDE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SHALL REQUIRE AN AMENDMENT TO THE CWSP was read into the record by the Clerk; the resolution and Amendment No. 1 were then brought forward for vote. Prior to the vote, Mr. Leshner stated that the purpose of Amendment No. 1 is to provide the County the same review opportunity as the discharge permit (Discharge Permit 19-DP-3460) issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and that the language of Amendment No. 1 parallels most of the language of the Discharge Permit. He stated that nothing new is imposed on the Town of Trappe beyond what the State requires, except to insert the County's review at the same time as the State's review. He stated that he had heard from a large number of citizens who are in favor of Amendment No. 1. Ms. Mielke concurred with Mr. Leshner's statements and stated that she had originally introduced Resolution No. 338, prompted by MDE's direction with respect to the wastewater treatment plant (Discharge Permit 19-DP-3460). Mr. Stepp requested that the vote on Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 be postponed until the Planning Commission has provided a recommendation on Resolution No. 347 and Resolution No. 348, anticipated to be at their meeting on Wednesday, April 3, 2024; Council discussion ensued and Planning Officer, Brennan Tarleton, clarified that the Planning Commission's April meeting would take place on Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. due to the unavailability of some members on Wednesday, April 3, 2024; Council discussion again ensued. Mr. Stepp made a motion to delay the vote on Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 until the Council's first meeting in April, April 9th, after the Planning Commission's meeting on April 2, 2024; following Council discussion with Mr. Tarleton and Mr. Thomas, Ms. Haythe seconded the motion. The Council approved postponing the vote on Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 to the April 9, 2024, Council meeting by voting 3 – 2 as follows:

Mr. Callahan- Aye

Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Nay
Ms. Mielke – Nay
Ms. Haythe - Aye

X. County Manager’s Report:

- A. Talbot County Emergency Services Advisory Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Shirley Bucci to a three-year term on the Talbot County Emergency Services Advisory Board as the St. Michaels District representative; said term will expire on February 1, 2027. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke - Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

- B. Request from Superintendent of Roads and County Facilities to Award Contract for Re-roofing of County Office Building at 215 Bay Street, Easton – Requested Council approval to award a contract for re-roofing the County office building located at 215 Bay Street to the lowest bidder, A.K.J., Inc., in the sum of \$97,750, and to utilize Contingency Funds for the project which the Finance Director has certified are available. Brian Moore, Superintendent, Roads and County Facilities, briefed the Council on the project and stated that the roof is at the end of its life expectancy. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the request as outlined by voting 5– 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke - Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

- C. Request from Roads Department to Extend the Contract for Bid No. 23-05, FURNISHING & DELIVERY, WITH POSSIBLE APPLICATION, OF CRS-2L EMULSIFIED ASPHALT WITH POLYMER, TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Requested Council approval of the recommendation of the Superintendent of Roads and County Facilities to extend the contract for Bid No. 23-05 through June 30, 2025. Brian Moore, Superintendent, Roads and County facilities, stated that the purpose of the contract is to provide liquid asphalt for the County’s paving and tar and chip operations. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved extension of the contract by voting 5– 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke - Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

- D. Request for Letter of Support from Trappe Volunteer Fire Department – Requested Council approval to forward a letter in support of the Trappe Volunteer Fire Department’s application for Congressionally Directed Spending; if approved, the funding will be utilized toward the construction of a new firehouse; no County funding is required. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the forwarding a letter in support of the application for funding by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

- E. Welcome to Reporter for *The Star Democrat* – Mr. Callahan welcomed the new Star Democrat reporter, Veronica Fernandez-Alvarado.

XI. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

XII. Council Comments:

Ms. Haythe – Ms. Haythe stated that, in her opinion, the Council members work very well together and that she respects the protocol in place whereby if a Council member requests to obtain more information on a matter, as Mr. Stepp requested with regards to Resolution No. 338, the matter is pushed farther down the road, and that we respect that as a Council. She stated that, in her opinion, it is a good protocol to have and to listen to all the members and to respect that, if that is what is needed. Ms. Haythe concluded her comments by stating that she enjoys working with each of her colleagues.

Ms. Mielke - Ms. Mielke concurred with Ms. Haythe’s comment that it is a good Council.

Mr. Leshner - No comments.

Mr. Stepp - Mr. Stepp concurred with Ms. Haythe’s comments and expressed his appreciation that the protocol is used across the Council on a wide array of issues. He stated that in this season of visiting all the volunteer fire departments across the county, we have, in his opinion, enjoyed seeing everyone receive awards as well as seeing the youth, the next generation of first responders in our county, really step up. He stated that there is one member of the Easton Volunteer Fire Department who has achieved over 30 years of service which caught the Council’s attention.

