



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

February 28, 2023

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

- I. Agenda – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Agenda of Tuesday, February 28, 2023.
- II. Minutes – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, February 14, 2023.
- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, February 21, 2023 and Tuesday, February 28, 2023.
- IV. Updated by Maryland Environmental Service - Tim Ford, Managing Director, Environmental Operations, Maryland Environmental Service; Gary Lasako, Senior Project Manager, Maryland Environmental Service - Mr. Ford and Mr. Lasako provided an overview of Maryland Environmental Services (MES), a not-for-profit business unit of the State of Maryland, and its functions throughout the state, including the operation of wastewater treatment plants and management of solid waste facilities. Mr. Ford utilized a PowerPoint presentation to provide a brief history of the Midshore Agreement, an 80-year agreement which began in the early 1980s when Caroline, Queen Anne’s and Talbot counties identified the need for a regional waste disposal solution whereby each county is obligated to host a landfill facility within their respective county for 20 years; Kent County joined in 1992. He stated that Mid-Shore I Regional Landfill was constructed in Talbot County in 1990, Mid-Shore II landfill was constructed in Caroline County in 2010, and Mid-Shore III landfill is scheduled to open in Queen Anne’s County in 2031. He stated that MES has submitted a draft Phase I Refuse Disposal Permit application to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for the proposed Mid-Shore III Regional Solid Waste Facility to be located near Centreville, MD; it is anticipated MDE will take action on the application by March 2023 with construction of Mid-Shore III anticipated to begin 12 to 18 months prior to the closure of Mid-Shore II. Mr. Lasako provided statistical information for 2022 on the number of customers, tonnage of solid waste, yard waste, and brush collected at the Homeowner Drop-Off (HODO) and Transfer Station which still operates at Mid-Shore I in Talbot County at 7341 Barkers Landing Road in Easton, and the Mid-Shore II facility in Caroline County. He noted that MES continues to collect and control landfill gas at Mid-Shore I, manages leachate, and maintains the exposed geo-membrane cap in accordance with post-closure care plan. He briefed the Council on a pilot renewable energy project in partnership with the Maryland Energy Administration using a Qnergy Stirling Engine which combusts methane gas generated by the landfill. Mr. Lasako also briefed the Council on the Mid-Shore Regional Recycling Program which has 35 sites throughout the four counties, the types of recyclables accepted and the tonnages received in 2022. He stated that the program is primarily funded through a \$5 per ton fee for the recyclables which are delivered to Mid-Shore II. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Ford and Mr. Lasako as various facets of the presentation were brought forward. The next Household Hazardous Waste Day will be held on Saturday, April 15, 2023 in Kent County ([HHW-Drop-off-Day-April-2023.pdf \(menv.com\)](#)). Maryland Environmental Service will continue to update the Council on a regular or as-needed basis.

