



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

September 26, 2023

Present – President Chuck Callahan, Vice President Pete Leshner, Lynn L. Mielke, Dave Stepp, County Manager Clay Stamp, and County Attorney Patrick Thomas. Councilwoman Keasha Haythe joined the meeting via telephone.

- I. Agenda – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Agenda for Tuesday, September 26, 2023.
- II. Minutes – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, September 12, 2023.
- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, September 19, 2023 and Tuesday, September 26, 2023.
- IV. Proclamation: Suicide Prevention Month – September 2023 – The Clerk read a proclamation into the record which spoke of the prevalence of suicide as one of the leading causes of death, particularly among young people, and the efforts by public and private organizations to reduce the number of suicides through the provision of adequate and accessible behavioral health services for citizens of all ages facing mental health challenges. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the proclamation by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

Katie Theeke, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, and Tina Jones, Chief Financial Officer, For All Seasons, Inc., briefed the Council on services offered by the seven locations of For All Seasons, Inc., including the new program “Open Access” which offers at several of their locations during select hours, same day walk-in appointments for those who may be experiencing a mental health crisis. Ms. Theeke encouraged everyone to check in with those in their circle to see how they are doing. Council members commended For All Seasons, Inc. for the work they do in the community.

Mr. Leshner presented the Proclamation to Ms. Theeke and Ms. Jones who accepted on behalf of For All Seasons, Inc.

- V. Proclamation: National Voter Education Week – October 2 – 6, 2023 – The Clerk read a proclamation into the record which spoke of National Voter Education Week, the purpose of which is to provide information to voters so they may cast their ballot as informed and prepared citizens when they exercise their right to vote, an essential element of our democracy. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe the Council did not approve the proclamation by voting 2 – 3 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Nay
Mr. Stepp – Nay
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Nay
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

Mr. Stepp stated that although the request for the proclamation had come from the Talbot County Board of Elections and he wholeheartedly supports voter rights, one of the fundamental rights in our country, he personally declined to support the proclamation, because the organization behind the National Voter Education Week initiative (votereducationweek.org), neophilanthropy.org, is partisan supports Planned Parenthood among other social justice organizations. Mr. Stepp encouraged anyone who would like to get information on voter registration in Talbot County to visit the Talbot County Board of Elections located at 215 Bay Street, Suite 7, in Easton.

- VI. Update on Talbot County Resource Day Event – Saturday, October 14, 2023 – Catherine Poe, Chair, Talbot County Hunger Coalition – Ms. Poe briefed the Council on the upcoming Talbot County Resource Day to be held on Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Easton Elementary School (307 Glenwood Ave.). She stated that the event provides “one-stop shopping” for Talbot County residents in need by offering, among other things, free dental and other health screenings, free books for children, free grocery items, heating assistance, voter registration, immigration assistance, and help for victims of domestic violence. Ms. Poe cited statistics on the number of school-age children in Talbot County who receive free and reduced meals (61%), the number of homeless children in the county (200), and the average wages earned by a family of two adults and two children living in Easton compared to the average cost of living in Easton and stated that 11% of Talbot County citizens are food insecure. She stated that Resource Day provides senior citizens and the working poor in our community with information on resources available to assist them with getting the services they need. Ms. Poe expressed her appreciation to the many sponsors and volunteers of the event and extended an invitation to the Council to volunteer at one of the county’s food pantries during the month of October, Hunger Action Month. Council members expressed their appreciation to Ms. Poe for the work of the Talbot Hunger Coalition.
- VII. Update to Board of Health – Maria Maguire, M.D., Talbot County Health Officer – Dr. Maguire utilized a PowerPoint presentation to brief the Council on various matters related to public health, including: (1) the Centers for Disease Control’s (CDC’s) prediction that the number of hospitalizations due to COVID-19, RSV, and flu during the 2023/2024 winter is anticipated to be approximately the same as last year. Dr. Maguire stated that a vaccine for RSV is now available for individuals 60 and older; those who are pregnant, and infants 8 months and older; flu vaccine is available at all eight pharmacies and at primary care physicians in Talbot County. She stated that the Health Department will be scheduling flu clinics for adults residing in assisted living and congregate care facilities and will also provide vaccines for children ages 18 and under who are on Medicaid or who are uninsured, through the Vaccines for Children Program; (2) COVID-19 – Dr. Maguire stated that Maryland is seeing an increase in hospitalizations due to COVID-19 but that the most recent vaccines for COVID-19 (Pfizer and Moderna) were approved on September 11th for individuals aged 6 months and older; however, supplies are limited at the present time; free take-home tests are available at the Talbot County Health Department, the Talbot County Free Library and from the federal government at COVID.gov; (3) Opioid Epidemic – Dr. Maguire provided statistical information on drug and opioid overdoses and deaths for the state of Maryland from 2011-2022 and for the Mid-Shore Region, and Talbot County for the years 2018 – 2022. She stated with receipt of funding to fight the epidemic, overdoses trended downward from 2018/2019 but the

