



Deposition of:
Council Meeting

December 21, 2021

In the Matter of:
Talbot County Council Meeting

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COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Council Meeting

December 21, 2021; 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chuck F. Callahan

Pete Leshner

Frank Divilio

Corey W. Pack

Laura E. Price - Via Telephone

Reported by

Diane Houlihan

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<p>1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 MR. CALLAHAN: I want to welcome</p> <p>4 everybody. We'll go ahead and get started</p> <p>5 tonight. So we will have Mr. Lesher say the</p> <p>6 prayer and then we're going to follow that up</p> <p>7 by the Pledge of Allegiance of the Flag. If</p> <p>8 you could stand, please.</p> <p>9 (Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.)</p> <p>10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So thank you,</p> <p>11 Mr. Lesher, for that great prayer. Appreciate</p> <p>12 that.</p> <p>13 I want to welcome everybody tonight. So</p> <p>14 let's get started on the agenda. The agenda of</p> <p>15 December 21st is before us. Is there any</p> <p>16 additions, deletions, or corrections to the</p> <p>17 agenda?</p> <p>18 MR. LESHER: I'll move that we remove item</p> <p>19 six, the presentation request by the Talbot</p> <p>20 County Board of Elections.</p> <p>21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.</p>	<p>1 Ms. Price is on the phone here. So she's with</p> <p>2 us here tonight, too.</p> <p>3 Okay. The next thing on the agenda is the</p> <p>4 minutes, the minutes of November 23rd. Are</p> <p>5 there any additions, deletions, or corrections</p> <p>6 to the minutes? Hearing none, the chair moves</p> <p>7 that the minutes be accepted by unanimous</p> <p>8 consent. Okay.</p> <p>9 The next thing on the agenda is</p> <p>10 disbursements of December 21st. Council has</p> <p>11 had a chance to review them. Are there any</p> <p>12 additions, deletions, or corrections to the</p> <p>13 disbursements, Council? Hearing none, the</p> <p>14 chair moves that the disbursements be accepted</p> <p>15 by unanimous consent. Okay.</p> <p>16 So the next thing on the agenda is the</p> <p>17 introduction of Ms. Church. We're happy to</p> <p>18 have her. So if you don't mind, come on up.</p> <p>19 And Joe, you want to come on up?</p> <p>20 MR. SECRIST: We just wanted to introduce</p> <p>21 Dionne Church, our new election director. She</p>
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<p>1 MR. DIVILIO: I'll second.</p> <p>2 MR. CALLAHAN: We got a motion and a</p> <p>3 second to eliminate number six. Madam</p> <p>4 Secretary, could you call the vote, please.</p> <p>5 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.</p> <p>6 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.</p> <p>7 SECRETARY: Mr. Divilio.</p> <p>8 MR. DIVILIO: Aye.</p> <p>9 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.</p> <p>10 MR. LESHER: Aye.</p> <p>11 SECRETARY: Ms. Price.</p> <p>12 MS. PRICE: Aye.</p> <p>13 SECRETARY: Mr. Pack.</p> <p>14 MR. PACK: Aye.</p> <p>15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.</p> <p>16 MR. DIVILIO: And we should say that that</p> <p>17 was at their request.</p> <p>18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes. That's at their</p> <p>19 request. Thank you, Mr. Divilio. She wasn't</p> <p>20 able to make it tonight. Okay.</p> <p>21 By the way, before we get started,</p>	<p>1 served six years as a deputy director in</p> <p>2 Wicomico County. So she's got a lot of</p> <p>3 experience.</p> <p>4 MR. CALLAHAN: That's great.</p> <p>5 MR. SECRIST: Now we'll orient her to</p> <p>6 Talbot County.</p> <p>7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's good.</p> <p>8 MS. CHURCH: It's a pleasure.</p> <p>9 MR. CALLAHAN: It's a pleasure. Really</p> <p>10 appreciate you doing the job and stepping up.</p> <p>11 And just want to let you know that the Council,</p> <p>12 you're always welcome to come here. I'm sure</p> <p>13 you'll be in front of us a little bit here</p> <p>14 through the years here coming. And you're</p> <p>15 always welcome to reach out. If you need us,</p> <p>16 we're there to help you.</p> <p>17 MS. CHURCH: Well, thank you. I'm looking</p> <p>18 forward to working with you.</p> <p>19 MS. PRICE: Yup, yup. Council.</p> <p>20 MR. LESHER: You're coming in at a busy</p> <p>21 time. It's an election year. I expect that</p>

