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COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Council Meeting

February 14, 2023; 6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chuck F. Callahan

Pete Leshner

Keasha N. Haythe

Lynn L. Mielke

Dave Stepp

Reported by

Diane Houlihan

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<p>1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS</p> <p>2</p> <p>3 MR. CALLAHAN: I want to welcome everybody</p> <p>4 tonight. So let's get ready to get started on</p> <p>5 the agenda.</p> <p>6 And we're going to go ahead and stand for</p> <p>7 the prayer and then we're going to do the</p> <p>8 Pledge of Allegiance of the Flag.</p> <p>9 (Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.)</p> <p>10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Appreciate that,</p> <p>11 Keasha. Thank you.</p> <p>12 And before I start here, I want to wish</p> <p>13 everybody a Happy Valentine's Day. So Clay, I</p> <p>14 hope you got the flowers and all that stuff for</p> <p>15 Lisa.</p> <p>16 MR. STAMP: Yes, sir.</p> <p>17 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. If you have to</p> <p>18 leave, I understand.</p> <p>19 MR. STAMP: And delivered.</p> <p>20 MR. CALLAHAN: And delivered. Okay.</p> <p>21 So first on the agenda here, we have the</p>	<p>1 Up next is an update from the Board of</p> <p>2 Health. Dr. Maguire, you want to come on up.</p> <p>3 Good evening.</p> <p>4 DR. MAGUIRE: Good evening. I hope all of</p> <p>5 you are doing well tonight.</p> <p>6 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup, yup. Hope everybody</p> <p>7 is healthy on your end.</p> <p>8 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. All right. So.</p> <p>9 SECRETARY: Is it working?</p> <p>10 DR. MAGUIRE: Here we go.</p> <p>11 MR. STAMP: Perfect.</p> <p>12 DR. MAGUIRE: Perfect. It works. A</p> <p>13 miracle. All right.</p> <p>14 Well, good evening, everyone. Thank you</p> <p>15 for inviting me tonight.</p> <p>16 So for those who don't know me, I'm Maria</p> <p>17 Maguire. I'm the health officer for the Talbot</p> <p>18 County Health Department. And now we are</p> <p>19 magically turning into the Board of Health.</p> <p>20 So I wanted to, since 60 percent of you</p> <p>21 are new on the Council, I wanted to give a</p>
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<p>1 agenda of February 14th before us. Is there</p> <p>2 any additions, deletions, or corrections to</p> <p>3 tonight's agenda? Okay. Hearing none, the</p> <p>4 chair moves that the agenda be accepted as</p> <p>5 unanimous consent.</p> <p>6 Next is going to be the minutes. Council</p> <p>7 has had a chance to take a look at the minutes</p> <p>8 of January 24th. Are there any additions,</p> <p>9 deletions, or corrections to the minutes?</p> <p>10 Okay. We're good? All right. So hearing</p> <p>11 none, the chair moves that the minutes be</p> <p>12 accepted as unanimous consent.</p> <p>13 Next on the agenda here is disbursements</p> <p>14 of January 31st and February 7th and</p> <p>15 February 14th. Council has had a chance to</p> <p>16 look at all the disbursements. Are there any</p> <p>17 additions, deletions, or corrections to the</p> <p>18 disbursements? Hearing none, okay, the chair</p> <p>19 moves that the disbursements be accepted as</p> <p>20 unanimous consent. That was a tough one. That</p> <p>21 was hard. Okay. All right.</p>	<p>1 broad update about basically a health check-in</p> <p>2 for Talbot County and just go over a few things</p> <p>3 as a status check on some of the health issues</p> <p>4 that, you know, so that you can get a good</p> <p>5 baseline of some of the issues that we have</p> <p>6 particular to this county. And then touch on</p> <p>7 just a couple of current issues.</p> <p>8 So just to go ahead. So as you know, you</p> <p>9 know, Talbot County, we have a nice, small</p> <p>10 population of about 37,000 people, 16,000</p> <p>11 households. So we have -- I'm going to show a</p> <p>12 couple of slides that show how we're a bit</p> <p>13 similar to the rest of Maryland and a bit</p> <p>14 different.</p> <p>15 So we have a bit less diversity in terms</p> <p>16 of racial and ethnic makeup than some of the</p> <p>17 rest of the state. We do have almost</p> <p>18 seven percent of our residents are foreign</p> <p>19 born.</p> <p>20 We have an interesting demographic in that</p> <p>21 we have a lot of seniors in our population. So</p>