COVID-19 Pandemic saw an increase; the majority of overdose deaths in Maryland are due to fentanyl, followed by cocaine and heroin. She stated that only in the last two years have the numbers begun to decrease, due in part to the availability and distribution of Narcan; and (3) Maternal Child Health Crisis – Dr. Maguire provided statistical information on the number of births per year in Talbot County (300 – 400), a breakdown of the demographics of the births and the infant mortality rate (infant deaths between birth and one year old) of 6.4 per 1,000 live births; the infant mortality rate in Maryland is 6.1 per 1,000 live births; in the United States the rate is 5.4 per 1,000 live births. She stated that the March of Dimes gave Maryland a D+ rating with regard to maternal child health, due in part, to the high preterm birth rate and inadequate prenatal care, both of which are higher in Talbot County than in other parts of the state; she outlined various factors negatively affecting maternal child health in Talbot County. She stated that, in her opinion, we can do better, highlighting participation by Talbot County residents in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, a supplemental nutrition program who are struggling with poverty and various women’s health services which are again being offered by the Talbot County Health Department through the Supporting Pregnancy Outcomes in Talbot County (SPOT) program, and the Early Head Start Program which prepares children for preschool and kindergarten readiness. Council discussion ensued with Dr. Maguire as various matters were brought forward. Dr. Maguire will continue to update the Council on a regular or as-needed basis.

- VIII. Presentation of Talbot County Public Schools FY25 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) – Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations, Talbot County Public Schools – Mr. Shafer utilized a PowerPoint presentation to brief the Council on the FY25 Capital Improvement Plan for Talbot County Public Schools. He stated that the CIP focuses on the construction funding request for the Chapel District Elementary School renovation and expansion project. Mr. Shafer stated that the funding request to the State for FY25 totals \$6.2 million and \$5.5 million in FY26 for a total construction funding request of \$11.7 million; the FY24 funding request for design totals \$682,450. He stated that the State had accepted Talbot County Public Schools’ request to waive excess enrollment at Easton Elementary School resulting in approximately an additional \$4.5 million for the Chapel District Elementary School project. He provided anticipated enrollment information for Chapel District Elementary School, stating that Talbot County Public Schools has requested that the State recognize 392 students as a 7-year projection. Mr. Shafer briefed the Council on space proposed to be occupied by Critchlow Adkins Children’s Centers at the site, and reimbursement by the State to Talbot County for a portion of the cost. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Shafer as various facets of the presentation were brought forward. The anticipated total cost for the construction and renovation project is \$29.9 million - \$12.4 million of which will be funded by the State; Talbot County’s portion is \$17.5 million. Mr. Shafer also outlined future CIP projects including replacement of the Easton Middle School roof and replacement of the rooftop HVAC units at Easton High School. He then requested Council consideration to forward a letter to the State in support of the FY2025 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as presented, contingent upon the availability of funding at the time each project is brought forward. Upon motion by Mr. Leshar, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved forwarding a letter in support of the FY25 CIP as presented, by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshar – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

IX. Introduction of Administrative Resolution:

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION REGARDING FACIAL COVERINGS AND VACCINATIONS IN TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND was read into the record by the Clerk. Mr. Stepp stated that he had requested that the administrative resolution be drafted, stating that the enforcement resolution which came down from the State and which was adopted by the Council on August 25, 2020 by a vote of 3 – 2 was, in his opinion, an unconstitutional mandate. He expressed his appreciation to Mr. Leshner for his vote against the administrative resolution in 2020 and stated that in February 2023, the Council unanimously repealed the August 25, 2020 administrative resolution. Mr. Stepp stated that the administrative resolution now before the Council is being introduced to, in his opinion, give individuals their rights and freedoms back – it is not saying that individuals can't wear a mask or be vaccinated if they want to. Council discussion ensued with County Attorney, Patrick Thomas. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Callahan, the Council did not approve the administrative resolution by voting 2 – 3 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Nay
Ms. Mielke – Nay
Ms. Haythe – Nay (via telephone)

