



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

Monday, March 16, 2020

SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEETING

Present – President Corey W. Pack, Vice President Chuck F. Callahan, Frank Divilio, Laura Price, County Manager R. Andrew Hollis, County Attorney Anthony Kupersmith and Assistant County Attorney, Mary O'Donnell. Councilman Pete Leshar joined the meeting via conference call participation.

- I. Agenda – Prior to the Agenda of Monday, March 16, 2020 being brought forward for consideration of approval, Mr. Pack stated that the emergency declaration activates the State of Emergency for Talbot County as announced at the Council's March 15, 2020 press conference. He expressed his appreciation to Emergency Services Director/Assistant County Manager, Clay Stamp, Talbot County Health Officer, Fredia Wadley, individuals at the Emergency Operations Center and all those working behind the scenes to ensure that county citizens are provided accurate, up-to-date information on the coronavirus (COVID-19). Mr. Pack then requested and received Council's unanimous consent for approval of the Agenda of Monday, March 16, 2020.
- II. Consideration of Emergency Declaration for Talbot County Regarding COVID-19 – The Clerk read the emergency declaration into the record. Prior to vote on the emergency declaration, Mr. Stamp thanked the Council for their leadership and stated that the local declaration provides his office the flexibility to quickly put into action measures needed to respond to the current health emergency in the community. The Office of Law provided additional information with regard to item 6. of the emergency declaration, *Extension of Licenses*. Under the Emergency Declaration, effective March 17, 2020 all Talbot County government buildings shall be closed to the public while the Declaration is in effect. Mr. Hollis stated that County staff will be available via phone and e-mail and that drop boxes would be placed at the outside entrance of several departments, including Planning and Zoning, Permits and Inspections, Finance, Public Works, Election Board and Environmental Health, by the end of the day. He stated that the boxes are being placed at the various departments to provide citizens an opportunity to submit information which cannot be conveyed by email or telephone in order to accommodate the public as much as possible.
- III. Upon motion by Ms. Price, seconded by Mr. Divilio, the Council approved the emergency declaration by voting 5 – 0 as follows:
 - Mr. Pack – Aye
 - Mr. Divilio – Aye
 - Mr. Callahan – Aye
 - Ms. Price - Aye
 - Mr. Leshar – Aye (via conference call participation)
- IV. Council Comments:
 - Mr. Leshar – Mr. Leshar expressed his appreciation to County staff for their prompt attention to this matter and that he appreciates all the support we have.
 - Ms. Price - Ms. Price concurred with Mr. Leshar's comments and stated that, in her opinion, Talbot County has the best staff anyone could ask for and that county citizens can

feel assured that things are being taken care of in any manner that we possibly can. She stated that citizens should continue to live their lives the best they can and to not be fearful. She stated that as a small business owner she is very concerned that the repercussions to the economy will last much longer than the medical emergency and encouraged individuals who can to give their full support to local businesses which are still allowed to be open.

Mr. Divilio - Mr. Divilio stated that citizens who have a question for a certain department or a document they need to get to that department, should contact that department directly so as not to overwhelm the County Manager's Office which is coordinating many things at present. Mr. Hollis stated that the contact information for each department is on the County's website.

Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan expressed his appreciation to staff and to Mr. Pack. He concurred with Ms. Price that we are a team and are here to help the public. He stated that, in his opinion, the Council had been elected to lead the county and to protect the citizens of the county and that's what the Council is doing. He concurred with Ms. Price's statement that we all have businesses and we are here to work together – if there is a business out there that has a problem, the County will work with you. He emphasized that the situation is changing as we speak; it will be a work in progress for the next couple of weeks as the situation changes day by day. He stated that the Governor, in his opinion, has done a great job of keeping people safe and county citizens have to just put all other things aside and look at it as a safety measure. He encouraged citizens to use common sense, not panic and we will all get through it and as a result, in his opinion, the whole system in Talbot County will be better than ever. He commended Mr. Stamp and his department and stated that he hopes everyone stays safe.

Mr. Pack - Mr. Pack concurred with Mr. Callahan's statements regarding Mr. Stamp and the staff at the Emergency Operations Center, including Geneva Schaffle and Cassandra Vanhooser for coordinating the virtual daily EOC meetings and for making sure the daily press releases get out to keep everyone informed. He stated that it is an "all hands on deck" situation and we are reaching out to every facet of Talbot County, including the faith community, to bring them on board so that citizens can see and feel that there is hope in the midst of great despair and worry and there will be better days ahead. He stated that these are very trying times, citing recent tremendous loss of life in Italy, a first world country, which is why, in his opinion, it would be naïve to think that what has happened in Italy could not happen to us. He stated that learning from history, particularly the Spanish Flu Epidemic of 1918, and taking the precautions of shutdowns, social distancing, handwashing, and use of hand sanitizer, add up and matter greatly. He expressed his appreciation to all the County's partner agencies for everything they are doing. Mr. Pack concluded his comments by encouraging citizens to check talbotcovid19.org and talbotdes.org for the latest information on the coronavirus.

The Council meeting previously scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, 2020 is cancelled.

- V. Upon motion by Mr. Callahan, seconded by Mr. Divilio, the Council voted to adjourn by voting 5 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Pack - Aye

Mr. Divilio – Aye

Mr. Callahan - Aye

Ms. Price – Aye

Mr. Leshner – Aye (via conference call participation)

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.