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1 30 percent of our population is actually over  
 2 the age of 65, and that's almost double the  
 3 rest of Maryland and actually the nation. And  
 4 the interesting thing about that is we love our  
 5 seniors. They contribute so much to our  
 6 community, but it does have some implications  
 7 for, you know, some of the health issues that  
 8 we deal with in the county.

9 So this picture is just the population of  
 10 the county compared to Maryland. And most  
 11 places in the world actually have this sort of  
 12 shape that's more like a triangle. And  
 13 interestingly, in Talbot County we have a more  
 14 sort of rectangular shape because we have so  
 15 many, you know, seniors.

16 And then just I wanted to throw out a few  
 17 statistics about some of the touch points about  
 18 the economics and how that affects health in  
 19 the county.

20 So the household income on average in  
 21 Talbot County is a bit lower than the rest of

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1 Maryland. But interestingly, in Talbot County  
 2 we have the highest income disparity. So  
 3 sometimes I like to use averages and sometimes  
 4 I don't. And this is a case where I don't  
 5 because that has some implications about we  
 6 can't necessarily generalized too much because  
 7 we have a broad range in terms of income. And  
 8 that certainly affects how people live their  
 9 life and how it affects their health status.

10 And you know, the, I guess the stereotype  
 11 of our county is that we have a lot of  
 12 resources, but we actually do have a poverty  
 13 rate almost ten percent. And I think that's a  
 14 surprise to a lot of people. Almost 30 percent  
 15 of our population is on Medicaid, and we have  
 16 about 7.4 percent of our Talbot residents with  
 17 no health insurance. So even though we do have  
 18 a lot of resources in the county, we certainly  
 19 have a decent needy population and we do have a  
 20 slightly higher population with disabilities.

21 Our life expectancy is just a tad bit

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1 higher than the rest of the state at almost 80  
 2 years. We have about the same teen birth rate.  
 3 So about 15 per 1,000 births is to a teen in  
 4 the county. So that's certainly something we  
 5 can always improve upon.

6 But then there's some markers that are a  
 7 bit better than the state average in terms of  
 8 preventive care. So for instance, for our  
 9 prenatal care, about 84 percent of births, of  
 10 pregnancies actually get early prenatal care,  
 11 which is a really good sign. There's certainly  
 12 room for improvement there, though, because we  
 13 want that to be 100 percent.

14 And then in the past year, most children  
 15 did get a well checkup and a dental checkup.  
 16 And certainly that's improved compared to the  
 17 rest of the State of Maryland.

18 So those are some areas where we're doing  
 19 pretty well.

20 I underlined some areas where we're a bit  
 21 worse off than the rest of the state. So for

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1 instance, in our smoking, and this does include  
 2 vaping actually, when we talk especially about  
 3 the teenagers. We do have a bit of a higher  
 4 rate of smoking. And so that's certainly  
 5 something that has implications for health  
 6 issues down the line.

7 And then we also have a bit of a higher  
 8 rate of asthma than the rest of the state. And  
 9 that's seen in more ER visits for asthma.

10 We have about the average rate of obesity  
 11 compared to the state and the nation. But  
 12 we're seeing a lot more visits in our ER for  
 13 diabetes. And one of the things I want to  
 14 point out is that some of these conditions,  
 15 asthma, hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and  
 16 poor nutrition, those are areas where in this  
 17 county we're seeing a statistically significant  
 18 difference between different racial and ethnic  
 19 groups. So in those conditions, there's much  
 20 higher rate in our black residents than in our  
 21 white residents. So that's a disparity that we

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1 need to be aware of.