X. Introduction of Numbered Resolution:

A RESOLUTION TO PLACE QUESTIONS ON THE BALLOT AT THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION TO AMEND SECTION 102 OF THE CHARTER OF TALBOT COUNTY TO PROVIDE THAT THE CITIZENS OF TALBOT COUNTY SHALL BE ACCORDED EQUAL TREATMENT IN ALL MATTERS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT REGARDLESS OF AGE, DISABILITY, HEALTH, OR GENETIC INFORMATION IN ADDITION TO RACE, CREED, SEX, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the purpose of the resolution is to amend Section 102 of the Talbot County Charter. He stated that following a public hearing, and if approved by four fifths (4/5) of the Council, the matter will then be placed on the Talbot County ballot for the 2024 Presidential Election. Mr. Stepp stated that the resolution basically adds anti-discriminatory language for age, disability, health, and genetic information to the language already in place regarding race, creed, religion, sex and national origin. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Thomas. The resolution was introduced by Mr. Callahan and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 350. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

XI. Council Discussion Regarding Public Hearings on:

- Resolution No. 338, 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

- Resolution No. 347, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO PROVIDE THE EQUIVALENT DWELLING UNITS FOR ALL PHASES OF THE LAKESIDE DEVELOPMENT
- Resolution No. 348, A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO CLARIFY AND CONFIRM THE WATER AND SEWER CLASSIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN PARCELS INCORRECTLY SHOWN IN EXHIBITS A AND B TO RESOLUTION NO. 281, AS AMENDED

were read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for discussion. County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that Resolution Nos. 347 and 348 were introduced at the Council meeting on September 12, 2023 and scheduled for public hearing on Tuesday, October 10, 2023. He stated that Ms. Mielke had introduced Resolution No. 338 in spring 2023 and the matter was heard before the Public Works Advisory Board as required; however, it did not go before the Planning Commission at that time, but is scheduled to do so on Wednesday, October 4, 2023. Mr. Thomas stated that Ms. Mielke had expressed interest in holding another public hearing on Resolution No. 338 after same has been heard by both the Public Works Advisory Board and the Planning Commission in order that members of the public will have the benefit of those recommendations. He stated that all three (3) resolutions relate to Trappe and the Lakeside Development; however, there is not sufficient public notice to schedule a second public hearing for Resolution No. 338 on October 10th; therefore, the public hearings for Resolution Nos. 347 and 348 need to be moved to Tuesday, October 24, 2023 so that all three (3) resolutions can be heard on that date. Ms. Mielke stated that she plans to introduce an amendment to Resolution No. 347 and requested that Mr. Thomas outline the provisions of same. Upon consent by the Council, the public hearings for Resolution Nos. 338, 347, and 348 will be scheduled for Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

- XII. Council Discussion of Proposed Amendments to the Education Article for the 2024 Legislative Session – Prior to Council discussion, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the proposal for an amendment arose following a recent vacancy on the Talbot County Board of Education. He stated that current law provides that the vacancy is filled by the Governor. He stated that Mr. Stepp had expressed an interest in requesting that the local delegation pre-file a bill for the 2024 Legislative Session which, if approved, would provide that Board of Education vacancies in Talbot County be filled by the County Council. Ms. Mielke agreed with Mr. Stepp that the matter should be a local decision but, in her opinion, the vacancy should be filled through a special election in the district in which the vacancy occurred so that the citizens in that district have input. Council discussion ensued. Mr. Stepp stated that Senator Mautz and Delegates Adams and Hutchinson have all expressed their support for legislation to permit the County to fill vacancies on the Board of Education. Council discussion again ensued. Mr. Thomas stated that with Council's approval, he will draft language incorporating Ms. Mielke's wording for a special election for Council's consideration at the Tuesday, October 10th Council meeting; Council could then determine in which direction to proceed.
- XIII. Update on Status of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funds – Mary Kay Verdery, Grant Administrator; Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Brian LeCates, Director, Talbot County Department of Emergency Services; Nancy Andrew, Executive Director, Talbot Family Network – Ms. Vanhooser provided a brief history of the approved allocations to date of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds received by Talbot County from the federal government. She stated that following passage of ARPA in March 2021, each state, county and municipality in the United States received funding; funding to Talbot County totaling approximately \$7.2 million was received May 1, 2021 and in September 2021. She stated that jurisdictions have until December 31, 2024 to obligate the funds and the funds must

