



Deposition of:
Public Hearing FY22 - Evening Session

May 4, 2021

In the Matter of:
Public Hearing Fy22

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COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Budget Public Hearing

May 4, 2021; 7:00 p.m.

Via Webex Events

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chuck F. Callahan

Pete Leshner

Corey W. Pack

Frank Divilio

Laura E. Price

Reported by

Diane Houlihan

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<p>1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 MR. CALLAHAN: Welcome, everybody, here</p> <p>4 tonight to the public hearing tonight at seven.</p> <p>5 And we're going to pick up on the hearing.</p> <p>6 And Ms. Lane is going to do her thing.</p> <p>7 And Jess, do you want to say anything more</p> <p>8 or are you good?</p> <p>9 MS. MORRIS: Thanks, Mr. Callahan. Nope.</p> <p>10 You're doing a great job.</p> <p>11 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you.</p> <p>12 How you doing, Ms. Lane? Have you got</p> <p>13 dinner? Did you get dinner?</p> <p>14 MS. LANE: I had a snack. So I'm great.</p> <p>15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Good.</p> <p>16 Well, Madam Secretary.</p> <p>17 MS. MORRIS: Call upstairs.</p> <p>18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. Madam Secretary,</p> <p>19 would you please read for the public hearing</p> <p>20 Bill 1473 in the record, please.</p> <p>21 SECRETARY: Bill Number 1473, an act to</p>	<p>1 Now, the fiscal 22 budget is just over</p> <p>2 \$112 million, which is almost 16 million, or</p> <p>3 16.56 percent, more than the current fiscal 21</p> <p>4 budget. And while this is a large increase of</p> <p>5 almost \$16 million, over \$14 million of this is</p> <p>6 for transfer to the capital projects fund of</p> <p>7 \$10 million and capital outlay, which is</p> <p>8 equipment, which is generally a one-time</p> <p>9 purchase, of \$4 million. So while this is a</p> <p>10 really large increase, \$14 million of this is</p> <p>11 really for one-time expenses and will not be</p> <p>12 ongoing or do not have to be ongoing in the</p> <p>13 budget. So this isn't a budget that is</p> <p>14 unsustainable.</p> <p>15 In order to fund this budget, we've used</p> <p>16 prior year funds of just over \$20 million. The</p> <p>17 fiscal 22 budget for operating expenses is</p> <p>18 increasing by only 3.86 percent. So obviously</p> <p>19 the majority of this increase is for the</p> <p>20 capital items.</p> <p>21 The budget does include the one-cent</p>
Page 3	Page 5
<p>1 establish the 2021-2022 annual budget and</p> <p>2 appropriation ordinance.</p> <p>3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thanks a lot.</p> <p>4 Ms. Lane, I'm going to turn it over to you</p> <p>5 and Mr. Stamp. I think you got a presentation</p> <p>6 and Powerpoints for us. So I'll let you take</p> <p>7 it from here. You do such a great job.</p> <p>8 MS. LANE: Okay. Thank you so much.</p> <p>9 Good evening, County Council and members</p> <p>10 of the audience. This is a public hearing on</p> <p>11 Bill Number 1473, the fiscal 2022 annual budget</p> <p>12 and appropriation ordinance.</p> <p>13 The fiscal 2022 proposed general fund</p> <p>14 budget is \$112,535,000. The current fiscal 21</p> <p>15 budget is \$96,550,000.</p> <p>16 Go to the next slide.</p> <p>17 This is a quick overview of the proposed</p> <p>18 general fund budget. The County Council</p> <p>19 received funding requests for operating and</p> <p>20 capital items of just over \$119 million, which</p> <p>21 is \$22.5 million more than the current budget.</p>	<p>1 increase to the property tax rate above what is</p> <p>2 allowed under the real property tax cap, as</p> <p>3 authorized by the voters of Talbot County in</p> <p>4 November of 2020.</p> <p>5 And public safety is a top priority in</p> <p>6 this budget.</p> <p>7 And I'll now turn it to over to Mr. Stamp.</p> <p>8 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Stamp, you with us?</p> <p>9 MR. STAMP: Thank you, Ms. Lane. Thank</p> <p>10 you, Council President, members of the Council.</p> <p>11 So the overarching management strategy of</p> <p>12 this year's budget is to ensure optimal service</p> <p>13 to our community while maintaining both</p> <p>14 transparency and frugality. And it centers on</p> <p>15 three areas; personnel, projects, and process.</p> <p>16 Really it works to drive retention of our</p> <p>17 existing workforce. And this includes not only</p> <p>18 county employees but also volunteer fire and</p> <p>19 rescue personnel in helping them, as well as</p> <p>20 the ability to recruit key members of our</p> <p>21 workforce.</p>

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1 The second is projects. And the budget
 2 supports funding for core projects addressing
 3 identified needs, which are significant.
 4 And then the final is process. And that's
 5 really to evaluate all the county processes to
 6 ensure that we are optimally performing to
 7 provide customer service.
 8 Next slide, please.
 9 The budget we believe is practical,
 10 flexible, and visionary. So from a practical
 11 perspective, there's only a modest increase in
 12 the operations budget. These are recurring
 13 expenses every year. And we've kept that under
 14 four percent. And the budget does address some
 15 core needs within the operations budget as
 16 approved by the Council and signaled by the
 17 voters.
 18 It's flexible because we invest in capital
 19 projects. It's flexible because the investment
 20 in capital projects requires a secondary action
 21 by Council to create enabling legislation for

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1 each project listed. So the monies that have
 2 been moved, the 10 million that's been moved
 3 into the critical infrastructure -- I'm sorry.
 4 The capital program can be determined whether
 5 it should be prioritized by Council. So it's
 6 flexible.
 7 And then finally, visionary. This signals
 8 a recovery and it aids in both economic
 9 development and overdue core projects.
 10 And then finally, again, moving the
 11 \$10 million in the capital improvement program
 12 addresses core pillars of our community. It
 13 invests in public safety and health projects,
 14 infrastructure projects, environment,
 15 education, and economic stability.
 16 And so Ms. Lane will go over several
 17 projects that will be addressed in this budget.
 18 So back to you, Ms. Lane. Thank you.
 19 MS. LANE: Thank you, Mr. Stamp.
 20 As I mentioned earlier, this is a modest
 21 increase in the operations budget of the