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<p>1 some of us will become familiar faces over</p> <p>2 time.</p> <p>3 MS. CHURCH: We will.</p> <p>4 MR. LESHER: Look forward to working with</p> <p>5 you.</p> <p>6 MS. CHURCH: Looking forward to it.</p> <p>7 MR. PACK: Welcome, likewise. This is a</p> <p>8 very busy time of year. You're going into a</p> <p>9 presidential election and gubernatorial</p> <p>10 election. Well, gubernatorial election I</p> <p>11 should say, not presidential. So going to have</p> <p>12 really a busy time here in the next couple of</p> <p>13 months, if not already.</p> <p>14 MS. CHURCH: Yes.</p> <p>15 MR. PACK: So welcome aboard.</p> <p>16 MS. CHURCH: Thank you.</p> <p>17 MR. PACK: I like the pink and white</p> <p>18 there, too. It's AKA, huh?</p> <p>19 MS. CHURCH: Yes. Thank you.</p> <p>20 All right. It's a pleasure. I'll be</p> <p>21 seeing you soon.</p>	<p>1 engineer met with the town engineer and our</p> <p>2 roads superintendent. And they took a look at</p> <p>3 the situation, and they have affirmed that we</p> <p>4 are good to go.</p> <p>5 MR. CALLAHAN: That sounds great.</p> <p>6 MR. STAMP: To move forward with this.</p> <p>7 That would be the recommendation.</p> <p>8 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you,</p> <p>9 Mr. Stamp.</p> <p>10 So any questions from Council? Everybody</p> <p>11 good with that information? Okay. Do I have a</p> <p>12 motion?</p> <p>13 MR. PACK: I think it's eligible for vote</p> <p>14 tonight.</p> <p>15 MR. CALLAHAN: So I don't need a motion to</p> <p>16 move forward, just need a vote? Is that all we</p> <p>17 need? Okay.</p> <p>18 MR. PACK: It's been read a second time.</p> <p>19 That's all you need.</p> <p>20 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Madam Secretary,</p> <p>21 could you call the vote.</p>
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<p>1 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Ms. Church. I</p> <p>2 appreciate it. Okay.</p> <p>3 That was great. So we're all set for the</p> <p>4 elections. Okay.</p> <p>5 Next on the agenda, eligible for vote. We</p> <p>6 got Resolution 310 eligible for vote. Madam</p> <p>7 Secretary, could you go ahead and read the</p> <p>8 title, please.</p> <p>9 SECRETARY: Resolution Number 310, a</p> <p>10 resolution authorizing the transfer of any</p> <p>11 interest Talbot County, Maryland, holds in</p> <p>12 Flood Avenue to the Town of Easton and the</p> <p>13 execution of a quitclaim deed to effectuate the</p> <p>14 same.</p> <p>15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you, Madam</p> <p>16 Secretary.</p> <p>17 So Mr. Stamp, you want to just make sure</p> <p>18 that we're all clear here?</p> <p>19 MR. STAMP: Yes, sir. Thank you,</p> <p>20 Mr. Council President, Members of the Council.</p> <p>21 After last week's meeting, our county</p>	<p>1 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.</p> <p>2 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.</p> <p>3 SECRETARY: Mr. Divilio.</p> <p>4 MR. DIVILIO: Aye.</p> <p>5 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.</p> <p>6 MR. LESHER: Aye.</p> <p>7 SECRETARY: Ms. Price.</p> <p>8 MS. PRICE: Aye.</p> <p>9 SECRETARY: Mr. Pack.</p> <p>10 MR. PACK: Aye.</p> <p>11 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right. That</p> <p>12 went pretty good.</p> <p>13 Next thing on the agenda here, if Joye</p> <p>14 could come on up, that would be great. Just</p> <p>15 want to do a discussion.</p> <p>16 And this is very important for the</p> <p>17 citizens. We're going to try to do our best we</p> <p>18 can to help you understand the penalties and</p> <p>19 the interest and stuff like that with the</p> <p>20 sewer. The last couple of years that's gone on</p> <p>21 and we've deferred that and tried to help</p>

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1 everybody out in the county here.
 2 So I'm going to leave it up to Joye to
 3 help us get through this and see what we can do
 4 here.
 5 MS. NAGLE: We're going to try to hurry.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 7 MS. NAGLE: Good evening.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Good evening.
 9 MS. NAGLE: I really do appreciate having
 10 the opportunity to speak with you this evening.
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Could you put that mike up
 12 a little closer? That would be great.
 13 MS. NAGLE: Is that better?
 14 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. That's good.
 15 MS. NAGLE: I also want to take this
 16 opportunity to introduce you to Tracy Smith.
 17 I'm not sure if you've had an opportunity to
 18 meet him or not. He works with me in the
 19 Finance Department as a tax -- he's our
 20 accountant. He handles property taxes and
 21 knows most things tax related. He's very well

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1 versed in the sanitary districts billing. So I
 2 wanted him to have a chance to come up and
 3 speak as well and answer any questions that you
 4 might have.
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: No problem. That sounds
 6 great.
 7 MS. NAGLE: We are about to prepare the
 8 sewer bills for the quarter. And so we do have
 9 a decision to make.
 10 Because of the economic hardships faced by
 11 our community during the pandemic, it was
 12 recommended by the Finance Department and
 13 approved by Council that we waive interest and
 14 penalties on delinquent sewer bills. And we
 15 had asked for permission from Council beginning
 16 April 2020. We asked for permission three
 17 times, April 2020 to December 2020. It was
 18 reaffirmed January 2021 through June 2021 and
 19 then again July 2021.
 20 The deferment is set to expire on
 21 December 31st. So now we all know that the

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1 pandemic is ongoing and hardships likely
 2 continue for many community members.
 3 The question is should we continue to
 4 waive the interest and penalties on delinquent
 5 accounts. What I want to do is give you enough
 6 information I hope to inform the decision and
 7 have you have the opportunity to ask us any
 8 questions that you might have.
 9 So currently there are 143 delinquent
 10 accounts. And we define those delinquent
 11 accounts as anybody owing more than a quarter's
 12 bill. So that's approximately five percent of
 13 our about 2,800 sewer accounts. The balance
 14 owed for these delinquent accounts is about
 15 \$111,000. And on an individual account basis,
 16 that's individually between 400 to \$1,000 is
 17 how much is owed.
 18 Before the pandemic, we measured that as
 19 of December 2019, there were approximately 200
 20 delinquent accounts. So we are in a better
 21 position today. And that was out of 2,800

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1 total accounts. And the balance at that point
 2 was \$97,000. So the total balance has grown,
 3 but the number of accounts is down.
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: Good, good.
 5 MS. NAGLE: So of course, we could
 6 continue to waive the interest and penalties,
 7 but I don't think that gets to the root of the
 8 problem.
 9 Interest and penalties we project on
 10 average is only about nine percent of the
 11 outstanding balance of an individual's account.
 12 So it likely does not affect the customer's
 13 ability to pay.
 14 Because of this, I don't, I really don't
 15 recommend that we extend deferral of interest
 16 and penalties.
 17 A separate question. The need for some
 18 assistance to pay outstanding bills is a
 19 separate and important question. There could
 20 also be a need for support with other utilities
 21 for the broader community.