At Mr. Stepp’s request, the Clerk then read a proclamation into the record which recognized Council President Chuck Callahan for his 37 years of service and contributions to the citizens of Talbot County as a member of the Easton Volunteer Fire Department and noted that since October 31, 2007, Mr. Callahan has been a Life Member of the Easton Volunteer Fire Department. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the certificate of recognition

by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp presented the Certificate of Recognition to Mr. Callahan.

Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan expressed his appreciation to his colleagues for their thoughtfulness. He stated that the fire department has been, and continues to be, a big part of his life and that he may go back to it sometime in the future. He stated that, in his opinion, it's always nice to fall back on something that you really enjoy because there are a lot of great people in that organization. Mr. Callahan concurred with the comments of Ms. Haythe and Mr. Stepp that we do have a good Council; he stated that he has served on the Council for many years involved with voting situations, and, in his opinion, as painful as it is sometimes, when you want something to be voted on and one member needs more information, it is refreshing to know that everyone is behind you to move the matter to the next meeting as another member may need to make a similar request in the future. Mr. Callahan concluded his comments by again expressing his appreciation to his colleagues for recognizing his service with the Easton Volunteer Fire Department.

The transcript of the March 12, 2024, County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Thursday, March 14, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. for FY25 Budget Deliberations; on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. for a work session on draft legislation regarding cannabis regulations; followed by a work session on a proposal for oyster nutrient trading credits; and at 5:00 p.m. for FY25 Budget Deliberations, and on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. for FY25 Budget Deliberations; all meetings will take place in the Bradley Meeting Room and are open to the public. The Council will reconvene on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. for work sessions; at 4:00 p.m. for FY25 Budget Deliberations, and at 5:00 p.m. will adjourn into Closed Session as listed on the statement for closing that meeting, and for the regularly scheduled meeting at 6:00 p.m. by voting 5 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner - Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye

The meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

XIII. Summary of Closed Session Held on March 12, 2024:

1. Statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed session:

Time of closed session: 4:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
 Place of closed session: County Council Office
 Purpose of the closed session: To consider various matters as set forth in the statement for closing the meeting

2. Record of the vote of each member as to closing the session:

Names of members voting aye: Callahan, Haythe, Leshner, Mielke, Stepp
 Members opposed: None
 Abstaining: None
 Absent: None

3. Statutory authority to close session and listing of each topic actually discussed, persons present, and each action taken in the session:

Topic Description	Statutory Authority	Reason for Closed Session Discussion	Persons Present	Action Taken
To discuss appointments to various County boards and committees	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Public discussion would discourage individuals from volunteering to serve	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
To discuss public security with regards to cybersecurity	GP § 3-305(b)(10)	To receive briefing on emergency plans with regards to cybersecurity	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris, Tommy Haddaway	No action



**TALBOT COUNTY,
MARYLAND
WEEKLY CASH
STATEMENT
March 5, 2024**

OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK

OPERATING FUNDS AT	2/27/2024	\$19,346,818.11
TOTAL ADP PAYROLL PPE 2/16/2024		(840,438.10)
TOTAL ADP MONTHLY PAYROLL PPE 2/29/2024		(20,156.22)
RETURNED CHECK #1068		(40.00)
Deposits		1,552,349.64
Checks		(232,333.65)
ACH Disbursements		(853,408.85)
EFT'S		(257,270.52)
OPERATING FUNDS AT	2/27/2024	<u>\$18,695,520.41</u>

PETTY CASH FUNDS \$18,105.00

INVESTMENT FUNDS

	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.38%	\$21,750,403.81
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,588,161.24
Shore United Money Market Account	5.33%	\$76,620,133.16
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL		<u>\$108,958,698.21</u>

TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS

\$127,672,323.62



**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT
March 12, 2024**

OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK

OPERATING FUNDS AT	3/5/2024	\$18,695,520.41
Deposits		11,450,928.56
Checks		(124,926.59)
ACH Disbursements		(539,248.45)
EFT'S		(104,590.30)
Wire Transfers		(4,513,982.97)
Voided Check(s) #370900, 370911		8,433.18
Voided ACH Disbursement		660.00

\$24,872,793.84

OPERATING FUNDS AT 3/12/2024

PETTY CASH FUNDS \$18,105.00

INVESTMENT FUNDS

	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.35%	\$21,750,403.81
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,626,673.88
Shore United Money Market Account	5.33%	\$76,620,133.16

**INVESTMENT FUNDS
TOTAL**

**\$
108,997,210.85**

TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS

**\$
133,888,109.69**