Page 8

1 county. And public safety is a priority, which
 2 is clearly outlined in the following items.
 3 The budget does include funding for the
 4 increased retirement expense associated with
 5 potentially joining the Law Enforcement Pension
 6 System for the Sheriff's Office. This has been
 7 a request of sheriffs for many years and is a
 8 priority to keep us competitive for recruiting
 9 and retaining sheriff's deputies in the county.
 10 It also includes salary scale adjustments
 11 for our 911 dispatchers, EMTs, paramedics, and
 12 correctional officers all to address
 13 recruitment and retention issues.
 14 The budget adds six new positions. Four
 15 additional positions for 12 hours per day for
 16 seven days per week for emergency services
 17 medical unit. This was started in the current
 18 fiscal year with part-time and overtime
 19 staffing. This will allow this function to be
 20 provided with full-time employees and will
 21 ensure the continuity of this unit always being

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1 available. This is primarily expected to serve
 2 the northern part of the county, which is
 3 underserved at this point. They have longer
 4 response times to the northern part of the
 5 county than other areas of the county.
 6 It also adds one legal assistant for the
 7 position in the State's Attorney's Office and
 8 one administrative fiscal position for the
 9 Department of Public Works.
 10 Talbot County Public Schools is funded at
 11 the same level as the current year, but this is
 12 \$532,000 more than the State-mandated
 13 Maintenance of Effort level of funding that the
 14 county is required to fund of the Public School
 15 system.
 16 It does include a step increase for
 17 eligible full-time county employees.
 18 I mentioned that we had transferred
 19 \$10 million for capital projects. And this
 20 slide shows all the proposed capital projects
 21 in the fiscal 2022 budget. And some of them

Page 10	Page 12
<p>1 are smaller than others. But many of these 2 have been discussed for a number of years. 3 The first one is \$2 million for land 4 acquisition. This can be for any future county 5 needs, but primarily we are focusing on public 6 safety. We do need to find property for an EMS 7 station in the north end of the county and 8 perhaps look at relocating EMS stations in the 9 future to provide better response times 10 throughout the county. 11 We also need to provide land or a site for 12 the relocation of the Sheriff's Office. That 13 office has to be moved from the Talbot County 14 Business Center in the very near future. 15 We do have \$5 million in the budget for 16 the start of a Public Safety Center. Again, 17 this is for the Sheriff's Office and perhaps 18 other public safety departments will be housed 19 in the same complex. 20 We have \$1.2 million for future EMS 21 stations that will need to be constructed. And</p>	<p>1 won't complete all of the projects for the 2 entire roads, but it will provide funding to 3 start vehicle safety enhancements and upgrades 4 to these roads. Again, these will be items 5 that will be in future budgets as we try to 6 continue the progress of expansion and safety 7 on these roads. 8 Under Parks and Recreation, Frederick 9 Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe. We have 10 included \$200,000 for the next phase of that 11 project. And \$50,000 is included for a study 12 on the Bill Burton Park. 13 Under the Talbot County Public Schools, we 14 are including \$1.3 million for the roof 15 replacement of the Easton High School roof. 16 This is year one of this project. Again, this 17 is a multiyear project. So this is the first 18 half of this project. This will be probably 19 included in an upcoming budget to finish the 20 project for the rest of the roof. 21 We also include \$3.5 million of capital</p>
Page 11	Page 13
<p>1 as we relocate for better response times, we 2 will start having funding available for that 3 project. 4 The other item is \$2.3 million for 5 broadband expansion. This is to match a grant 6 that Easton Utilities has for broadband 7 expansion into areas that are not served in the 8 county. So this is to provide broadband in 9 areas not already covered by Atlantic Broadband 10 or Easton Utilities or another cable provider 11 or Internet provider. 12 This has obviously become a forefront item 13 in this climate that we are in now where so 14 many people need to be able to have adequate 15 access to broadband. And this is a multiyear 16 project. 17 Highways and streets. We have two 18 projects identified, Black Dog Alley and 19 Airport Road. The total of these projects is 20 \$2.7 million. These are to provide 21 enhancements to sections of the road. This</p>	<p>1 projects fund reserves. And this is from the 2 \$10 million that we've transferred in. This 3 will be available to continue to fund these 4 projects in subsequent years or to provide 5 funding for new projects. 6 So our total capital projects budget is 7 almost \$19 million. And many of these projects 8 have been discussed for a number of years, and 9 we are finally in a position financially to 10 move forward with them. 11 Bill Number 1473, which is the annual 12 budget and appropriation ordinance, is eligible 13 for vote on Tuesday, May 18, 2021. 14 Any written comments will be accepted by 15 the County Council until Wednesday, May 5, 16 2021, at noon. E-mailed comments can be sent 17 to publiccomment@talbotcountymd.gov. Or 18 comments can be mailed or dropped off at the 19 County Council office in the south wing of the 20 court house at 11 North Washington Street. 21 Information on Bill Number 1473 may be</p>

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1 found at the county website at
 2 www.talbotcountymd.gov. And also under the
 3 Finance Office tab on that website, there is
 4 the budget ordinance, the budget workbook, and
 5 a two-page budget summary available for review.
 6 And that concludes my presentation.
 7 Mr. Callahan, I believe you're muted.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, thank you.
 9 Thank you, Ms. Lane. Appreciate that.
 10 Mr. Stamp.
 11 Angela, I think you've probably been
 12 looking for this one for 20 years. It's your
 13 last one. So I can't thank you enough. You
 14 mean a lot to all of us. And your dedication
 15 to the community and the county and stuff is
 16 just off the charts. And we really, really
 17 appreciate everything that you've done for us.
 18 MS. LANE: Thank you.
 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Stamp, appreciate your
 20 hard work getting it to this point. What a
 21 great leader you are, too. Thank you. Okay.