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1 I believe that we need to assess the need
 2 for assistance with a broader review of
 3 community needs.
 4 And just, the process, just a little bit
 5 about the process. A customer's account is
 6 delinquent at the end of February after we
 7 prepare the bills. If we don't waive the
 8 interest and they're considered delinquent,
 9 they will be notified at that point that they
 10 will enter the tax sale process.
 11 And they will receive a flyer from us that
 12 gives them some information about agencies that
 13 they could reach out to for support, just as we
 14 do that with folks that get behind on their
 15 property taxes.
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 17 MS. NAGLE: And they still have the
 18 ability to get current at that point. The
 19 flyer that we make for folks that would enter
 20 the tax sale process doesn't happen until April
 21 of 2022. And we're predicting that the next

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1 tax sale will happen in May of 2022.
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. He's awful quiet.
 3 MS. NAGLE: He's waiting for questions.
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: I'm sure he does some great
 5 work. And I heard you do very great work. And
 6 we really appreciate everything that you do.
 7 MR. SMITH: Thank you.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Tracy, that's for sure.
 9 So out of the 143 people that are behind a
 10 little bit and we're helping, I think you said
 11 we have alerted them that this date of
 12 December 31st is sort of the end of it? Do
 13 they know that at this point or are we deciding
 14 that now?
 15 MR. SMITH: That's going to be decided
 16 now.
 17 MS. NAGLE: We're deciding now. So when
 18 the bills get prepared at the beginning of the
 19 year, at that point --
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.
 21 MS. NAGLE: Yeah.

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: I'm with you.
 2 I think, Council, we probably need to
 3 discuss is the 31st of December, she's kind of
 4 recommending that. They're hearing this for
 5 the first time. I'm not sure.
 6 MR. PACK: Not the first time. Remember,
 7 this is our third extension.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: I understand. Yup.
 9 MR. PACK: Of penalties and so forth.
 10 You know, the Council has done a great job
 11 with our CARES funding to help citizens out
 12 through that hardship. Through Cassandra's
 13 office and through the county manager's office,
 14 we were able to help a number of citizens who
 15 fell upon hard times. We worked very closely
 16 with our utility companies, both here in the
 17 town and outside the town, to help citizens out
 18 who were having some difficulty.
 19 We couldn't use CARES funding I believe
 20 for sewer, but we could use it for some
 21 utilities bills.

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1 So there was some assistance over and
 2 above the waiver of the penalties and fees. We
 3 have the assistance you could have gotten for
 4 utility and taken that money and swung it over
 5 to pay your sewer bill if you were so inclined.
 6 And it seems that citizens did that because you
 7 were at 200 delinquent accounts at the onset.
 8 Now you're down to 143. So there was several
 9 who did what they should have done to pay their
 10 bills.
 11 The chicken will come home to roost at
 12 some point. And I think that you can do as
 13 much as you can to help citizens out through
 14 some difficult times. But I think it comes to
 15 a point where you have to say this is the end
 16 date, pick it back up, and pay your bills.
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 18 MR. LESHER: It seems to me that the
 19 circumstances that motivated this, the pandemic
 20 shutdown, the fact that some people were out of
 21 work, this was done back in the days when we

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1 were wondering how are we going to replace this
 2 income. The paycheck protection program and
 3 others, those programs worked.
 4 We -- people are back to work, many of
 5 them now remotely. The recovery is pretty
 6 remarkable, which is not to say that everybody
 7 is out of trouble. But we're back to economic
 8 circumstances that are more typical of
 9 pre-pandemic times and that -- and where the
 10 social safety net that existed prior is still
 11 in place. The services such as the
 12 Neighborhood Service Center that can help
 13 people with these utilities, those programs
 14 remain in place.
 15 And I think I can -- we had -- this
 16 shouldn't come as a surprise to anybody. We
 17 had said this was going through the end of this
 18 year. It would be news if we were to choose to
 19 extend this for any period of time.
 20 What I'm hearing here is that there's not
 21 substantial justification for continuing to do

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1 so.
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Mr. Divilio.
 3 MR. DIVILIO: So I'm looking at \$110,000
 4 that's owed to the county from 143 people,
 5 which is about \$700 on average.
 6 MS. NAGLE: Right.
 7 MR. DIVILIO: What is an average water...
 8 MS. NAGLE: Somewhere between 100 and 200.
 9 MR. SMITH: The average sewer bill,
 10 depending on where you live, I think in the
 11 Tilghman district it's about \$130. If you live
 12 in Martingham, I think it's 182.50. Rio Vista
 13 I think is \$177.50, which I think is the same
 14 as St. Michaels. Royal Oak and Bellevue I
 15 believe is \$175. It might be \$177.50.
 16 MR. DIVILIO: That's fine.
 17 MR. SMITH: So it's somewhere in there
 18 generally.
 19 MR. DIVILIO: So the amount outstanding
 20 that these individuals is much more than
 21 they're accustomed to coming up with on a

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1 quarterly basis. It's accrued over a lot of
 2 time.
 3 I don't want to see 143 houses go to a tax
 4 sale, nor do I want 143 people running into the
 5 Neighborhood Service Center asking for 1,000
 6 bucks and completely depleting that account as
 7 well.
 8 But it's clear that if we continue with
 9 it, it's just going to continue to grow
 10 exponentially. And the amount of people coming
 11 off of it, it's not correlating to the amount
 12 that we owe back.
 13 So yeah. I don't see how -- if someone
 14 were to come in and make payment arrangements
 15 to this, would that extend or prevent them from
 16 going to the tax sale?
 17 MR. SMITH: Generally --
 18 MR. DIVILIO: If there's money owed.
 19 MR. SMITH: Many of the customers, there's
 20 already in place that they can pay whatever
 21 they can pay on the bill. They don't have to