- V. Update by Talbot Humane – Patty Crankshaw-Quimby, Executive Director, Talbot Humane – Ms. Crankshaw-Quimby stated that in 2022, 977 animals were taken in at Talbot Humane, 794 of which were adopted, reunited with their owner or transferred to other rescue groups. In addition, 1,264 animals were spayed or neutered, 1,200 animals were microchipped, 327 animals were fostered in the community, 9 tons of pet food were distributed, and 202 owners received assistance from Talbot Humane’s intervention program. Ms. Crankshaw-Quimby noted that the intake of animals at Talbot Humane in 2022 increased by 18% over 2021 and that the number of citizens contacting Talbot Humane due to financial hardship, housing issues, etc., continues to increase. She stated that Animal Control responded to 315 initial calls for service and expressed her appreciation to Officer Gonzalez who will celebrate 20 years of service with Talbot Humane in May. She stated that February 28th is World Spay Day and that Talbot Humane was recently awarded funding in the sum of \$43,595 from the Maryland Department of Agriculture for their spay/neuter program. Ms. Crankshaw-Quimby expressed her appreciation to all the volunteers who collectively gave over 8,000 hours of time to Talbot Humane in 2022, stating that she and her small staff rely on the support of the volunteers. She stated that the internship program for interested high school students continues and noted that a former intern is now a licensed veterinarian. Ms. Crankshaw-Quimby concluded her presentation by outlining upcoming events and invited the Council to tour the Talbot Humane facility in the near future. Talbot Humane will continue to update the Council on a regular or as-needed basis.
- VI. Presentation by Talbot County Agricultural Community – Shawn Smith, District Manager, Talbot Soil Conservation District; John Swaine, III, Chairman, Board of Supervisors, Talbot Soil Conservation District and Vice President of Talbot County Farm Bureau; John Barga, County Executive Director, USDA Farm Service Agency; Shannon Dill, Extension Educator – AgFS, University of Maryland Extension – Talbot County – Ms. Dill outlined the mission of agriculture in Talbot County, profitability and conservation, stating that each of the agencies represented has a different role to play. She stated that agriculture is the No. 1 land use and the No. 1 economic driver in Talbot County. She stated that the Extension Office provides outreach in the areas of agricultural research, 4-H development, family consumer science, food and nutrition and home horticulture. She stated that the Extension Office also provides information to stakeholders regarding regulatory policies, upcoming training sessions, etc. Ms. Dill offered to provide Council with a tour of various farms throughout the county later in the summer or early fall. Mr. Swaine introduced Joe Willoughby as the new Talbot County Weed Control Coordinator. He stated that the Farm Bureau organization was established in 1956 to represent the interest of farmers at the county, state and national level with regard to policies and regulations. He stated that Talbot County Farm Bureau currently has 269 members, meetings are open to the public and welcomed the Council to attend. Mr. Smith stated that the Soil Conservation District works with the agricultural community on matters related to conservation planning, erosion and sediment control, etc. Mr. Barga stated that the primary role of the USDA Farm Service Agency, a federal program, is to provide efficient agricultural programs throughout the country; farmers submit information into a database on the crops planted and the number of acres in production for specific crops; that information is then used to determine the various programs offered the farmers, including programs to protect the farms against natural disasters, conservation programs, income safety net programs, etc. Mr. Barga encouraged anyone who is thinking about getting into farming to stop by the USDA Farm Service Agency office. Representatives of the Agricultural community will continue to update the Council on a regular or as-needed basis. The Talbot County Ag Fair will be held July 13 – 15, 2023.

VII. Introduction of Numbered Resolution:

A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN (CWSP) FOR CONSISTENCY WITH DISCHARGE PERMIT NO. 19-DP-3460, ISSUED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON OCTOBER 27, 2022 AND TO REQUIRE THAT ANY FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE NEW LAKESIDE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SHALL REQUIRE AN AMENDMENT TO THE CWSP was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated the purpose of the resolution, drafted at the request of Ms. Mielke, is to incorporate the provisions of the discharge permit issued in October by the Maryland Department of the Environment for the Lakeside facility, into the County's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan. He stated that the provisions of the permit are more restrictive than those currently in the Plan. Ms. Mielke then outlined her reasons for requesting the resolution be drafted. The resolution was introduced by Ms. Mielke as Resolution No. 338. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 N. Washington St., Easton, Maryland 21601. The Planning Commission will review Resolution No. 338 at its meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 5, 2023.

VIII. Discussion of General Assembly Legislation:

HB235 – Property Tax – Deadline Extension for Homeowners to Redeem Property Involved in a Tax Sale; and

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/HB0235>

SB303/HB700 Talbot County – Speed Monitoring Systems – Intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue; and

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0303>

SB498/HB497 Rural Health Collaborative Pilot Repeal and Mid-Shore Health Improvement Coalition Funding; and

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/SB0498>

SB777/HB1118 Middle Shore Counties - Sunday Hunting - Repeal of Time Restrictions