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1 I will now open the public hearing to Bill
 2 1473. If you wish to provide some comments on
 3 Bill 1473, please provide your name. You will
 4 have three minutes to speak as an individual.
 5 And you will have five minutes to speak for an
 6 organization.
 7 Mr. Durham, we're going to go ahead and
 8 open the callers who wish to speak about 1473.
 9 Let's get started on that.
 10 MR. DURHAM: Okay. If you're calling in
 11 on a phone and you want to speak, please press
 12 asterisk three on your phone. Or if you're on
 13 a computer, please click on the raise hand
 14 button.
 15 Our first caller is a 301-219 number.
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Sure, sure. Okay. Caller,
 17 appreciate you calling in tonight. So if you
 18 would give your name and where you're from,
 19 that will be great.
 20 MS. WALTERS: Thank you. My name is
 21 Elizabeth Walters, and I live in Cordova right

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1 behind Chapel Elementary School. And I just
 2 wanted to voice my support on two things or
 3 three things.
 4 Number one in terms of Bill 1473, full
 5 support for any funding that's all day pre-k.
 6 My daughter has benefited immensely from this.
 7 And most studies, if not all studies, show that
 8 the benefits of full day pre-k versus half are
 9 huge in terms of school readiness. Listening
 10 to virtual school most of this fall, I can
 11 assure you that there's a lot of kids here in
 12 the Chapel District that need this.
 13 Easton has had a pretty significant
 14 advantage for almost a decade with their
 15 grants. So I'd like to see that funding get
 16 opened.
 17 Any of the other funding that the school
 18 is asking for, as a taxpayer I fully support
 19 that.
 20 And then since it got brought up and I
 21 didn't really know it was coming, I also want

Page 17

1 to throw full support behind that broadband
 2 grant, as I watch the Webex circle still going
 3 around after 17 minutes because I can't get on
 4 the Webex because I don't have good Internet
 5 access.
 6 Any questions about anything I've said?
 7 Cannot stress enough on the all day pre-k.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: We thank you, Ms. Walters.
 9 I really appreciate you spending and calling in
 10 and spending the time talking to us. So really
 11 appreciate you calling in.
 12 Next caller.
 13 MR. DURHAM: Our next caller is a computer
 14 user. Casey Scott.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.
 16 MR. DURHAM: Please begin.
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Casey Scott, you can go
 18 ahead and talk, you're on.
 19 MS. SCOTT: I think I'm unmuted now. Can
 20 you hear me?
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. Go ahead, Casey, go

Page 18

1 ahead.

2 MS. SCOTT: Hi there. So my name is Casey

3 Scott. I live in Trappe. And my kids attend

4 White Marsh Elementary School. And I'm also

5 here to vouch for that full day pre-k option.

6 My son is four years old. We did opt to

7 send him to pre-k this year, despite it likely

8 going to be mostly virtual.

9 I will say being able to have that

10 full-day option, I've seen so much growth in

11 him this year, not just with letter sounds and

12 phonics, but also social and emotional

13 development. I think that they've done a great

14 job in really trying to catch these kids up

15 with a lot of the school that they've missed.

16 And I fully, fully support any funding

17 that we can continue to send to these more

18 rural schools to make sure that our Trappe and

19 Cordova counterparts can have the same benefits

20 as our Easton Elementary counterparts.

21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you,

Page 19

1 Ms. Scott. I really appreciate you calling in

2 and representing Trappe and thanks for the

3 call.

4 Okay. Next caller.

5 MR. DURHAM: Our next caller is a Connor

6 Flaherty.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: I'm sorry?

8 MR. DURHAM: Connor Flaherty, please

9 begin.

10 MR. FLAHERTY: Hi. My name is Connor

11 Flaherty. I'm currently a freshman at Easton

12 High School. My address is 8526 Colony Circle,

13 Easton, Maryland.

14 I'm very grateful for all the course

15 selections available at Easton High School and

16 am extremely excited about the CNA completer

17 program scheduled for next year school. We are

18 the only county on the Eastern Shore that does

19 not have this program.

20 The job market in Talbot County shows the

21 demand for CNA specifically, and this program

Page 20

1 allows for licensing upon the graduation so

2 that students can have these job opportunities

3 directly after high school or a head start when

4 entering college.

5 Please consider fully funding the budget

6 so we have the opportunity to have this

7 valuable program in our county. Thank you.

8 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Flaherty. I

9 appreciate you calling in tonight. Thanks a

10 lot.

11 MR. DURHAM: Currently that is our last

12 person requesting to speak.

13 If you're interested in speaking, press

14 asterisk three on your phone or the raise hand

15 button on your computer.

16 We do have a Robert. Please begin.

17 MR. CALLAHAN: Robert, do you have a last

18 name? Robert, go ahead. Do you have a last

19 name?

20 MR. FORLONEY: It's Robert Forloney.

21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

Page 21

1 MR. FORLONEY: And I'm a resident in

2 St. Michaels. I'm also the vice president of

3 the Talbot County Free Library.

4 I'm just calling to thank the County

5 Council on behalf of all the work that it's

6 done in the past for the library and to fully

7 recommend that we fund the budget going forward

8 with regards to the expansion in St. Michaels

9 in particular.

10 But in addition to that, a number of the

11 other things that have been mentioned with

12 regards to support for schools, pre-k, and also

13 broadband is I think essentially important

14 given the situation that we have today and in

15 order to recuperate from COVID.

16 So thank you for your support.

17 And again, I fully recommend fully funding

18 this particular bill.

19 MR. CALLAHAN: Thanks a lot for calling

20 in, Mr. Forloney. I appreciate it and

21 appreciate your hard work down at the library,

Page 22

1 too.