be spent by December 31, 2026. Ms. Vanhooser stated that prior to distribution of funds, a survey was sent to county residents to obtain feedback on how they would like to see the monies spent according to the six (6) categories outlined in the federal rules: Infrastructure; Public Health; Assistance to Households and Small Businesses, Tourism, and Economic Recovery. She utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline the priorities cited by Talbot County residents in the survey: infrastructure, public health and assistance to households. Ms. Vanhooser stated that following review of the various projects which were submitted for consideration of funding, the Council, in March 2022, approved appropriating \$4,758,439.96 in accordance with the priorities cited in the survey. Ms. Vanhooser, Ms. Verdery, Mr. LeCates, and Ms. Andrew provided details on the distribution of funds to the various projects, agencies, and non-profits. Ms. Vanhooser stated that to date, \$2,456,616.20 of the monies allocated have been spent; the balance remaining to be allocated is \$2,463,533.04. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Vanhooser, Ms. Verdery, Mr. LeCates and Ms. Andrew. Talbot County's ARPA Working Group was comprised of the following individuals: Pete Lesher, Vice President, Talbot County Council; Clay Stamp, County Manager; Jessica Morris, Assistant County Manager; Martha Sparks, Finance Director; Kaitlin Foster-Clark, Assistant Finance Director; Mary Kay Verdery, Grants Administrator; Nancy Andrew, Executive Director, Talbot Family Network; Ray Clark, County Engineer; and Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Department of Economic Development and Tourism

XIV. Public Hearing on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Project:

- Update on Early Head Start/Family Support Center – Renovation Project at 305 Glenwood Avenue, Easton, MD 21601

was brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, Mary Kay Verdery, Grants Administrator, provided an update on the Early Head Start Family Support Center project which was the recipient of \$800,000 in Maryland Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding; Talbot County provided additional funding for the \$1.2 million project. Ms. Verdery utilized a PowerPoint presentation to provide information on, and photographs of, the new Early Head Start facility located on the campus of Easton Elementary School. She stated that the Early Head Start program offers comprehensive early care, education and family support services for infants and toddlers, from six weeks to three years of age, and their families. The facility currently serves 36 children with the capacity to serve 65. She outlined various amenities which were incorporated into the project, including bathroom facilities sized for toddlers, a laundry area and toddler-sized playground equipment. Dr. Maria Maguire, Talbot County Health Officer, and Jamila Whitt, MPH, Director of Family Programs, Talbot County Health Department, were in attendance to answer any questions. Ms. Verdery stated that Talbot County was recently honored to be selected by the Maryland CDBG Program of the Department of Housing and Community Development to host a tour of CDBG projects in Easton, including the Early Head Start project. The tour was attended by representatives from 40 states of the Council of State Community Development Agencies. Ms. Verdery and Dr. Maguire expressed thanks to Council for their support of the project. Members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on the project.

XV. Request for Abatement of FY23 Real County Property Taxes – Martha Sparks, Finance Director – Ms. Sparks stated that the owners of 49 parcels are requesting abatement from FY24 County Real Property Taxes totaling \$101,128.04. She stated that the owners of the properties are all non-profit or governmental entities which meet the State criteria for abatement. Upon motion by Mr. Lesher, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the request as presented by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

XVI. Presentation on Talbot Emergency Alert System – Brian LeCates, Director, Department of Emergency Services; Geneva Schaffle, Emergency Management Division Chief, Department of Emergency Services – Mr. LeCates briefed the Council on the citizen alert system, Talbot Alert, used by Talbot County through the platform Everbridge, to quickly communicate with residents regarding emergency situations or imminent threats which may arise involving portions of, or the entirety of, Talbot County. The system is also known and referred to as “Reverse 911”. Ms. Schaffle outlined various situations for which Talbot Alert can be used, including providing notifications from law enforcement, emergency road closures, dissemination of evacuation information, missing persons, etc. Talbot Alert can send messages to cell phones, cable TV and radio as well as landlines. Citizens are encouraged to sign up to receive alerts at www.talbotalerts.com; www.talbotdes.org; or by calling (410) 770-8160 and speaking with Geneva Schaffle or Dave Tyler.