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/bills/sb/sb0777F.pdf>

were read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for discussion. Ms. Haythe made a motion requesting that staff provide more information on each of the bills prior to any Council action; the motion was seconded by Mr. Stepp. The Council approved the request by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye

Mr. Stepp – Aye

Ms. Mielke – Aye

Ms. Haythe – Aye

IX. County Manager’s Report:

- A. Talbot County Agricultural Land Preservation Board – Mr. Stamp requested Council approval of the reappointment of Robert Saathoff, Sr. to a five-year term on the Talbot County Agricultural Land Preservation Board; said term will expire on March 13, 2028. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, second by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- B. Talbot County Animal Control Board – Requested Council approval of the appointment of Cassandra Vanhooser to a three-year term on the Talbot County Animal Control Board as a representative of the agricultural community; said term will expire on July 1, 2025. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the appointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- C. Talbot County Weed Control Committee – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Michael Weaver and the appointment of Lloyd Pahlman to three-year terms on the Talbot County Weed Control Committee; said terms will expire on July 1, 2025. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the reappointment and the appointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- D. Request for Letter of Support from Eastern Shore Land Conservancy – Requested Council approval to forward a letter in support of Eastern Shore Land Conservancy’s sponsorship of the Rural Legacy Program and Talbot County Rural Legacy priorities for FY24: the Eastern Shore Heartland Rural Legacy Area and the Tuckahoe Rural Legacy Area; no County funding is required. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the request for a letter of support by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- E. BID NO. 23-02, GRASS CUTTING SERVICES – PARKS, BALL FIELDS AND LANDINGS – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND - Requested Council approval of

the Department of Parks & Recreation Director’s recommendation to award Bid No. 23-02 to the sole bidder, Riverside Lawn Service, in the sum of \$44,994.00 for the 2023 season; three proposals were distributed but only one bid submitted. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the award by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- F. BID NO. 23-03, PORTABLE SANITARY CHEMICAL TOILET SERVICE – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND - Requested Council approval of the Department of Parks & Recreation Director’s recommendation to award Bid No. 23-03 to the sole bidder, Pierson Comfort Group, LLC in the sum of \$32,917.50 for the 2023 season; six proposals were distributed but only one bid submitted. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the award by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- G. Request from Department of Parks & Recreation – Requested Council approval of the Department of Parks & Recreation Director’s recommendation to enter into a renewal of the pool management contract with Coastline Pool Service for the George Murphy Pool and the Bay Hundred Community Pool for the 2023 season in the sum of \$270,000. Council discussion ensued with Preston Peper, Director, Department of Parks & Recreation. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved renewal of the contract by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- H. Request for Letter of Support from Easton Utilities – Requested Council approval to forward a letter in support of Easton Utilities’ application for FY24 Congressionally Directed Spending for upgrades to the Town of Easton’s water treatment system; no County funds are required. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the request for a letter of support by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- X. Public Comments: Members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on matters of interest to them.

- XI. Council Comments:

- Mr. Stepp – Mr. Stepp stated that since the Council’s last meeting on February 14th, several Council members had attended Warren Edwards’ (Roads Superintendent) recent retirement ceremony. He stated that Mr. Edwards had put in a lot of years for Talbot County and it was, in his opinion, great to see a warm and friendly sendoff for him. He stated that he and several Council members, as well as County employees had recently helped serve lunch to over 100 participants at Brookletts Place, the Senior Center in Easton. Mr. Stepp stated that he and Ms. Mielke had attended the annual banquet at the St. Michaels Volunteer Fire Company and earlier today the Council held a work session with Easton Utilities to learn more about their initiative to extend broadband initiative out into the county. He stated that, in his opinion, good things are happening in Talbot County. Mr. Stepp concluded his comments by stating that he will be seeking the support of Council in the near future for a proclamation for “Talbot Day.” He stated that a proclamation issued by the Council in 1983 designated April 25th as the birthday of Talbot County and that this year, April 25th happens to be a Council meeting date; more information will be forthcoming.
- Ms. Mielke – Ms. Mielke stated that she listens via Zoom to the Eastern Shore Delegation meetings and summaries each Friday morning and during the last meeting, introduced Serena McIlwain, new Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment, who was nominated to the position on February 17, 2023; from January 18, 2023 to February 17th, 2023 Ms. McIlwain was Acting Secretary. Ms. Mielke stated that, in her opinion, Ms. McIlwain is very enthusiastic and has a philosophy of getting up and getting out and wants to visit the counties to learn what their issues are as she is going to be very proactive in protecting our environment. She stated that at some point she would like to have Ms. McIlwain meet with the Council, the municipalities and environmental groups so she can get to know the needs and desires to Talbot County with regard to environmental issues so we can protect our precious environment.
- Ms. Haythe - Ms. Haythe stated that she and Mr. Callahan had attended the 205th birthday celebration of Frederick Douglass at the Avalon Theatre and expressed her appreciation to Cassandra Vanhooser and Terrence Bailey for their assistance with the event. She stated that, in her opinion, the statue was awesome and it was a well done event, including the dinner at the Waterfowl Building. She stated that she saw the actor who played Frederick Douglass, Darius Wallace, on Law & Order a couple days later and in her opinion, it was good to have a celebrity in town and then to see him on TV. Ms. Haythe stated that as the Council moves into budget deliberations, she has spoken with her colleagues individually regarding a placeholder for a housing coordinator position. She stated that the County previously had a housing coordinator position, which was eliminated, but if, through budget deliberations we are successful in bringing the position back, the individual would be responsible for creating a workforce program for citizens to either receive financial counselling to be able to purchase a home or to assist citizens with renting apartments in Talbot County. Ms. Haythe stated that if the program is created, Talbot County will be one of

two counties in the state which has such a program. She stated that as the Council goes through budget deliberations, she hopes that the program can be brought to the citizens of Talbot County in order to provide some retention benefits to our fire departments, healthcare workers, etc. so they can live Talbot County where they work.

Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan stated that the Council had held a work session with Easton Utilities at 3:00 p.m. today on *Connect Talbot*. He stated that, in his opinion, that it is such an important project that Talbot County has partnered with Easton Utilities to connect broadband to unserved and underserved areas throughout the entire county. He stated that, in his opinion, it is a big accomplishment and adds value to land, housing, and schools. Mr. Callahan concluded his comments by stating that the Council will be working hard with staff and department heads over the next two months on the budget and although the Council can't please everyone, we are going to do whatever we can to help Talbot County be very successful.

XII. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. and Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room for budget presentations from County departments and agencies and to reconvene on Tuesday, March 14, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in Open Session and immediately adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of legal, personnel and real estate matters as listed on the statement for closing the meeting, and at 6:00 p.m. for the regularly scheduled meeting by voting 4 - 0 as follows:

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

The transcript of the February 28, 2023 County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

XIII, Summary of Closed Session Held on February 28, 2023:

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

Time of closed session: 4:35 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Place of closed session: County Council Office
Purpose of the closed session: To consider various matters as set forth in the statement for closing the meeting

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

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

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

Topic Description	Statutory Authority	Reason for Closed Session Discussion	Persons Present	Action Taken
To discuss appointment to various County boards and committees	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Public discussion would discourage individuals from volunteering to serve	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
For legal update on litigation involving Talbot Integrity Project v Talbot County	GP § 3-305(b)(7)(8)	Attorney-client privilege regarding status of litigation	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	Council concurred with legal filing
For legal update on litigation involving Bartlett et al v Talbot County	GP § 3-305(b)(7)(8)	Attorney-client privilege regarding status of litigation	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
To discuss possible acquisition of property for a public purpose in the Bay Hundred area	GP § 3-305(b)(3)	To collect the County’s bargaining position regarding the potential acquisition of parcel(s) of real property for a public purpose	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action