2 MR. FORLONEY: Thank you.

3 MR. DURHAM: That is the last person we

4 have requesting to speak.

5 MS. MORRIS: Mr. Callahan, I do see that

6 Dr. Griffith is with us this evening as well as

7 Ms. Delean-Botkin. And just wanted to

8 recognize them, if either of them wish to

9 speak.

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, I think they do, yes.

11 That's what I was waiting for.

12 DR. GRIFFITH: Jessica, did you say you

13 could see Susan Delean-Botkin? She does want

14 to speak.

15 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. Kelly. Go ahead, you

16 and Susan.

17 DR. GRIFFITH: Susan, go ahead.

18 MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: Thank you very much.

19 This is Susan Delean-Botkin. Apparently this

20 big storm down here in Oxford at the same time

21 we tried to call in is causing a little

Page 23

1 disruption.

2 So please, can you hear me all right?

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Sure. Yeah. We can hear

4 you great. Go ahead.

5 MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: Thank you very much,

6 President Callahan, members of the County

7 Council, Manager Stamp, Ms. Lane, and staff.

8 My name is Susan Delean-Botkin. I am here

9 this evening as president of the Board of

10 Education to thank you for all the work that

11 you've done during these very difficult times.

12 You've kept the county headed in the right

13 direction, safe, growing, fiscally responsible.

14 As we know, the collaborative partnership

15 between the Talbot County Public Schools and

16 the County Council has enabled us to provide a

17 high-quality education for all of our children.

18 We hope to maintain that relationship for the

19 future prosperity of our county.

20 In these most interesting of times, there

21 have been some remarkable changes in Talbot

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1 County in the last year.

2 Living in God's waiting room down here in

3 Oxford, we are pleasantly surprised at the

4 number of young families with children becoming

5 full-time residents. Just in my square block,

6 there are now three families with elementary

7 school children, three with high school

8 students, and one with a middle school child,

9 where there were none two years ago.

10 We have children playing tennis on the

11 local courts, older kids playing basketball in

12 between the pickle ball players.

13 All of these families are planning on

14 sending their children to Talbot County Public

15 Schools this fall.

16 In addition, as a business owner of a

17 primary care health practice, I will also

18 mention that we have seen an unprecedented

19 growth in new patients coming into the county.

20 We now have a 160-person waiting list for our

21 practice. A good percentage of these folks are

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1 younger with school-aged children.

2 I chatted with a new full-timer to the

3 county last week and listened to his complaints

4 about the school system across the bridge.

5 When I mentioned to Walter our graduation rate

6 of 96 percent, our dropout rate of 1.6 percent,

7 our open AP class policy, he was stunned. He

8 questioned what our graduates do after high

9 school. And again, was highly appreciative

10 that our students get accepted to the best

11 colleges in the country and the state, are

12 going into certificate in trades or

13 technologies. And many, thank goodness, return

14 to Talbot County to work and raise their

15 families.

16 Having spent every Friday last spring

17 delivering weekend meals to our students'

18 families, I can tell you this school system

19 goes over and above for our students and

20 families.

21 We provide education, nutrition, and

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1 family support. Talbot County Schools
 2 organized an amazing system of Internet
 3 accessibility all throughout the county,
 4 partnering with our thousand community partners
 5 to see that each student had an electronic
 6 device to connect to their classes. While not
 7 perfect, we did get it to work.
 8 If Internet was spotty, hot spots were
 9 arranged. If I mentioned a child on my route
 10 was having problems, by the next week
 11 Dr. Griffith's team had reached out, identified
 12 the issue, and put a solution in place.
 13 And we provide breakfast and lunch to any
 14 child, weekend meals to families on top of
 15 that.
 16 As we know, the electronic interaction and
 17 the meals continue.
 18 I am recounting this because we have a
 19 jewel of an education system. Superintendent
 20 Griffith and her staff and faculty work
 21 diligently to structure a system based on

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1 priorities, derived from shared input from the
 2 community, parents, students, teachers,
 3 administrators.
 4 Our system works on the best practices
 5 model. And this past year has perfected the
 6 pivot, switching gears frequently to
 7 accommodate the COVID crisis, while supporting,
 8 developing, and improving the educational
 9 services for our students.
 10 Our fiscal year 22 budget reflects the
 11 priorities needed for a quality education for
 12 our students.
 13 Earlier today, Dr. Griffith reviewed the
 14 decreases, the decreases to the FY22 budget
 15 brought about by cost savings and grants to cut
 16 \$2 million. That's right, \$2 million was cut
 17 from our earlier budget request.
 18 I am strongly advocating for you to accept
 19 or even increase this budget. This is an
 20 investment in the future of Talbot County, and
 21 that future is now.

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1 We have to offer competitive salaries and
 2 benefits, just like we do for our first
 3 responders and our public safety officers. We
 4 have to maintain lower class sizes. We have to
 5 update curriculum and instructional materials.
 6 We have to increase security measures. We have
 7 to do these things just to stay up with other
 8 midshore counties.
 9 I just ask you to invest with Talbot
 10 County schools for the future. And please fund
 11 the public school budget for this year.
 12 Thank you very much.
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. I really
 14 appreciate it, Ms. Delean-Botkin. Appreciate
 15 everything. That was great.
 16 MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: Thank you,
 17 Mr. Callahan.
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah, yeah.
 19 And Dr. Griffith, would you like to
 20 comment before you leave?
 21 DR. GRIFFITH: I just thank you all for

Page 29

1 your support. And really appreciate the
 2 opportunity for people to speak even though
 3 we're under these circumstances. Thank you so
 4 much.
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay, guys. Thank you so
 6 much for all you guys do. And Kelly, thank you
 7 for this afternoon having such great comments,
 8 too. Appreciate it.
 9 Mr. Durham, do we have anybody else
 10 online?
 11 MR. DURHAM: We have no other callers
 12 requesting to speak.
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. So we're going to be
 14 on for a few more minutes. So if somebody pops
 15 on, just let me know.
 16 Okay. Just a reminder, the public
 17 hearing, written comments will be accepted by
 18 the County Council until Wednesday, the 5th,
 19 which would be tomorrow, at noon. We will keep
 20 accepting them. You can e-mail the comments,
 21 and you can send them to