2 And then on the flip side, in terms of

3 high cholesterol, that's something we're seeing

4 a lot more in our white residents.

5 Another area that we notice in Talbot

6 County is we do have a bit higher rate of

7 alcohol use. And actually the county has

8 double the state rate of non-fatal car

9 accidents due to alcohol use. Not necessarily

10 fatal car accidents, interestingly. But you

11 know, you imagine driving home from a

12 restaurant or something and maybe hitting a

13 tree or something. So those are some areas

14 that are unique to Talbot County. And

15 certainly, our programs in the community,

16 stakeholders we work with, we have some

17 programs that try to focus on prevention of

18 substance use, especially in teens and kids.

19 And then in terms of some of the leading

20 causes of death that we see in county

21 residents, they actually match up really

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1 closely to the rest of the state. But one

2 thing we do see is that we have higher rates of

3 accidents and also Alzheimer's in our

4 population than the State average. And my

5 feeling is that that's likely due to our

6 demographics with our older population.

7 So that is just a super brief, superficial

8 snapshot of some of the ways that the health

9 status of Talbot County is a little similar,

10 different to the rest of Maryland and gives an

11 important viewpoint to consider some of the

12 health issues that we deal with.

13 I wanted to next touch on the opioid

14 epidemic, which is something we're always

15 dealing with. And we have -- so this is

16 something that really since about, you know,

17 2010, '11, has become such a significant aspect

18 of our lives, is opioid use.

19 And this epidemic continues to be mostly

20 driven by fentanyl, if you know that drug. And

21 that's the drug that's so much more potent than

Page 12

1 morphine and takes such a tiny amount to be

2 fatal. And there's a lot of analogues, which

3 are cousins of fentanyl. One of them we see a

4 lot is carfentanil. And what we're seeing is

5 that in 81 percent of our fatal overdoses in

6 the state, fentanyl is involved.

7 And so this graph, it's a little hard to

8 see, but basically the different colors

9 involve -- show different drugs that are

10 involved in fatal overdoses. And fentanyl is

11 this bluish purplish line. And you can see

12 since about 2015, just the role of fentanyl in

13 the fatal overdoses is really staggering. And

14 what we're also seeing is the contamination of

15 drugs with other sedatives, mostly things like

16 ketamine or some other ones you may see,

17 xylazine.

18 And the interesting thing about these is

19 that one of the main drugs we use to help

20 prevent overdoses is Narcan. And these drugs

21 are not responsive to that. So it's become an

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1 issue where we're seeing our law enforcement or

2 our EMS having to use, you know, two or three

3 doses of Narcan. So fortunately, our supply of

4 Narcan, we're giving out a lot. So it's

5 getting to the people in need. But certainly

6 with that amount of fentanyl, it's really hard

7 to deal with and we're always chasing it.

8 And so what we're seeing, though, is that

9 the treatment, prevention, and harm reduction

10 strategies do appear to be helping here,

11 especially in the midshore. And so in Talbot,

12 actually in the past year, the fatal overdoses

13 did decrease by 15 percent between

14 September 2021 and September 2022. And that

15 was compared to a 13 percent decline statewide.

16 Now, this graph shows the red are counties

17 where there were actually increases in fatal

18 overdoses and the blue counties had decreases.

19 And the darker the blue is the bigger the

20 decrease.