XIV. Work Session with Easton Utilities on *Connect Talbot* Project – The Council met with Hugh Grunden, P.E., President & CEO, Easton Utilities Commission; John Horner, Executive Vice President & COO, Easton Utilities Commission, Kelly Simonsen, Marketing and Communications Manager, Easton Utilities Commission, and Ted Book, Vice President, Easton Velocity – Easton Utilities Commission – Mr. Grunden briefed the Council on the *Connect Talbot* project, stating that he wants Talbot County to be the first county in Maryland with ubiquitous broadband as it enhances healthcare, education and remote work environments. Mr. Horner utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline the timeline of the *Connect Talbot* project to date, beginning with the passage of the Connecting Rural Maryland Act of 2017 (SB 717/HB1169) which established a task force to study and make recommendations as to how Maryland’s rural counties could work together to obtain federal assistance to provide, among other

services, broadband to their citizens. He outlined funding received from various sources, including Talbot County, to provide broadband to the estimated 3,600 unserved and underserved customers in the county, and provided a map depicting the numerous stages of connection and anticipated date of completion of connection to areas throughout the county. He stated that service is currently available to a potential 967 customers, with 456 actually receiving service at this time, and that to date, 160 miles of the anticipated 350 miles of fiber to be installed has been installed. Council discussion ensued with the representatives as various facets of the presentation were brought forward. Easton Utilities will continue to update the Council on a regular or as-needed basis as the project moves forward.

CASH STATEMENT 02/21/2023

BALANCE 2/14/2023	94,725,622.58
TOTAL ADP PAYROLL PPE 2/3/2023	(749,159.67)
PENSION DED PPE 2/3/2023	(45,338.57)
DEFERRED COMP DED PPE 2/3/2023	(20,766.19)
DEFERRED COMP PPE 2/3/2023 PLAN 401(A)	(8,664.00)
WELLS FARGO GOLF EQUIP LEASE PYMT 2/2023	(4,092.00)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT #92-04	(2,833.00)
USDA/RD MTHLY BOND PYMT #97-08	(1,304.00)
DEPOSITS	648,035.33
CHECKS	(325,890.55)
ACH DISBURSEMENT(S)	(187,647.45)
WIRE TRANSFERS	
VOIDED CHECK(S) #363781, 364900, 364963	2,767.84
BALANCE 02/21/2023	<u>94,030,730.32</u>

INVESTMENTS - CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT

<u>Certificate Date</u>	<u>Maturity Date</u>	<u>Yield</u>	<u>Amount</u>
PNC-MLGIP INVESTMENTS TOTAL		4.51%	20,682,477.51
BAYVANGUARD BANK			10,268,610.91
TOTAL INVESTED			<u>30,951,088.42</u>
PETTY CASH BALANCE			<u>18,105.00</u>

GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS**124,999,923.74****CASH STATEMENT 02/28/2023**

BALANCE 2/21/2023	94,030,730.32
CIGNA CLAIMS PAID THRU 2/21/2023	(85,513.18)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT #92-16 2/2023	(6,626.00)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT #92-14 2/2023	(13,086.00)
ENTERPRISE LEASE PYMT 2/2023	(16,271.11)
RETURNED CHECK(S) #895251, 895254	(300.00)
INTEREST ON ACCOUNTS 1/2023	366,284.01
DEPOSITS	739,919.02
CHECKS	(377,010.53)
ACH DISBURSEMENT(S)	(728,483.81)
WIRE TRANSFERS	
VOIDED CHECK(S) # 199	89,925.33
BALANCE 02/28/2023	<u>93,999,568.05</u>

INVESTMENTS - CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT

<u>Certificate Date</u>	<u>Maturity Date</u>	<u>Yield</u>	<u>Amount</u>
PNC-MLGIP INVESTMENTS TOTAL		4.55%	20,682,477.51
BAYVANGUARD BANK			10,268,610.91
TOTAL INVESTED			<u>30,951,088.42</u>
PETTY CASH BALANCE			<u>18,105.00</u>
<u>GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS</u>			<u>124,968,761.47</u>

