



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

August 11, 2022

Present – President Chuck Callahan, Vice President Pete Lesher, Corey W. Pack, County Manager Clay Stamp, and County Attorney Patrick Thomas. Council members Frank Divilio and Laura Evergam Price joined the meeting via phone.

- I. Continuation of Presentation of Talbot County Economic Development Commission Recommendations for Funding of Talbot County Projects Through the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund – Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Reza Jafari, Chairman, Talbot County Economic Development Commission – Ms. Vanhooser stated that \$50 million in funding included in Governor Hogan’s February 2022 budget was designated for economic development in Maryland’s rural counties. She stated that each of the five regional councils in the state is to receive \$10 million; the Mid-Shore Regional Council, comprised of Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot counties, will each receive \$3,233,333. She stated that ten members of the Talbot County Economic Development Commission volunteered their time to review and rank the 23 grant applications received, and the recommendations of the committee were presented to Council at their Tuesday, August 9, 2022 meeting. Mr. Jafari outlined the criteria by which applications could be considered for funding: economic development, workforce development, infrastructure, entrepreneurship and innovation. As she had done at the Tuesday, August 9, 2022 Council meeting, Ms. Vanhooser provided a brief outline of the projects recommended by the committee for funding, the amounts requested by the applicants, and the amounts recommended to be funded. As each of the projects was brought forward, Council discussion ensued and the amount recommended by the committee was accepted or modified. Several Council members requested that other projects be given consideration for funding and outlined the reasoning for their requests; Council discussion ensued. The projects presented for Council’s consideration on Tuesday, August 9th were as follows:

- \$257,500 - Chesapeake College, Future Work Workforce Training Program
- \$240,000 - Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Mid-Shore Optical Broadband Network Upgrade
- \$500,000 - Avalon Foundation, Stoltz Pavilion
- \$501,700 - Town of Easton, Port Street Improvement Project
- \$400,000 - Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, Ag Biotech Manufacturing Project
- \$22,000 - Talbot County Free Library, Digital Literacy and Employment Skills
- \$87,133 - Building African American Minds, Workforce Development Program
- \$50,000 - Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, Inclusive Ventures Program
- \$300,000 - Talbot County Parks and Recreation, Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Phase II Predevelopment Engineer, Architecture, and Interpretation
- \$125,000 - Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, Strategic Plan
- \$750,000 - Talbot County Public Works, Goldsborough Neck Road Culvert Replacement Project

Council expressed its appreciation to Ms. Vanhooser, Mr. Jafari, and members of Economic Development Commission application review committee for all the work that went into the making the recommendations.

Upon motion by Mr. Pack, seconded by Mr. Divilio, the Council agreed to forward its recommendations, as agreed upon, by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Pack – Aye
Ms. Price – Aye (via telephone)
Mr. Divilio – Aye (via telephone)

Mr. Leshar recused himself from discussion related to funding a project at the St. Michaels Maritime Museum as he is an employee of the Museum, and Mr. Pack recused himself from discussion related to funding for the Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe as he is a member of the Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Advisory Committee. Mr. Leshar also recused himself from voting.

The County Council will forward the following recommendations, in ranked order, along with a letter of support to Mid-Shore Regional Council by Friday, August 12, 2022:

- \$257,500 - Chesapeake College, *Future Work Workforce Training* –
- \$240,000 - Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Inc., *Mid-Shore Optical Broadband Network Upgrade*
- \$500,000 - Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center, *Ag Biotech Manufacturing Project*
- \$500,000 - Town of Trappe, *Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade to ENR Technology*
- \$300,000 - Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Inc., *New Welcome Center*
- \$22,000 - Talbot County Free Library, *Digital Literacy and Employment Skills*
- \$87,133 - Building African American Minds, *Workforce Development Program*
- \$50,000 - Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, *Inclusive Ventures Program*
- \$300,000 - Talbot County Parks and Recreation, *Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe Phase II Predevelopment, Engineer, Architecture and Interpretation*
- \$125,000 - Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, *Strategic Plan*
- \$750,000 - Talbot County Public Works, *Goldsborough Neck Road Culvert Replacement Project*
- \$38,700 - Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, *Visitors Center Feasibility Study*
- \$13,000 - Oxford Community Center, *Showtime*
- \$50,000 - Classic Motor Museum of St. Michaels, Inc., *Automotive Technician Apprenticeship Program*

The Council, in its letter to Mid-Shore Regional Council, will also indicate its support for an alternative project, the Avalon Foundation, Inc., *Stoltz Pavilion* - \$500,000, should the review committee find that one of the fourteen projects submitted above does not meet the grant guidelines.

II. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

III. Upon motion by Mr. Divilio, seconded by Mr. Pack, the Council voted to adjourn by voting 4 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
Mr. Pack - Aye
Ms. Price – Aye (via telephone)
Mr. Divilio – Aye (via telephone)

The meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

The transcript of the August 11, 2022 County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.