21 If I had given the numbers from July to

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1 July, it would have been a 50 percent decrease.  
 2 But you know, I wanted to give the most  
 3 up-to-date numbers.  
 4 Now, our nonfatal overdoses declined by  
 5 65 percent between 2021 and 2022. And  
 6 actually, that was a decrease of in 2021 we had  
 7 92 nonfatal overdoses. And then 2022, 32. So  
 8 that was a significant improvement.  
 9 And then one of the things that you will  
 10 hear about if you haven't already is the Opioid  
 11 Restitution Fund. So this was a fund that was  
 12 created in 2019 to receive all the funds that  
 13 were awarded to the State of Maryland through  
 14 the legal settlements from the manufacturers  
 15 and the distributors. And so this is going to  
 16 be a long-term fund. They're expected to get  
 17 about \$400 million to the State over 18 years  
 18 from the initial settlements. And there's some  
 19 other settlements that will be coming down as  
 20 well.  
 21 And so starting at the end of 2022 and now

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1 the first tranche of those funds should be  
 2 coming out to localities.  
 3 And so in 2022, Maryland established via  
 4 legislation the Opioid Restitution Fund  
 5 Advisory Council. And so this is a body that  
 6 will provide recommendations on the use of  
 7 those funds. And locally, we're working with  
 8 many community partners to develop a plan of  
 9 how to best use those funds here and make sure  
 10 we're using the most evidence-based practices  
 11 to really combat this epidemic.  
 12 But it's certainly a welcome thing to have  
 13 additional funding so that we can address this  
 14 serious issue.  
 15 I wanted to also mention that,  
 16 unfortunately, in the fall, we had one of our  
 17 behavioral health providers close, Eastern  
 18 Shore Psychological Services. But luckily, we  
 19 do have a couple new providers entering the  
 20 county. And one is going to offer both  
 21 substance use and mental health care to adults

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1 and then they'll also offer mental health care  
 2 to children. So that's certain welcome because  
 3 over the past 18 to 24 months, we've had  
 4 certainly a huge increase in demand for mental  
 5 health care services.  
 6 And given that we're a rural county, we  
 7 just don't have quite as many resources in  
 8 terms of behavioral health providers as other  
 9 locations. And also as sort of a health care  
 10 hub for the five county midshore region, we in  
 11 Talbot County serve a lot of counties that have  
 12 even fewer resources.  
 13 Another provider is also implementing a  
 14 residential crisis bed service. So that's a  
 15 welcome change. And the thing about that  
 16 service is that it can really keep individuals  
 17 out of the emergency room during an acute  
 18 episode and stabilize them. Because what we're  
 19 seeing is a lot of backup in the emergency room  
 20 when people go in for mental health crises and  
 21 that there's no place to send them afterwards.

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1 So some news on the opioid and behavioral  
 2 health services front there.  
 3 And then I wanted to switch into, there we  
 4 go, some of our public health emergencies. And  
 5 as I was putting this together, I realized,  
 6 wow, in the past year locally we've been  
 7 dealing with at least three public health  
 8 emergencies; COVID, monkeypox, and avian flu.  
 9 And I noticed that over the past about ten or  
 10 13 years, there has been an increase. It's not  
 11 just me thinking that it seems like we're  
 12 having them all at once.  
 13 And so this is interesting because the  
 14 public health emergencies declared by the CDC  
 15 have seemed to have increased over the past say  
 16 five or seven years. And this encompasses  
 17 everything from, you know, COVID, monkeypox,  
 18 like I said, weather events, H1N1, Zika, Ebola.  
 19 Now, some of these we don't necessarily  
 20 deal with in quite the same way as a larger  
 21 city, but we still have to be prepared, you

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1 know, in case say someone with Ebola comes into  
 2 the area.  
 3 But this is certainly keeping us very  
 4 busy. So I wanted to talk about a couple of  
 5 them.  
 6 Monkeypox, which is officially now called  
 7 Mpox, last time I was here in the fall, I  
 8 described. And the good news about this  
 9 illness is that it really seems to have  
 10 resolved in terms of the epidemic. So  
 11 currently in Maryland, there's 742 cases, and  
 12 three of which resulted in deaths. And  
 13 95 percent of those cases are in actually the  
 14 eight largest counties.  
 15 Luckily, in Talbot we never actually had a  
 16 case. And you know, knock on wood, that will  
 17 remain true. And but we have vaccinated about  
 18 two or three dozen people. So we do have  
 19 vaccines still available for anyone who is  
 20 eligible because there are cases here and  
 21 they're popping up. But luckily, that epidemic