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1 pay the whole bill in full if they can't.
 2 Since it's a quarterly bill, you could in
 3 theory pay so much for each of the three months
 4 and make up most of it maybe even without the
 5 interest. But we're talking one percent of
 6 interest.
 7 MS. NAGLE: But I think they have to get
 8 their bill down to \$50. Is that correct?
 9 MR. SMITH: Yes. Well, for sewer, if we
 10 cut off on December 31st, they'll get a bill in
 11 January. That won't go against them for tax
 12 sale. And they'll get another one in April,
 13 and that won't go against them for tax sale.
 14 But whatever is outstanding at
 15 December 31st, they would have to pay down to
 16 less than \$50 to be taken out if the sewer
 17 bills are the only charges they have that are
 18 outstanding. If they have taxes outstanding,
 19 they would be in the sale anyway.
 20 MR. DIVILIO: Okay.
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: But December 31st.

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<p>1 MR. SMITH: Whatever the balance is at 2 December 31st. If they pay say in mid February 3 and they get down below that, then they'll come 4 out of the sale process. 5 MR. CALLAHAN: I got you. 6 MR. SMITH: Even if they pay in March or 7 in April before it goes to the newspaper, 8 they'll come out then, too. 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. 10 MS. NAGLE: They do have some time. 11 MR. DIVILIO: \$110,000 out of the \$450,000 12 quarterly revenue, that's a big chunk of money. 13 And that, I don't want to just ignore that, 14 even though I'm sure Ray could spend that in 15 one pump sometimes it seems like. 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. 17 MR. DIVILIO: It seems like people would 18 have six months to get it collected, paid up, 19 as well as -- well, I guess no. You're only 20 going to have December through April. 21 Yes. I'm fine with ending it. And as</p>	<p>1 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. 2 MR. DIVILIO: You're going to get the 3 brunt of it, but that's not fair. It is these 4 individuals who haven't gone out and looked for 5 help yet. There is help out there, and we will 6 help them. 7 Put it back on me if you need to, but I 8 appreciate the difficult position that you're 9 going to be in. But thank you. 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. 11 MS. NAGLE: You're welcome. 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay, Council. All right. 13 So Joye, you got your sort of marching 14 orders. 15 MS. NAGLE: Okay. 16 MR. CALLAHAN: You and Tracy. 17 So Tracy, I really appreciate everything 18 you can do to try to help these individuals. 19 So if there's -- 20 MR. PACK: Well, let me -- I'm sorry. Go 21 ahead.</p>
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<p>1 long as we are putting options and letting 2 people know where they can go for assistance, I 3 think it's the thing that we have to do 4 unfortunately. 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. Okay. All right. 6 So I guess we'll put this to a vote. 7 MR. LESHER: Is there simply a no action 8 needed? 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Are we just taking 10 recommendations of Joye? Is that what we're -- 11 or do we need to take action on this? 12 MR. PACK: It just ends. You don't have 13 to take any action. It ends the 31st. 14 MR. DIVILIO: I think for Ms. Nagle's 15 benefit, it would be nice for the Council to 16 take ownership of this, that we are bringing 17 this to an end. 18 And it was great that -- I appreciate you 19 bringing this to our attention, trying to look 20 for some kind of guidance. You're not the one 21 making this decision.</p>	<p>1 MR. CALLAHAN: If there's something that 2 needs to come to our attention of some sort 3 that the Council can help, we've helped for two 4 years. So if out of the 143, if there's a few 5 of them there that for some reason something is 6 not right, please come to the Council so we can 7 help these people. Thank you. 8 MS. NAGLE: You're welcome. 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Pack. 10 MR. PACK: I was just going to say I don't 11 know whether Mr. Divilio was alluding to a 12 motion to take the matter off of Ms. Nagle's 13 shoulders and put it on Council's shoulders. 14 I would entertain a motion, if that's what 15 he was leaning towards, although one is not 16 necessary. If you wanted it for the record, I 17 would certainly second any motion to do so. So 18 putting it out there. 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. I sort of think it 20 would probably help put it on our shoulders, 21 you know. I mean...</p>

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1 MR. DIVILIO: I can do that. I'll make a
 2 motion that we bring an end to the deferment on
 3 the sewer bills and start billing regularly
 4 again.
 5 MR. PACK: I'll second that.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and
 7 a second to end the deferment December 31st.
 8 Madam Secretary, could you call the roll,
 9 please.
 10 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.
 12 SECRETARY: Mr. Divilio.
 13 MR. DIVILIO: Aye.
 14 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.
 15 MR. LESHNER: Aye.
 16 SECRETARY: Ms. Price.
 17 MS. PRICE: Aye.
 18 SECRETARY: Mr. Pack.
 19 MR. PACK: Aye.
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you. Thank
 21 you, Council.

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1 MR. PACK: Let me say to Tracy, I think
 2 you've outdone me with your tie.
 3 Thank you, Tracy, for all your help.
 4 MR. SMITH: Thank you.
 5 MS. NAGLE: Thank you very much.
 6 MR. STAMP: Ready for county manager
 7 report?
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Huh?
 9 MR. STAMP: You want to go to county
 10 manager report?
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: I sure do. I was getting
 12 ready. Yeah. Absolutely.
 13 MR. STAMP: So under county manager report
 14 this evening, first of all, before I go into
 15 that, I just want to recognize the good work
 16 that Joye and the team, Tracy and Ken back
 17 here, do. It's been some challenging times
 18 running special programs.
 19 And of course, I'll give a quick briefing
 20 on the fire that we had in the north wing on
 21 Sunday. And they're just doing what it takes