XVII. County Manager’s Report:

A. Talbot County Ethics Commission – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Paul Davin to a three-year term on the Talbot County Ethics Commission; said term will expire on July 1, 2026. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the appointment by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

B. Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Dr. James Bell and the reappointment of Mary Ellen Carter and Rev. Eric Daniels to three-year terms on the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board as representatives of the private sector; said terms will expire June 30, 2026. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the appointment and reappointments by voting 5 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

C. Request from Easton Airport – Requested Council approval of the Easton Airport Manager’s recommendation of the Design Review Reimbursable Agreement for the Instrument Landing System (ILS) for Easton Airport. Micah Risher, Manager, Easton Airport, stated that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) owns the ILS and is responsible for ensuring that the ILS meets all FAA criteria when it is relocated to its

new location during the upcoming airfield modernization program. He stated that the Airport will pay Air Space System Planning Group to review the plans and conduct a site survey to ensure that ILS is properly planned for relocation; costs will then be reimbursable through a future grant from the FAA in the sum of \$54,000. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the Agreement by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

Mr. Risher also briefed the Council on Airport Day, scheduled for Saturday, October 14, 2023. Council discussion then ensued with Mr. Risher regarding the initial phase of the forthcoming Airfield Modernization Program beginning in November. He stated that information on the project may be found at eastonairport.com. The groundbreaking ceremony for the project will be held at Easton Airport on Friday, October 13, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

- D. Request from Chesapeake College – Requested Council approval for a letter in support of Chesapeake College’s capital project for the Queen Anne’s Technical Center in order to ensure the Maryland Higher Education Commission that Talbot County will provide its local share of funding. Mr. Stamp stated that the College is requesting a letter of support from each of the five (5) participating counties. Cliff Coppersmith, President, Chesapeake College, introduced Karen Smith, Chief Financial Officer, Chesapeake College, and Reza Jafari, Chair, Chesapeake College Board of Trustees and Talbot County representative on the Board. Dr. Coppersmith utilized a PowerPoint presentation to brief the Council on the proposed project to replace the current Queen Anne’s Technical Center, constructed in 1976, and to assign new uses for the Manufacturing and Training Center which currently houses skilled trade programs. Dr. Coppersmith outlined the programs and agencies to be housed at the new facility which is anticipated to cost approximately \$79,000,000. Ms. Smith stated that 75% of the funding for the project will come from the State of Maryland; 25% will be funded by the participating counties based on population; Talbot County’s portion is 21.8%, or just over \$4 million. She outlined the process for funding, stating that the project will be submitted to the State in January 2024, with design in 2025; and anticipated construction in 2026. Council discussion ensued with Dr. Coppersmith and Ms. Smith. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved forwarding a Letter of Intent in Support of the Capital Building Project for the Queen Anne’s Technical Center by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

- E. Request from Bellevue Passage Museum – Requested Council approval for a Letter of Support for the Bellevue Passage Museum project and conveyance of a preservation easement for same. Mr. Stamp stated that the Maryland Historical Trust is requiring

that Talbot County, as owner of the property, consent to a preservation easement. Mr. Stamp stated that the County conducted a title search and there are no less than fee simple interests in the property. Council discussion ensued with Dr. Dennis De Shields, Bellevue resident and representative of the Bellevue Passage Museum. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved forwarding a Letter of Support to the State by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

- F. Citizen Scrap Tire Collection Event– Mr. Stamp stated that the Mid-Shore Transfer Station, located at 7341 Barkers Landing Road, Easton, will host a citizen scrap tire collection event on Saturday, September 30, 2023 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; a maximum of ten (10) tires can be dropped off at the facility, which is limited to one (1) load per household.

XVIII. Public Comments: Members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on matters of importance to them.

XIX. Council Comments:

Ms. Haythe - Ms. Haythe expressed her appreciation to everyone who presented to the Council and voiced their opinions and stated that, as always, she respects all her colleagues for bringing things forth. Ms. Haythe concluded her comments by stating that she looked forward to being at the next Council meeting in person.

Ms. Mielke - No comments

Mr. Leshner - No comments.