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1 publiccomments@talbotcountymd.gov.
 2 The public hearing on Bill 1473 is
 3 concluded.
 4 And being that is said, Council, I'm just
 5 going to open it up for a quick Council comment
 6 from everybody.
 7 Mr. Vice President. Mr. Vice President,
 8 Pete, Mr. Leshner.
 9 MR. LESHER: Sorry. I thought I was
 10 speaking there. I was muted.
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: No problem.
 12 MR. LESHER: I just wanted to thank the
 13 members of the public for their testimony under
 14 these trying circumstances. We had really
 15 hoped to be able to do an in-person hearing.
 16 On advice from the county health officer, we
 17 backed away from that initial plan.
 18 And I'm sure that we have a smaller
 19 audience as a consequence of that. I'm sure
 20 many others are listening besides those who
 21 have chosen to speak. But I do thank those who

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1 went to the extra effort to be able to testify
 2 this evening.
 3 We heard some important things this
 4 evening. I hope that we will take those into
 5 consideration.
 6 I will say that as we heard from Finance
 7 Director Angela Lane at the beginning, the
 8 broadband project is funded. That is in the
 9 budget. That was part of our capital budget
 10 for this year. The library for the most part
 11 is funded as requested.
 12 There are questions outstanding about the
 13 school's budget, and we heard some testimony
 14 about that. But there is substantial support.
 15 And again, as in the opening remarks, we
 16 heard this budget has prioritized, as we
 17 committed, public safety, that we've taken
 18 advantage of what the voters have allowed us
 19 under the revised property tax cap and
 20 allocated those funds toward improvements in
 21 public safety, including the Sheriff's Office,

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1 particularly for recruitment and retention
 2 there. As well as emergency services, the
 3 addition of that additional ambulance unit,
 4 both the staffing and the equipment for that.
 5 These are important priorities. And I'm
 6 looking forward to continue to work with this
 7 Council to move these priorities forward.
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Leshner. I
 9 appreciate it.
 10 Mr. Pack.
 11 MR. PACK: Yes, Mr. Callahan. Thank you
 12 very much. I have a few things.
 13 I want to start by first addressing
 14 Ms. Lane personally. It's been many years
 15 working with Angela and her team over at the
 16 Office of Finance through many budgets, some
 17 very strenuous and some very relaxed.
 18 I will say that this budget was probably
 19 one of the more amenable budget processes that
 20 I've had the pleasure to go through. And
 21 that's partly due to her preparation and

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1 presentation of the materials and working very
 2 closely with Mr. Stamp and the administration
 3 office, as well as with the department heads to
 4 make sure that we have a really neat budget
 5 that's addressing those priorities here in
 6 Talbot County.
 7 I've been saying, many of us have been
 8 saying for many, many years that the day was
 9 going to come when these capital expenditures
 10 would have to be met, and that day is here.
 11 And as Ms. Lane pointed out, the \$18.5 million
 12 in capital funding, although they don't
 13 continue eating as those operational costs do,
 14 they are still items that we desperately need
 15 to address here in the county to make sure
 16 we are safe, to make sure we have
 17 adequate space for our public safety officers
 18 and officials, and to make sure our roads are
 19 safe for citizens to travel upon.
 20 So those things that she highlighted in
 21 her budget review were items that she mentioned

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1 that this Council and prior Councils have been
 2 mentioning for many, many years that we were
 3 going to have to address.
 4 I do want to thank the citizens of Talbot
 5 County for their vote in November for allowing
 6 a modest increase in the property tax to allow
 7 us to address these capital expenditures as
 8 well as some operational items that we had to
 9 also take care of as well.
 10 So to Ms. Lane, we do know this is her
 11 final budget. As much as I tried to persuade
 12 her to stay, I think she has much deserved to
 13 go off and enjoy her vacation, her retirement I
 14 should say.
 15 And Ms. Lane, I wish you nothing but the
 16 best in your future endeavors.
 17 I also want to just take a moment to
 18 reflect upon the work that has been done
 19 dealing with the COVID effort here in Talbot
 20 County. There are many individuals I can name.
 21 I'm not going to try to name everyone because I

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1 know I'm going to forget someone.
 2 But starting with the Superintendent
 3 Griffith and her team. Feeding our youth,
 4 feeding our students, making sure that through
 5 the school year and through the summer even,
 6 last summer, that our students were fed, and
 7 that that basic human need of food was met.
 8 And they have done a yeoman's job in making
 9 sure and coordinating that food distribution
 10 effort, along with Ms. Jen Willis, who stepped
 11 in to work with our emergency operations team
 12 to address those food insecure communities in
 13 Talbot County.
 14 I also want to address Ms. Nancy Andrew in
 15 her part that she played as our COVID
 16 coordinator and then stepping down from that
 17 position, but still keeping her hand in the
 18 midst chairing our COVID vaccine equity task
 19 force to make sure that all citizens in Talbot
 20 County, regardless of race or population area
 21 that they live in, can have the vaccine.

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1 So I just wanted to highlight a couple of
 2 those individuals. Again, the list was too
 3 long for me to go through everyone, but I do
 4 want to say thank you to the full team that met
 5 each Wednesday and put together what I felt was
 6 an outstanding effort to keep the citizens of
 7 Talbot County safe.
 8 Mr. Stamp, I want to thank you for your
 9 effort. I know this was your, well, I wouldn't
 10 say your first budget, but your first official
 11 budget as county manager and working with
 12 Ms. Lane and her team, as well as with the
 13 department heads.
 14 And you stepped into a land mine, not just
 15 with COVID, but also with department heads who
 16 were retiring and moving on and having to work
 17 to get those positions filled. And we're still
 18 working to do that. So I just want to also
 19 highlight you on your efforts thus far.
 20 And also Ms. Morris and Ms. Moran working
 21 alongside you each and every day.