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1 to get the job done. So I just want to
 2 recognize them for that.
 3 Under county manager report, Mr. Council
 4 President, Members of the Council, we have one
 5 request this evening for the appointment of
 6 Mr. Michael Weaver to the Weed Control Board.
 7 MR. PACK: So moved.
 8 MR. DIVILIO: Second.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Motion and a second. Madam
 10 Secretary, could you call the roll, please.
 11 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.
 13 SECRETARY: Mr. Divilio.
 14 MR. DIVILIO: Aye.
 15 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.
 16 MR. LESHNER: Aye.
 17 SECRETARY: Ms. Price.
 18 MS. PRICE: Aye.
 19 SECRETARY: Mr. Pack.
 20 MR. PACK: Aye.
 21 MR. STAMP: And before moving on, I just

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1 want to share that there are a number of board
 2 and committee opportunities available for the
 3 public to serve. And they can view those by
 4 going to our website at talbotcountymd.gov
 5 under County Council.
 6 And I know, Council, you have encouraged
 7 me to share that with the public. And we do
 8 seek volunteers to help with those important
 9 jobs.
 10 The next item I have is a request from the
 11 Department of Public Works. Ray, could you
 12 come forward, please? Thank you.
 13 The Department of Public Works is
 14 requesting to submit a grant and loan
 15 application to the Maryland Water Control
 16 Financing Administration water control
 17 infrastructure finance program.
 18 As you read in your packet, they are
 19 requesting Council approval to apply for water
 20 quality and infrastructure financial program
 21 for seven environmental projects. Applications

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1 are due January 31st of 2022. And rather than
 2 me go through all seven of those, Ray is here.
 3 He's going to go through the seven with you to
 4 make sure you're okay and to gain your
 5 permission to submit that.
 6 Ray.
 7 MR. CLARKE: Council, just so you're
 8 aware, each year, we're actually, the county is
 9 provided the opportunity to apply to MDE
 10 through the Maryland water quality
 11 infrastructure program for funding basically
 12 through what they call the State revolving fund
 13 for loans, where you can actually get loan
 14 forgiveness as well as a low interest loan.
 15 And also, for those wastewater projects,
 16 those can also receive Bay Restoration funding,
 17 basically a grant.
 18 What we're looking at, one of the first
 19 projects would be the replacement of The
 20 Preserve at Wye Mills wastewater treatment
 21 plant, submitting that as a project.

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1 The next one would be basically an
 2 emergency generator for the Martingham water
 3 and wastewater system.
 4 The third project would actually be for
 5 the Unionville, Tunis Mills, Copperville
 6 system. This would actually be a sensor that
 7 we would -- a pressure sensor that we put on
 8 the force main that would help us monitor the
 9 force main so that it would reduce let's say
 10 sanitary sewer overflows that would be
 11 associated with breaks that might happen in
 12 that force main.
 13 At the same time, we would also be adding
 14 vacuum collection sensors. They're pretty much
 15 the same sensor, but then these would be added
 16 to the Martingham, which would then help us
 17 with saving overtime pay when that system goes
 18 down.
 19 MR. PACK: Ray, the sensors. I'm sorry.
 20 Do they go through a phone? Are you going
 21 to --

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1 MR. CLARKE: They're actually cellular.
 2 So there's a cellular system. They go right
 3 into a central component that's put at the
 4 wastewater treatment plant. They then call in
 5 and then they would be interactive with our
 6 smart site plan map. So they'll then pop up
 7 where they're located.
 8 So let's say we have a manhole or a curb
 9 out or not a curb out. I'm sorry. But a valve
 10 assembly that broke let's say along Maryland
 11 Route 33. We would then get a low pressure in
 12 that force main. Once we have that low
 13 pressure, that would trigger probably at two
 14 points of where that break is located.
 15 We would have just beyond where the break,
 16 beyond that one valve, and then the valve
 17 that's downstream from that would also be
 18 showing a low pressure. So that would then
 19 give our guys the ability to come out.
 20 In addition, these sensors also have flow
 21 switches that we can actually put right into

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1 the valve box. So if there's water building up
 2 or flow building up, usually that's what's
 3 happened in the past, we'll see the level of
 4 water build up. Now, some of that can be rain
 5 water, but it also can be an early warning
 6 system for us if there's a break in that valve,
 7 in that T that we have in those valve boxes.
 8 So that's usually where we tend to see the
 9 problems is in those valve boxes. So it would
 10 be really an early warning system as well for
 11 us to react immediately to get out there.
 12 MR. PACK: Like an Amber alert, will you
 13 then get that on your cell phone, that alarm
 14 is --
 15 MR. CLARKE: That actually, it will
 16 trigger. It will actually -- like when it
 17 calls into our system, it will call out the
 18 operator. So it's going to call the first
 19 operator on call, the second operator on call,
 20 and then the third operator on call.
 21 MR. PACK: Okay. Great.

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1 MR. CLARKE: The other item is basically
 2 the Bar Neck, Fairbank. We're looking at
 3 trying to get funding to extend sewer out from
 4 the Tilghman Island wastewater treatment plant
 5 to the properties out on Bar Neck and Fairbank.
 6 In addition to that, we have I guess the
 7 Tilghman Island sewer collection system. This
 8 would be kind of what we call I guess a
 9 sanitary sewer evaluation. So this is more or
 10 less do what we're doing in St. Michaels. We
 11 do smoke testing and then a preliminary
 12 engineer report. And then start the process of
 13 working to correct I&I problems. We know that
 14 we do have them looking at the monitoring
 15 reports. So this would be basically the first
 16 phase of what we were doing in St. Michaels.
 17 So in addition to that project, we would
 18 also be looking at Unionville, Tunis Mills,
 19 Copperville. We currently have E/one pumps.
 20 We have a lot of 200 series pumps.
 21 Right now E/one does not support the 200

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1 series. So we're looking at basically
 2 replacing those with the extreme pumps. And so
 3 this would basically be funding to go ahead and
 4 replace all of our 200 as well as 1,000 and
 5 2,000 series E/one pumps with all extreme
 6 grinder pumps.
 7 And then the last project we have is
 8 actually doing the preliminary as well as the
 9 design for the Tilghman Island wastewater
 10 treatment plant. We did have RK&K complete the
 11 preliminary engineering report, which actually
 12 found the feasibility more or less instead of
 13 upgrading the Tilghman Island plant, we would
 14 actually pump all that wastewater flow to
 15 St. Michaels. So this would be basically
 16 moving this project into design. Actually
 17 planning, looking at all the properties that
 18 we'd look at trying to serve with sewer between
 19 St. Michaels and Tilghman. And then
 20 ultimately begin the process of design.
 21 MR. PACK: Great.