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1 has really resolved. And as a result, the  
 2 national public health emergency that was  
 3 declared for that illness actually ended  
 4 January 31st. So that's good news.  
 5 And then another public health emergency  
 6 that I'm sure you're aware of is COVID-19. And  
 7 the status of that is, I'll kind of bury my  
 8 lead, is that you may have heard in the news  
 9 that public health emergency is planned to be  
 10 ended in May, May 11th.  
 11 And so as expected, we had a bit of a  
 12 winter surge. Certainly nothing like previous  
 13 years given just the fact that there's, you  
 14 know, both natural and vaccine immunity.  
 15 And so over the whole of Maryland now,  
 16 we're seeing about 700 PCR cases per day. I  
 17 specify that they're the cases that are tested  
 18 by that PCR group because the State doesn't  
 19 tally the antigen cases. And of course, now  
 20 most of the testing done for COVID is actually  
 21 at home with self-tests.

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1 And so what I prefer to look at is what  
 2 are the severe cases that are resulting in  
 3 hospitalizations. And what we're seeing is  
 4 about four to 500 people still hospitalized  
 5 every day in Maryland with COVID.  
 6 So we did see a bump over the holiday  
 7 period that peaked to about 900 people  
 8 hospitalized with COVID, but that has come  
 9 down. And so today we were at 479. And we're  
 10 still seeing about ten to 15 deaths per day.  
 11 But it is, I expect that the COVID rates  
 12 will continue to decrease because we have so  
 13 many people, you know, vaccinated with boosters  
 14 and who had previous infections. And you know,  
 15 given the, you know, usually in the spring we  
 16 see cases come down. And so we don't expect  
 17 another surge to occur.  
 18 And so that -- and we're seeing that  
 19 locally, too, how since December, it was  
 20 basically around New Year that we kind of  
 21 peaked this time around. And then through the

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1 beginning of February, we've really declined in  
 2 terms of our case rates. So here, we're seeing  
 3 about four new cases a day that we are aware  
 4 of.  
 5 And so through the whole experience so far  
 6 in Talbot County, we've had 10,070 cases that  
 7 were reported to us and 110 deaths. So we're  
 8 still seeing here about two to four deaths per  
 9 month due to COVID locally since the start of  
 10 the fall.  
 11 So again, the hope is that this will  
 12 continue to resolve. There's always new  
 13 variants coming up that we have to be careful  
 14 about.  
 15 But because of the trend nationally, the  
 16 public health emergency, like I said, is slated  
 17 to end May 11th. And so the implications for  
 18 that is something that people should be aware  
 19 of because we've gotten so used to having free  
 20 tests, free vaccines.  
 21 So what that means is that in terms of

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1 tests, depending on your insurance, you may  
 2 have to pay for COVID testing, or at least a  
 3 portion of it, after this public health  
 4 emergency ends.  
 5 And in terms of vaccines, the federal  
 6 government basically bought up a huge amount of  
 7 vaccines. So until that stockpile runs out or  
 8 until those vaccines actually expire, those can  
 9 continue to be given for free.  
 10 And so locally our Health Department,  
 11 we're still giving vaccines and testing at our  
 12 COVID center over on Marlboro Avenue in Easton.  
 13 We're certainly not having the demand anywhere  
 14 near we used to. So we're scaling back. But  
 15 we'll continue to give out vaccines, you know,  
 16 until we no longer have them.  
 17 And then telemedicine. Some of you may  
 18 not be aware of some of the changes that  
 19 occurred in this realm. But it was actually  
 20 really important because some of these  
 21 regulations about telemedicine were loosened