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1 I do want to pass on my condolences as
 2 well to the Cox family. We did hear early week
 3 that Kelly Cox had passed away. Kelly was a
 4 beloved resident here in Talbot County in the
 5 Bay Hundred area. She had done some marvelous
 6 work down on Tilghman Island to bring a school
 7 down there that would help educate students on
 8 marine life and just a person who was full of
 9 life and full of energy and dedicated,
 10 committed to her community.
 11 Was very saddened to hear about Kelly's
 12 passing and just wanted to pass on my
 13 condolences to her family.
 14 We also heard this evening that Oxford
 15 lost one of their former Councilwoman, that in
 16 Carolyn Abruzzese. Carolyn was a great citizen
 17 down in Oxford. She served them well over the
 18 years. Had the pleasure to work with her
 19 through many years of interaction from the
 20 county and the municipal level. And heard of
 21 her passing earlier day, and just wanted to

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1 extend my condolences to the Oxford community
 2 and to her family as well.
 3 Mothers Day is coming up on Sunday. And
 4 wanted to say to all the mothers who are
 5 listening Happy Mothers Day. And to the
 6 fathers and to the family, go out and treat
 7 your mothers well. They deserve it, and show
 8 them the love that they need.
 9 So with that, I think the budget
 10 presentation was very well done. Thanks for
 11 all those citizens. I know there weren't many.
 12 But thank you for those citizens who took the
 13 time out to call and to share their opinion
 14 with this Council. Thank you.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Pack. There
 16 were some kind words there. Did a great job.
 17 And I really appreciate those comments.
 18 Mr. Divilio.
 19 MR. DIVILIO: So sure, thank you.
 20 There's really just -- when I look at this
 21 budget, there's three things that really jump

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1 out at me. And I think we're doing the right
 2 steps to address some big concerns that have
 3 been going on.
 4 Thinking about the people. We have some
 5 great staff in many different departments,
 6 whether it be the Detention Center, the
 7 Sheriff's Department, taking care of all the
 8 buildings that we have. There's a lot of great
 9 employees that we have. And there's nothing
 10 more expensive for staffing than bad employees
 11 who cause good employees to leave and then
 12 you're replacing multiple.
 13 And hiring and training is very expensive.
 14 We've heard that over and over again from the
 15 Sheriff's Department and from EMTs. And we
 16 know that there's some things that will make
 17 their lives much better through benefits and
 18 packages, and we're addressing those.
 19 And I'm glad that this will reduce hiring.
 20 It will keep employees here longer, which will
 21 reduce the cost and the overhead, but it will

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1 also just make Talbot County a better place to
 2 work, which, in turn, is a better place to
 3 live.
 4 When I look at the places, the buildings
 5 that we're looking at addressing and the
 6 projects, I think we're being very strategic
 7 with the movement with it. We're looking at
 8 projects that we've had on the books for a long
 9 time. The Sheriff's Department, where is it
 10 going to go.
 11 And a lot of these are very expensive.
 12 We've looked at trying to combine things. I
 13 think we've done a really good job at looking
 14 at the different buildings, the different
 15 properties around, and what we have already and
 16 trying to figure out the most efficient way to
 17 get those going.
 18 And then lastly, looking at trying to use
 19 technology and not to replace individuals but
 20 make individuals' lives better and improve
 21 processes to make their work life easier and to

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1 just, again, make Talbot County a great place
 2 to work and a great place to live.
 3 None of that comes cheap. And to
 4 Mr. Pack's words, some of this keeps eating,
 5 but thankfully the majority of these large
 6 projects that we're looking at, we've been
 7 focused on saving for for a while.
 8 And it does still require the capital
 9 enabling legislation, which is always the nice
 10 safety net to make sure that we are making good
 11 decisions. We're planning right now, and then
 12 we're going to ramp up with that legislation in
 13 the future as those locations get found.
 14 So I thank this Council for working
 15 collectively to come up to solve a lot of
 16 challenges and working within the tight
 17 financial constraints that we have.
 18 And all of that could not be accomplished
 19 without the wonderful work of Ms. Lane, and the
 20 knowledge and the efficiency that she brings to
 21 that department will never be matched. She

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1 will greatly be missed. I hope she'll stay
 2 around and we'll be able to consult with her
 3 and use her as need be because there's nobody
 4 who knows it better or who can it handle
 5 better. She's leaving big shoes to fill.
 6 So Ms. Lane, from the very beginning of me
 7 coming on, I greatly appreciate you taking the
 8 time to educate me on the budget, take the
 9 phone calls when I'm in a frantic mess worried
 10 about how are we going to afford this, how is
 11 this going to work. And you always know. And
 12 I greatly appreciate having great people like
 13 that in there supporting us.
 14 So thank you very much. And I hope you
 15 enjoy your retirement.
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Divilio, for
 17 those kind words. Appreciate it.
 18 Ms. Price, are you with us?
 19 MS. PRICE: I am with you. And this is
 20 the first time I can remember where Council
 21 comments is longer than the public hearing.

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1 Never happened. But obviously that's because
 2 of the virtual nature.
 3 I did turn on the TV, and we have been
 4 preempted by the Easton Town Council. So I am
 5 concerned that even though it was just a very
 6 short public hearing, that we were not on TV
 7 tonight. So we need to make sure that we get
 8 video out there. And for those of you who are
 9 listening who most people watch on TV,
 10 hopefully that MCTV will play it again.
 11 I don't need to repeat my colleagues. I
 12 agree with everything that they've said, which
 13 is a wonderful thing. It is a very, very scary
 14 high number on the budget. But again, some of
 15 it is capital things and capital outlay items.
 16 The operating budget isn't that much higher.
 17 But it is still amazing to me that my
 18 first year on the Council it was in the mid
 19 \$60 million range, and now we're well over
 20 \$100 million. And I never thought I would see
 21 that over the course a decade.

