COUNTY COUNCIL

OF

TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

2026 Legislative Session, Legislative Day No.: October 5, 2026

Bill No.: 1655

Expiration Date: December 9, 2026

Introduced by: Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Lesher, Ms. Mielke, Mr. Stepp

A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 24 (BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPEALING AND REENACTING ARTICLE II (BOARD OF TOURISM) TO ESTABLISH A NEW BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM AND SET FORTH THE MEMBERSHIP, DUTIES, AND FUNCTIONS THEREOF

By the Council: October 5, 2026

Introduced, read first time, ordered posted, and public hearing scheduled on Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

By Order: Susan W. Moran

Susan W. Moran, Secretary

A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 24 (BOARDS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPEALING AND REENACTING ARTICLE II (BOARD OF TOURISM) TO ESTABLISH A NEW BOARD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM AND SET FORTH THE MEMBERSHIP, DUTIES, AND FUNCTIONS THEREOF

SECTION ONE: BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND that Article II (Board of Tourism) of Chapter 24 (Boards, Committees and Commissions) of the Talbot County Code shall be and is hereby repealed in its entirety and reenacted as Article II (Board of Economic Development and Tourism) as follows:

KEY

Boldface.....Heading or defined term

* * *.....Existing law unaffected

* * *

ARTICLE II
Board of Economic Development and Tourism

§ 24-4. Board created.

The Talbot County Board of Economic Development and Tourism shall be and the same is hereby created as an advisory board.

§ 24-5. Membership; terms; vacancies.

A. The Talbot County Board of Economic Development and Tourism shall consist of 17 members. The Board shall adopt bylaws and rules of procedure to govern its meetings. Members of the Board shall receive no compensation for their services.

B. The Director of Economic Development and Tourism and the Airport Manager shall serve as ex officio, nonvoting members.

C. The 15 appointed, voting members shall consist of representatives from various County industry sectors and shall be appointed by the County Council as follows:

(1) One regional business leader with multi-sector experience, who shall serve as the Chairperson;

(2) One tourism or hospitality executive, who shall serve as the Vice Chairperson;

(3) One member from each of the following nine core economic sectors:

(a) agriculture and agribusiness (e.g., farmer, producer, ag-tech, cooperative leader);

(b) maritime (e.g., aquaculture, boating industry, watermen, seeding and hatchery facilities, boatbuilding, marine trades);

(c) aviation (e.g., airport, aviation industry);

(d) manufacturing and light industrial;

(e) utilities (e.g., electric, water, natural gas);

(f) professional services and finance (e.g., banking, legal, accounting, insurance, economic development, Chamber of Commerce);

(g) real estate, development, and infrastructure (developer, commercial broker, engineer);

(h) health and life sciences (e.g., hospital leadership, health, life sciences); and

(i) education and workforce (e.g., college, public education, technical institutions, workforce development programs);

(4) One member from each of the following three tourism, hospitality, and cultural sectors:

(a) hospitality and lodging (e.g., hotel, inn, or resort operator);

(b) food, beverage, and culinary tourism (restaurant group, brewery, winery, or farm-to-table leader); and

(c) arts, culture, and heritage (e.g., museum director, arts council, historic preservation); and

(5) One member from the small business and entrepreneurship sector (e.g., entrepreneurship/startup ecosystem representative, Small Business Development Corporation, incubator, accelerator).

D. For the first terms, which shall commence on March 1, 2027, the appointments shall be as follows:

(1) The members in Subsection C(1) and (2) above: four years;

(2) Three of the members in Subsection C(3) above and one of the members in Subsection C(4) above: three years;

(3) Three of the members in Subsection C(3) above and one of the members in Subsection C(4) above: two years; and

(4) Three of the members in Subsection C(3) above, one of the members in Subsection C(4) above, and the member in Subsection C(5) above: one year.

E. Thereafter, as each appointment expires, the new appointment shall be for a term of four years or until a successor is appointed, to commence from the first day of March of the year in which it was made. Appointed members shall serve no more than two consecutive terms, subject to the provisions of Subsection F below.

F. Vacancies occurring prior to expiration of a term of an appointed member shall be filled in the same manner as an original appointment of that member for the unexpired portion of their term. An appointed member filling a vacancy may serve an additional term if the individual whose term they are completing was in their first term.

§ 24-6. Duties and functions; participation of members.

A. The Board shall develop plans, goals, objectives, and programs for the promotion and management of economic development and tourism in the County and recommend proposed policies and legislation regarding economic development and tourism to the County Council.

B. The Board shall assist with the periodic development of a strategic plan for economic development and tourism for the County.

C. The Board shall encourage development of cooperative programs among the various municipalities, organizations and segments of businesses and the tourism industry throughout the County and federal, State, and local agencies, boards, departments and commissions, and shall act as a clearinghouse for coordination of ongoing programs.

D. The Board shall act as an advisory and consultive body to the County Council regarding policy, planning, and funding issues affecting economic development and tourism.

E. The Board shall provide other related support for the County's economic development goals and objectives as determined from time to time by the County Council.

F. The Board shall meet as necessary, but no less than quarterly. Board members are expected to attend all meetings, and nonparticipation in two consecutive meetings will be reviewed by the Board. The review can result in a recommendation to the County Council to remove the nonparticipating member and reappoint another representative to fill the vacant Board seat.

G. All Board meetings shall comply with the Maryland Open Meetings Act, Md. Code Ann., General Provisions § 3-101, et seq., as amended hereafter from time to time.

H. The Board shall report its activities to the County Council no less than annually and at such other times as may be requested by the County Manager or the County Council.

§ 24-7. Director of Economic Development and Tourism.

The County shall employ a Director of Economic Development and Tourism, who shall report directly to the County Manager and serve at the County Council's discretion and subject to its supervision and control. The Director shall exercise executive and administrative authority to implement the directives, plans, and programs of the Board.

§ 24-8. Reserved.

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SECTION TWO: AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that if any provision of this Bill or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid for any reason in a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or any other application of this Bill which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and for this purpose the provisions of this Bill are declared severable.

SECTION THREE: AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that the Publishers of the Talbot County Code and the Talbot County Office of Law, in consultation with and subject to the approval of the County Manager, may make non-substantive corrections to codification, style, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, spelling, and any internal or external reference or citation included in this Bill, as finally adopted, that are incorrect or obsolete, with no further action required by the County Council. All such corrections shall be adequately referenced and described in an editor's note following the section affected.

SECTION FOUR: AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, that this Bill shall take effect on March 1, 2027, in accordance with the provisions of § 214 of the Talbot County Charter, said date being more than sixty (60) days from the date of its passage.

PUBLIC HEARING

Having been posted and Notice of time, date, and place of hearing, and Title of Bill No. 1655 having been published, a public hearing was held on Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

BY THE COUNCIL

Read the third time.

ENACTED: **October 27, 2026**

By Order Susan W. Moran
Susan W. Moran, Secretary

Callahan	-	Aye
Stepp	-	Aye
Lesher	-	Aye
Mielke	-	Aye
Haythe	-	Aye

EFFECTIVE DATE: **March 1, 2027**