Mr. Stepp - No comments

Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan concurred with Ms. Haythe’s comments about individuals voicing their opinions. He stated that, in his opinion, that is what these meetings are about and why this Council is pleased to hear from the public.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the Talbot County Free Library Meeting Room for a joint work session with the Town of Easton, Housing Commission of Talbot and representatives from Pennrose Management Company to discuss the Doverbrook Apartments Redevelopment Project; at 5:00 p.m. for a meeting with elected officials from the Towns of Easton, Oxford, Queen Anne, St. Michaels and Trappe; and to reconvene on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in Open Session and immediately adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of matters as listed on the statement for closing that meeting; and for the regularly scheduled meeting at 6:00 p.m. by voting 5 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye
 Mr. Stepp - Aye
 Mr. Leshner - Aye
 Ms. Mielke – Aye
 Ms. Haythe – Aye (via telephone)

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

The transcript of the September 26, 2023 County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

XX. Summary of Closed Session Held on September 26, 2023:

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

Time of closed session: 3:35 p.m. to 4:10 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, Leshner, Mielke, Stepp
 Members opposed: None
 Abstaining: None
 Absent: Haythe

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 appointments to various County boards and committees	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Public discussion would discourage individuals from volunteering to serve	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
For update on legal matter regarding Talbot Integrity Project v Talbot County	GP § 3-305(b)(7)(8)	Attorney-client privilege regarding status of litigation	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action

XXI. On Monday, September 18, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. the Talbot County Council met virtually with representatives from Caroline, Dorchester, Kent and Queen Anne’s counties to discuss the proposed Chesapeake College capital project for the renovation of the Queen Anne’s Technical

Center. The five counties provide financial support to Chesapeake College. The proposed capital project for the Queen Anne's Technical Center will cost approximately \$79 million, with the State providing 75% of support and the supporting counties the remaining 25% of support based on the percentage of each county's population. Programs to be housed in the building include electrical, welding, advanced manufacturing, HVAC, agriculture, construction trades, marine trades, culinary and skilled trades office/administrative support as well as the offices of Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board (USWIB). Chesapeake College is seeking a Letter of Intent from each of the five supporting counties by September 28, 2023. If approved, the project will be submitted to the State in January 2024 with design in FY25, construction in FY26, and furniture, fixtures and equipment phases in FY27. Talbot County's obligation would be approximately \$4,310,500. Dr. Coppersmith, President, Chesapeake College will attend the Talbot County Council's meeting on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 to seek approval for the letter of intent.

XXII. Work Session on Leeds Creek Bridge Replacement Project – The Council held a work session on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room to discuss the proposed project to replace the Tunis Mills Bridge, also known as the Leeds Creek Bridge. Ray Clarke, County Engineer, Mike Mertaugh, Assistant County Engineer, Mark Ledebur, PE of Wallace Montgomery, engineering consultant for the project, and Greg Grosskopf of GPI, design consultant for the project, were in attendance. Council members Keasha Haythe and Pete Leshner were absent. A PowerPoint presentation was utilized to provide a brief history of the existing bridge, a two-lane bridge with timber support beams and decking constructed in the 1960s which has been deemed to have reached the end of its useful life; a timeline of the project from 2008 to present was also provided. County staff and the representatives then presented the agreed-upon design approved by the Council in 2009. The design includes a 2' higher clearance; reinforced concrete support beams, asphalt decking, retention of the water access platform, and a pedestrian walkway. Mr. Grosskopf stated that the design team is of the opinion that the decisions made by the County Council in 2009 are still valid and are in the best interest of having the project move forward. The representatives stated that should the design plans substantially change, there will be significant funding impacts to the County; as currently designed, the federal government will pay 80% and Talbot County will pay the remaining 20% of the anticipated \$6 million project. Because federal funds are being utilized for the project, use of some specific materials is required. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Clarke, Mr. Mertaugh and the engineering and design consultants as various facets of the proposed project were brought forward. Members of the public in attendance were afforded an opportunity to present comments and concerns. At Council's request, another work session will be scheduled at a later date to address the citizens' comments.