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1 But thank you to everybody. Just echo
 2 everything that my colleagues said. And we'll
 3 be back in a couple of weeks, and I'm sure
 4 we'll have a little bit more to say.
 5 So thank you very much for tuning in this
 6 evening.
 7 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Ms. Price. And
 8 I'll wrap things up, too.
 9 Council, it's been a pleasure working with
 10 you tonight. We've done a lot of things, said
 11 a lot of nice things. And I echo everything
 12 that you guys have said tonight.
 13 Angela, once again, you have been
 14 definitely a big part of this for the 20 years.
 15 And you touched the lives of a lot of people
 16 and touched the lives of a lot of Council
 17 ladies and Council men and taught us a lot.
 18 And you've taught me a lot. With the constant
 19 yield, I don't know if you would be able to
 20 even comprehend pulling you out of retirement
 21 and teaching me what that's all about.

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1 So we can't thank you enough for all the
 2 hard work you've done and leadership that you
 3 gave Council. It's such an important position,
 4 and we really love everything you've done and
 5 taught us.
 6 Mr. Stamp, like I think Mr. Pack said, one
 7 of your first official budgets. And you led
 8 and your leadership and you've done such a
 9 great job.
 10 And I really appreciate that we did get a
 11 little break on some of the tax stuff and the
 12 voters allowed us to gain a little bit more
 13 money, which helps a lot, which gives us an
 14 opportunity to think about safety first. And
 15 that's what we've done.
 16 And just like Mr. Pack said, we've got a
 17 big budget for capital projects. And since
 18 I've been here, we haven't been able to have
 19 that luxury to start thinking about safety
 20 projects, EMS, the correctional facilities and
 21 Sheriff's Department, stuff like that. It's

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1 so, so important now that we are able to
 2 concentrate a little bit on that.
 3 And I'm excited to be a part of it. I'm
 4 excited to be my first year as president here.
 5 Mr. Pack is right. When me and Mr. Stamp
 6 stepped in this position and we've got a
 7 pandemic and we have leadership roles that
 8 we've had to endure, it's been tough. But with
 9 the leadership of this Council, and I really
 10 truly mean this, the leadership of this
 11 Council. And look, sometimes we battle it out.
 12 But at the end of the day, we're there for each
 13 other. And we're going to be hiring great
 14 people.
 15 And the community should be happy of their
 16 leadership. And I'm happy to be one of the
 17 leaders and part of this. And I'm very blessed
 18 and very honored to be here to be part of it.
 19 And for an example, I want to extend my
 20 hand out to Cassandra last Friday with an
 21 excellent, excellent summit she did for the

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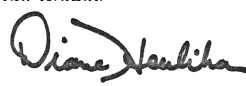
1 breakfast for economic development.
 2 Economic development around here is huge
 3 and a big revenue driver of this county. And
 4 I'm so proud to be part of it. Cassandra is
 5 sort of the backbone of that, and she does such
 6 a great job. And I just wanted to commend her
 7 for that.
 8 And the other sadness is like we said,
 9 Kelly Cox down in Oxford. I want to do a
 10 heartfelt out for the Cox family. So anything
 11 that we can do, we'd be glad to help you with.
 12 And I didn't know the other Council lady
 13 from Oxford that Mr. Pack mentioned, but same
 14 here. Give condolences to her family in
 15 Oxford.
 16 So to wrap all that up, it's been a
 17 heartfelt budget. It's been great dealing with
 18 Council. We've pulled it off. It was, to me,
 19 one of the easier budgets putting together with
 20 Council and working together because it was
 21 really hard to believe that we all really did

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1 it all well together.
 2 And I believe Ms. Price is going to pass
 3 this. So that's what really -- I mean that's
 4 awesome. I'm proud of her for thinking that
 5 and all that.
 6 So but anyway, Mr. Leshner, would you mind
 7 closing the evening for us and tell us what is
 8 going on next?
 9 MR. LESHER: Yes, indeed. The County
 10 Council's next --
 11 MR. PACK: I'm sorry, Mr. Leshner.
 12 Mr. President, I was wondering if you
 13 would indulge Ms. Lane just to address Council
 14 as this is her final budget.
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Oh, sure.
 16 MR. PACK: If that would be --
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Absolutely. I'll be glad
 18 to.
 19 MR. PACK: Thank you.
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: I'd be glad to you. Thank
 21 you, Mr. Pack.

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1 Ms. Lane, would you like to say a few
 2 things?
 3 MS. LANE: Well, thank you very much for
 4 all the kind words. I do appreciate it.
 5 As you all know, I do love budget and I
 6 love audit. They're my two favorite parts of
 7 my job. So I really do love this part of my
 8 job.
 9 And it's been a real pleasure to work with
 10 you all on this budget. And I do think we're
 11 really doing a lot of great things. I think
 12 transferring the money to the capital projects
 13 fund is wonderful. You really need to shore up
 14 that fund to get these projects done. And I'm
 15 thrilled that that's included in this budget.
 16 We have the reserves. And I know it is
 17 sometimes difficult to move money out of
 18 savings to spend on capital projects. It's
 19 hard in my personal life. So I know it's hard
 20 here. But I think it is really the right thing
 21 to do.