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1 MR. LESHER: So at this point, that is the
 2 decision, that the engineering study justifies
 3 the connection rather than rebuilding the
 4 Tilghman plant?
 5 MR. CLARKE: Yes, sir. And that's partly
 6 due to the fact that when we started to look at
 7 the sea level rise, that had a major impact on
 8 us. Basically the elevations of a lot of the
 9 roads, the manholes on Tilghman Island would
 10 actually become submerged probably within the
 11 next so many years that they were predicting.
 12 So looking at it on a 50-year basis, it
 13 would be best to pump that flow to
 14 St. Michaels rather than have it impact the
 15 wastewater treatment plant.
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Council.
 17 MR. PACK: Mr. Callahan, I'll make the
 18 motion that we accept the grant loan package
 19 for water quality infrastructure program.
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 21 MR. DIVILIO: I'll second.

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: All right. Mr. Pack and
 2 Mr. Divilio, motion and second.
 3 So Madam Secretary, could you call the
 4 vote, please.
 5 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.
 7 SECRETARY: Mr. Divilio.
 8 MR. DIVILIO: Aye.
 9 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.
 10 MR. LESHER: Aye.
 11 SECRETARY: Ms. Price.
 12 MS. PRICE: Aye.
 13 SECRETARY: Mr. Pack.
 14 MR. PACK: Aye.
 15 MR. CLARKE: Thank you.
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Ray.
 17 MR. PACK: Mr. Clarke --
 18 MR. STAMP: As Ray steps away, I just want
 19 to give him a lot of credit. He's working
 20 really diligently with MDE to address hooking
 21 more systems on, more septic systems onto our

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1 sewer system.

2 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.

3 MR. STAMP: Clearly, it's environmental

4 mitigation effort. And the more we can get on,

5 the better. So Ray --

6 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Ray.

7 MR. STAMP: -- good work.

8 MR. PACK: And Ray, before you go, not

9 tonight, but after the new year, could you come

10 back and give us an update on Ferry Point? I

11 understand there may have been a change there

12 that I think Council needs to be made aware of.

13 MR. CLARKE: That would be fine. I'll go

14 ahead and take care of that.

15 MR. PACK: Thank you.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Stamp.

17 MR. STAMP: Council, I want to give you a

18 brief update. As you all know, this past

19 Sunday about 11:45 in the morning, the 911

20 Center received an alarm for a fire in the

21 courthouse. Easton Volunteer Fire Company

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1 responded. Other companies responded to assist

2 them.

3 There was a fire on the first floor of the

4 north wing. The fire was isolated to the

5 clerk's office. A piece of equipment caused

6 the fire. It did burn up a countertop and

7 extended toward the ceiling.

8 Three sprinkler heads activated, put the

9 fire out. There is fire damage in that area of

10 the clerk's office. However, about

11 10,000 gallons of water were released. So the

12 first floor and the basement area, pretty

13 extensive water damage as well as smoke damage.

14 We very quickly reached out to Royal Plus

15 Disaster Kleenup, who responded within two

16 hours, 15 vehicles, a tractor-trailer, and 40

17 people. Within four hours using these special

18 pieces of equipment to evacuate the water out

19 of the building, they got about 10,000 gallons

20 out of this building. It was pretty impressive

21 to see.

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1 They put machines in to begin scrubbing

2 the air and addressing moisture issues,

3 humidity. They are working together with the

4 county, our insured, the State, which the

5 clerk's office and the register of wills are

6 State organizations. They are working

7 collectively with all three entities. They're

8 moving very swiftly to try to get that wing

9 back open.

10 And what I would encourage people to do

11 that have business with the clerk of the court

12 or the register of wills is to go to their

13 websites. And they're being updated daily as

14 we move through this.

15 Again, we're moving quickly to try to get

16 all services up and running as quickly as

17 possible.

18 I do want to just highlight the excellent

19 cooperation with Patti Camenp and our register of

20 wills Kathy Duvall, our clerk of court, Judge

21 Kehoe, Brian Moore, who is our facilities

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1 manager, Joye Nagle.

2 And then again, Royal Plus Disaster Kleenup

3 has done an absolutely amazing job with a very

4 difficult situation.

5 So I'll continue to keep Council aware of

6 what is going on and our team will continue to

7 work to get services back up.

8 With that being said, I want to announce

9 that county offices will be closed on Thursday,

10 December 23rd, and Friday, December 24th, and

11 Friday, December 31st.

12 And the only last thing I would say is I

13 would like to wish everybody happy holidays,

14 happy and safe holiday season. Thank you.

15 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you there, Mr. Stamp.

16 Appreciate it. Appreciate the report.

17 Appreciate all the good work your whole team

18 has done involved in that fire. That could

19 have been a lot worse, that's for sure. Okay.

20 So let's move on to public comment. Is

21 there a sheet out there?