XXIII. Work Session on Federal Legislation to Create the Chesapeake National Recreation Area as Part of the National Park System – The Council held a work session on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 at 2:45 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room. Alyssa Hastings, Eastern Shore Regional Director for Senator Van Hollen; Teri Weathers, Deputy Chief of Staff for Senator Van Hollen; Shelby Prettiman, Legislative Assistant for Senator Van Hollen; and Leila Duman, Congressman Sarbanes Office, joined the meeting via Zoom. The purpose of the work session was to provide Council with additional information on federal legislation proposed by Maryland Senator Chris Van Hollen and Maryland Congressman John Sarbanes as presented by Ms. Vanhooser at the Tuesday, August 8, 2023 Council meeting and to provide members of the public an opportunity to comment. The legislation, if approved, would establish the Chesapeake National Recreation Area as part of the National Park System. Ms. Vanhooser stated that the Department of Economic Development and Tourism received a request from Senator Van Hollen's office for a letter of support for the legislation. Ms. Hastings emphasized that involvement in the program is completely voluntary, is strictly land-based, and in no way impacts any regulations as what can be done in and around our

waterways. She stated that there are currently no designated sites on the Eastern Shore. Ms. Duman stated that there is no unified National Park System for the Chesapeake Bay, which the legislation would provide through private and public partnerships to highlight the landscapes, stories and national significance of the Chesapeake Bay by linking cultural, historic, environmental and recreational land-based sites. Ms. Duman utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline the Chesapeake National Recreation Area (CNRA) guiding principles, including among others, respect of land rights, public engagement, increasing ecological tourism in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed; composition of the CNRA Advisory Commission, proposed initial CNRA sites; and a listing of what the Chesapeake National Recreation Area legislation will and will not do. Ms. Duman stated that the CNRA will take approximately 1 to 3 years to develop and will be built around sites and people who live in the area. She stated that existing National Recreation Areas provide significant economic contributions to their communities.

Mr. Leshar arrived at 3:20 p.m.

Members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on the proposal. The matter will be scheduled on the Tuesday, October 10, 2023 agenda for Council’s consideration.



**Talbot County, Maryland
Weekly Cash Statement**

September 19, 2023

OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK

OPERATING FUNDS AT	9/12/2023	\$111,281,731.19
Petty Cash Balance		18,105.00
TOTAL ADP PAYROLL PPE 9/1/2023		(833,635.55)
PENSION DED PPE 9/1/2023		(50,119.03)
RETURNED CK #1264		(1,236.98)
INTEREST ON ACCOUNTS 7/2023		447,512.75
INTEREST ON ACCOUNTS 8/2023		551,938.92

Deposits	1,692,369.15
Checks	(480,557.31)
ACH Disbursements	(1,180,751.42)
Wire Transfers	(6,277.49)
CIGNA & Integra EFTs	(26,296.71)
VOIDED CHECK(S) #366011, 368284	11,127.23

OPERATING FUNDS AT 9/19/2023 \$111,423,909.75

INVESTMENT FUNDS

	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.38%	\$ 21,264,031.96
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	10,387,272.70

INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL \$ 31,651,304.66

TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS \$143,075,214.41

Talbot County, Maryland



**Weekly Cash Statement
September 26, 2023**

OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK

OPERATING FUNDS AT 9/19/2023 \$ 111,423,909.75

DEFERRED COMP DED PPE 9/1/2023	(21,584.61)
DEFERRED COMP PPE 9/1/2023 PLAN 401(A)	(8,846.80)
ENTERPRISE LEASE PAYMENT 9/2023	(21,282.08)
ROADS SALES & USE DUE 9/20/2023	(515.68)

GOLF COURSE SALES & USE DUE 9/20/2023		(3,289.95)
COMMUNITY CENTER SALES & USE DUE 9/20/2023		(42.26)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT 92-14 8/2023		(13,086.00)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT 92-16 8/2023		(6,626.00)
USDA/RD MTHLY BOND PYMT 97-08 9/2023		(1,304.00)
PENSION DED 4/27, 5/11, 6/12, 6/27, 8/31/2023		(309.58)
BANK CHARGES 8/2023		(7,396.03)
Deposits		1,923,053.28
Checks		(564,807.72)
ACH Disbursements		(512,133.60)
Wire Transfers		(1,445,527.09)
OPERATING FUNDS AT	9/26/2023	<u>\$ 110,740,211.63</u>
PETTY CASH FUNDS		\$ 18,105.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS		
	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.39%	\$ 21,264,031.96
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$ 10,387,272.70
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL		<u>\$ 31,651,304.66</u>
<u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u>		<u>\$ 142,409,621.29</u>