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<p>1 But I really do thank you for all the kind</p> <p>2 words. I will miss doing budget, to be honest.</p> <p>3 I'm not sure what I will do next February and</p> <p>4 March.</p> <p>5 MR. CALLAHAN: Hopefully you're somewhere</p> <p>6 warm.</p> <p>7 MS. LANE: That would be nice.</p> <p>8 But thank you so much. And I have loved</p> <p>9 working with all of you and all of the amazing</p> <p>10 employees of Talbot County. We do have great,</p> <p>11 great staff.</p> <p>12 I do have to give a shout out to my</p> <p>13 wonderful staff in the Finance Office. I am</p> <p>14 very fortunate to have such a wonderful,</p> <p>15 wonderful team behind me. And the next person</p> <p>16 will be very lucky.</p> <p>17 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Ms. Lane. I</p> <p>18 appreciate that, those kind words. We're going</p> <p>19 to miss you. That's for sure.</p> <p>20 Anything else, Council? Any other</p> <p>21 comments before Mr. Leshner puts things to bed</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. Good night.</p> <p>11 MR. CALLAHAN: Good night, Council.</p> <p>12 Appreciate the good work.</p> <p>13 (Meeting concluded at: 7:52 p.m.)</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p>
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<p>1 here for us?</p> <p>2 Okay, Mr. Leshner.</p> <p>3 MR. LESHER: All right. My thanks to</p> <p>4 Corey for that catch there.</p> <p>5 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you.</p> <p>6 MR. LESHER: The County Council's next</p> <p>7 meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 11th,</p> <p>8 beginning at six o'clock p.m. The Council will</p> <p>9 be convening in open session at three o'clock</p> <p>10 for a work session on final budget</p> <p>11 deliberations in association with Bill Number</p> <p>12 1473. And then adjourn into closed session to</p> <p>13 discuss real estate, legal, and personnel</p> <p>14 matters, as listed on the statement for closing</p> <p>15 that meeting.</p> <p>16 Therefore, is there a motion to adjourn</p> <p>17 this meeting and reconvene as noted?</p> <p>18 MR. DIVILIO: So moved.</p> <p>19 MS. PRICE: Second.</p> <p>20 MR. CALLAHAN: Madam Secretary, could you</p> <p>21 please call the roll please.</p>	<p>1 STATE OF MARYLAND</p> <p>2 I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and</p> <p>3 for the State of Maryland, County of Anne Arundel,</p> <p>4 do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot</p> <p>5 County Council Audio, personally appeared before me</p> <p>6 at the time and place herein set according to law,</p> <p>7 was interrogated by counsel.</p> <p>8</p> <p>9 I further certify that the examination was</p> <p>10 recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed</p> <p>11 from my stenographic notes to the within printed</p> <p>12 matter by means of computer-assisted transcription</p> <p>13 in a true and accurate manner.</p> <p>14</p> <p>15 I further certify that the stipulations</p> <p>16 contained herein were entered into by counsel in my</p> <p>17 presence.</p> <p>18</p> <p>19 I further certify that I am not of counsel</p> <p>20 to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel,</p> <p>21 nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way</p> <p>interested in the outcome of this action.</p> <p>AS WITNESS my hand Notarial Seal this 10th</p> <p>day of May, 2021, <i>at the</i></p> <p></p> <p>Diane Houlihan Notary Public</p> <p>My commission expires September 16, 2021</p>

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<p>2</p> <p>2 10:3 27:16,16 2.3 11:4 2.7 11:20 20 4:16 14:12 44:14 200,000 12:10 2020 5:4 2021 1:7 13:13,16 53:13,20 2021-2022 3:1 2022 3:11,13 9:21 21 3:14 4:3 22 4:1,17 27:10 22.5 3:21</p>	<p>ability 5:20 able 11:14 18:9 30:15 31:1 42:2 44:19 45:18 46:1 abruzzoese 37:16 absolutely 48:17 accept 27:18 accepted 13:14 25:10 29:17 accepting 29:20 access 11:15 17:5 accessibility 26:3 accommodate 27:7 accomplished 41:18</p>		

<p>assure 16:11 asterisk 15:12 20:14 atlantic 11:9 attend 18:3 attorney's 9:7 audience 3:10 30:19 audio 53:3 audit 49:6 authorized 5:3 available 9:1 11:2 13:3 14:5 19:15 awesome 48:4 aye 52:2,4,6,8,10</p>	<p>big 22:20 39:2 42:5 44:14 45:17 47:3 bill 2:20,21 3:11 12:12 13:11,21 15:1,3 16:4 21:18 30:2 51:11 bit 44:4 45:12 46:2 black 11:18 blessed 46:17 block 24:5 board 23:9 books 40:8 botkin 22:7,13,18 22:19 23:5,8 28:14,16 break 45:11 breakfast 26:13 47:1 bridge 25:4 bring 37:6 brings 41:20 broadband 11:5,6 11:8,9,15 17:1 21:13 31:8 brought 16:20 27:15 budget 1:4 3:1,11 3:14,15,18,21 4:1 4:4,13,13,15,17 4:21 5:6,12 6:1,9 6:12,14,15 7:17 7:21 8:3,14 9:21 10:15 12:19 13:6 13:12 14:4,4,5 20:5 21:7 27:10 27:14,17,19 28:11 31:9,9,13,16 32:18,19 33:4,21 34:11 36:10,11 38:9,21 42:8 43:14,16 45:17 47:17 48:14 49:5</p>	<p>49:10,15 50:2 51:10 budgets 12:5 32:16 45:7 47:19 buildings 39:8 40:4,14 burton 12:12 business 10:14 24:16 button 15:14 20:15</p>	<p>care 24:17 34:9 39:7 carolyn 37:16,16 casey 17:14,17,21 18:2 cassandra 46:20 47:4 catch 18:14 51:4 cause 39:11 causing 22:21 cent 4:21 center 10:14,16 39:6 centers 5:14 certificate 25:12 certify 53:3,5,8,10 chairing 35:18 challenges 41:16 changes 23:21 chapel 16:1,12 charts 14:16 chatted 25:2 cheap 41:3 child 24:8 26:9,14 children 23:17 24:4,7,10,14 25:1 chosen 30:21 chuck 1:14 circle 17:2 19:12 circumstances 29:3 30:14 citizen 37:16 citizens 33:19 34:4 35:19 36:6 38:11,12 class 25:7 28:4 classes 26:6 clearly 8:2 click 15:13 climate 11:13 closed 51:12 closely 33:2 closing 48:7 51:14</p>
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