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1 MS. MORRIS: There's nobody here this
 2 evening, Mr. Callahan. Nobody signed up.
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 4 MR. DIVILIO: Mr. Clarke, you got
 5 anything?
 6 MS. MORRIS: Mr. Clarke.
 7 MR. CLARKE: I'm good.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Got you. I got you. So
 9 okay.
 10 So let's move on to Council comments.
 11 Mr. Pack.
 12 MR. PACK: Okay.
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes.
 14 MR. PACK: Well, thank you. I want to
 15 tell those listening at home, don't adjust your
 16 volume. That grizzling sound you hear in
 17 Mr. Stamp's voice is not in your audio.
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Got you.
 19 MR. PACK: So I want to also echo wishing
 20 everybody a very joyous and merry and safe
 21 Christmas and New Year, as we will not be back

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1 together until after the new year.
 2 So be safe in your travels and in your
 3 contact with friends and family and enjoy
 4 yourself as best we possibly can.
 5 I had an opportunity over the weekend to
 6 attend a funeral of Mr. Francis Wilson.
 7 Mr. Wilson is, was a barber here in town. He
 8 was also the uncle of Karen Roberts, who was,
 9 as you know, on staff here, and Eddie Roberts,
 10 who is one of our EMTs.
 11 And the reason why I mention this is that
 12 in listening to the service and listening to
 13 all that Mr. Wilson gave to this community, it
 14 just hit me in a certain way. He was class of
 15 Moton 1957. At the age of 25 in 1963 he opened
 16 up his own barber shop here on West Street. In
 17 1977 at the age of 39, he purchased his own
 18 building right here, next door, on Glenwood
 19 Avenue, 18 Glenwood Avenue, where he operated
 20 there for 55 years as a barber.
 21 And he trained a number of young men in

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1 that trade, including his nephew, Eddie
 2 Roberts, who cut hair there for a number of
 3 years.
 4 He also drove school buses 25 years here
 5 in the county.
 6 And the one thing that we all know about a
 7 haircut is that it can just do so much for your
 8 confidence. It gives you that confidence. If
 9 you're a young man going off to college and
 10 you're getting that haircut or you're about to
 11 go down the aisle to say your nuptials, that
 12 haircut is just not a haircut. It means so
 13 much more.
 14 And that hometown barber, I mean he's your
 15 counselor, he's your tax adviser, he knows
 16 where you can get the best roast beef sandwich
 17 in town. I mean that local barber just is more
 18 than just a haircut.
 19 And I always say the local barber is like
 20 the working man's country club. You're going
 21 to see just about every walk of life through

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1 there, from Postal carriers to truck drivers to
 2 utility workers, politicians, and the like.
 3 So we had his service this past Friday
 4 down at Scott's in Trappe to say good-bye to
 5 him, farewell to him. Francis Wilson, Wilson's
 6 Barber Shop, 55 years here in Easton. Again, I
 7 want to just give highlight to his remarkable
 8 career that he had here and the many lives that
 9 he touched along the way, including my own. So
 10 just wanted to give a shout-out to him and his
 11 family, a special condolences to them as well.
 12 With that, I'll pass it back over.
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Pack. That
 14 was some kind words. And let's give regards to
 15 the family.
 16 Mr. Divilio.
 17 MR. DIVILIO: So as we head into Christmas
 18 this weekend, to me it means generosity. And
 19 in that regard, we're heading into a time that
 20 is always emotionally difficult for
 21 individuals. Mental health has been a big

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1 concern of everyone's over the last couple of
 2 years. And this is going to be a time when
 3 individuals who are normally going out,
 4 grandparents who are going out seeing
 5 grandkids, parents who are traveling to see
 6 their children and grandchildren aren't going
 7 to be able to. They won't feel comfortable to,
 8 to do it.

9 So I ask everybody to just take a little
 10 step back and think about how the holiday
 11 season can be different and still be
 12 pleasurable for all those involved. No
 13 pressure to anybody who is not feeling safe or
 14 comfortable doing something.

15 But just keep an eye out, an ear out. And
 16 if you have that neighbor that you don't often
 17 see or doesn't get out much, a phone call can
 18 mean a lot, a card can mean a lot. Please just
 19 try to be generous and think of others during
 20 this time and not just how you see the holiday.
 21 Times are different, and we need to adjust

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1 to that. And for seniors not being able to use
 2 technology is a big challenge. A lot of us
 3 think oh, we'll just throw Grandma on FaceTime
 4 and let her see the kids open presents. And
 5 that doesn't happen. So just dial that corded
 6 phone number one extra time this weekend and
 7 speak with them.

8 Thank you. And hope everybody is safe and
 9 happy.

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Divilio.
 11 Ms. Price, can you hear us?

12 MS. PRICE: I can hear you. I want to, of
 13 course, wish everybody Merry Christmas, Happy
 14 Holidays, and Happy New Year.

15 But also to share that I had the
 16 opportunity last week to meet with Governor
 17 Hogan along with the president of the Maryland
 18 Municipal League as both organizations were
 19 able to present our legislative initiatives
 20 from each of our organizations. It was a
 21 wonderful meeting with him. He was in great

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1 spirits and he was very, very receptive to
 2 hearing what it is that we want to put forth.

3 And the number one issue for both
 4 organizations is this highway user revenues,
 5 which is something that Governor Hogan even
 6 when he was running seven, eight years ago, was
 7 very supportive of. So I expect there will be
 8 some good strong support behind that initiative
 9 from the governor along with our organizations.

10 So it was an honor to be able to sit and
 11 meet with him for an hour with my counterpart
 12 over at MML. So it was wonderful.

13 And again, Happy Holidays, everybody.

14 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Ms. Price.
 15 Appreciate that.

16 Mr. Vice President.

17 MR. LESHER: Thank you. As we -- I will
 18 wish everybody safe and healthy holidays.

19 As we hear more about cases of the Omicron
 20 variant of COVID-19, there are now some, even
 21 some high profile cases of vaccinated and

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1 boosted people with breakout cases.

2 Keep in mind the vaccines are not intended
 3 to prevent transmission of the disease. They
 4 are designed to save you from serious illness
 5 and death. And they are working well to do
 6 exactly that.

7 Vaccines are freely available at the
 8 Talbot County Health Department's center on
 9 Marlboro Road. If you are not yet vaccinated
 10 or if you are but not yet boosted and now
 11 eligible for that, I encourage you to call for
 12 an appointment. This is the time to do that.
 13 The life you save may be your own or your
 14 mother's.

15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. It's hard to argue
 16 with that.

17 I want to wish everybody a happy holiday,
 18 too. We've all had a tough year up here a
 19 little bit.

20 And I want to thank the Council for the
 21 great year we put in. We put in a lot of hard

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1 work, and we made some hard decisions this
 2 year. I want to commend everybody.
 3 And on that behalf, I want to make sure
 4 that the team that makes us look good, all the
 5 employees, and I mean all the employees. I
 6 think we have 550 employees. And I want to
 7 extend my thanks for all they do for the
 8 county. I know a lot of them can't be here,
 9 but we do appreciate everything they do, part
 10 time and full time.
 11 And you know, there's situations where you
 12 see the true colors about how blessed we are
 13 when we have a fire in this building and
 14 everybody comes together. And there's one
 15 goal, to make sure it's safe, we can work in
 16 that environment. And that's what we've done
 17 in the last few days.
 18 So I, once again, thank everybody for
 19 supporting us and coming to the meetings. The
 20 public, the public comments and stuff, we
 21 appreciate you being here. And that's what

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1 it's here for.
 2 So on that behalf, Mr. Vice President,
 3 Mr. Leshner, could you go ahead and close us up.
 4 MR. LESHNER: On Tuesday, January 4th, the
 5 County Council will be holding a work session
 6 beginning 3:30 p.m. to discuss the creation of
 7 a Police Accountability Board for Talbot County
 8 in accordance with recently-enacted State
 9 legislation. The work session will be held in
 10 the Wye Oak Room at the Talbot County Community
 11 Center and is open to the public.
 12 At 5:30 p.m. that evening, the Council
 13 will be holding a joint dinner meeting with the
 14 Board of Education. The dinner meeting will be
 15 held at the board office located at 12 Magnolia
 16 Street in Easton.
 17 The County Council's next meeting will be
 18 held on Tuesday, January 11th, beginning at
 19 six o'clock p.m. The Council will be convening
 20 in open session at 3:30 p.m. and immediately
 21 adjourning into closed session to discuss real

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1 estate, legal, and personnel matters, as listed
 2 on the statement for closing that meeting.
 3 Therefore, if there's no other business
 4 before us, a motion to adjourn would be in
 5 order.
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: I got one more thing that I
 7 have to bring up to Mr. Pack, which is very,
 8 very important for him.
 9 I hate to do this, but I think I beat your
 10 record. I think I have.
 11 MR. PACK: You did. Congratulations.
 12 MR. DIVILIO: Before he starts a
 13 conversation for 20 minutes, I'll make a motion
 14 that we adjourn.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: I thought he might.
 16 (Inaudible.) He was getting ready to.
 17 MR. PACK: Let me add one more thing to
 18 that.
 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Madam Secretary.
 20 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

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1 SECRETARY: Mr. Divilio.
 2 MR. DIVILIO: Aye.
 3 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.
 4 MR. LESHNER: Aye.
 5 SECRETARY: Ms. Price.
 6 MS. PRICE: Aye.
 7 SECRETARY: Mr. Pack.
 8 MR. PACK: Aye.
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Good evening and have a
 10 great holiday.
 11 (Meeting concluded at: 6:46 p.m.)
 12
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 21

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
6 I further certify that the examination was
recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed
7 from my stenographic notes to the within printed
matter by means of computer-assisted transcription
in a true and accurate manner.

8
9 I further certify that the stipulations
contained herein were entered into by counsel in my
presence.

10
11 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
12 interested in the outcome of this action.

13 AS WITNESS my hand Notarial Seal this 28th
day of December, 2021, at Easton, MD.

14
15 

16
17 _____
Diane Houlihan
Notary Public

18
19
20 My commission expires September 16, 2025
21

1	23rd 4:4 41:10 24th 41:10 25 43:15 44:4 28th 54:13	accept 36:18 accepted 4:7,14 account 12:15 13:11 14:5 20:6 accountability 51:7 accountant 10:20 accounts 12:5,10 12:11,13,14,20 13:1,3 17:7 accrued 20:1 accurate 54:7 accustomed 19:21 action 23:7,11,13 54:12 activated 39:8 add 52:17 added 31:15 adding 31:13 addition 32:20 34:6,17 additions 2:16 4:5 4:12 address 37:20 addressing 40:2 adjourn 52:4,14 adjourning 51:21 adjust 42:15 46:21 administration 29:16 adviser 44:15 affect 13:12 affirmed 8:3 age 43:15,17 agencies 14:12 agenda 2:14,14,17 4:3,9,16 7:5 9:13 ago 48:6 ahead 2:4 7:7 24:21 35:3 38:14 51:3 air 40:2 aisle 44:11	aka 6:18 alarm 33:13 38:20 alert 33:12 alerted 15:11 allegiance 2:7,9 alluding 25:11 amazing 41:3 amber 33:12 amount 19:19 20:10,11 announce 41:8 answer 11:3 anybody 12:11 18:16 46:13 anyway 21:19 appeared 54:3 application 29:15 applications 29:21 apply 29:19 30:9 appointment 28:5 49:12 appreciate 2:11 5:10 7:2 10:9 15:6 23:18 24:8,17 41:16,16,17 48:15 50:9,21 approval 29:19 approved 11:13 approximately 12:12,19 april 11:16,17 14:20 21:12 22:7 22:20 area 39:9,12 argue 49:15 arrangements 20:14 asked 11:15,16 asking 20:5 assembly 32:10 assess 14:1 assist 39:1 assistance 13:18 14:2 17:1,3 23:2
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