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1 and made more flexible. And so those -- and  
 2 that allowed a lot more people to access health  
 3 care during the pandemic.  
 4 So some of those flexibilities are likely  
 5 to be scaled back a little bit, but there's a  
 6 lot of efforts in both locally in Maryland and  
 7 across the nation to keep some of those  
 8 telemedicine flexibilities available.  
 9 So what we'll see is even after the end of  
 10 the public health emergency, likely more  
 11 telemedicine available compared to pre-pandemic  
 12 times, which is a good thing in terms of  
 13 access, especially to a rural county like us.  
 14 And then Medicaid eligibility. So what  
 15 happened during the pandemic was there was  
 16 continuous eligibility. And so states are now  
 17 starting to dis-enroll people who did not need  
 18 to get their eligibility re-determined. And so  
 19 that's going to be a process that will take  
 20 about a year. So we'll see a significant  
 21 amount of people who lose that eligibility. So

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1 that will be a bit disruptive.  
 2 And then additional things that aren't  
 3 necessarily directly health related, such as  
 4 the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,  
 5 the SNAP program, was giving emergency  
 6 allotments. And those are slated to end the  
 7 end of February. So we're certainly seeing  
 8 some changes and back to normal with the end of  
 9 the public health emergency.  
 10 And I wanted to switch to a couple of the  
 11 respiratory illnesses that we deal with this  
 12 time of year. So you may have heard in the  
 13 news the term triple-demic. And so that  
 14 involved COVID, influenza, and RSV. And we  
 15 certainly did see those respiratory illnesses  
 16 through the fall.  
 17 Luckily, again, those behaved a bit  
 18 differently than usual. So they peaked earlier  
 19 than they should have. And so those rates are  
 20 coming down now.  
 21 And so in the US, what we saw was the

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1 rates of influenza peaked in December. So  
 2 that's what this graph shows. And then they've  
 3 pretty precipitously declined until the end of  
 4 February.  
 5 And in Maryland, this current year is  
 6 shown with this red line. And so we peaked in  
 7 Maryland in November around Thanksgiving and  
 8 then have since come down.  
 9 There's a chance that we could have flu  
 10 increase in activity, but that all depends upon  
 11 how the virus behaves and how people behave.  
 12 So far, we've had about 3,800 people  
 13 hospitalized in Maryland for flu, and we've had  
 14 56 deaths, including one child, due to flu.  
 15 Compared to last year, which was a bit  
 16 different because there were a lot of pandemic  
 17 precautions in place, the green line here shows  
 18 last year's influenza trend. And it peaked in  
 19 April actually. And so this season is a lot  
 20 different than last season. And it's also a  
 21 lot different that what we usually see with flu

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1 where it peaks in that sort of December to  
 2 March range.  
 3 And so generally what I'm seeing with all  
 4 sorts of viruses is that they're behaving a  
 5 little bit differently from the past couple of  
 6 years because people and viruses behaved  
 7 differently the past couple of years. And so  
 8 we're kind of trying to get back to normal in  
 9 terms of our --  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Dr. Maguire, can I ask you  
 11 a question on one thing?  
 12 DR. MAGUIRE: Yes.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: So at the beginning of this  
 14 you said it was called triple something?  
 15 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. This was just a term  
 16 that the news used, triple-demic.  
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: No problem. With three  
 18 type of viruses?  
 19 DR. MAGUIRE: Yes.  
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: So I just want to make sure  
 21 that people were clear. So when you test for

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1 COVID, does the other two show up as positive?  
 2 DR. MAGUIRE: It depends on the test. So  
 3 some of the hospitals do test for four things  
 4 or more actually.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.  
 6 DR. MAGUIRE: Or 24 things. So it depends  
 7 on the test.  
 8 So if you have a test that is one of the  
 9 at-home COVID antigen tests, that's just COVID.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Got you. Got you.  
 11 DR. MAGUIRE: But there are tests you can  
 12 get that have flu as well. And in a lot of  
 13 doctors' offices, like primary care offices,  
 14 they can do a rapid test for flu and COVID. In  
 15 the ERs, they can test for RSV, COVID, flu all  
 16 at once with one swab.  
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.  
 18 DR. MAGUIRE: Or that plus, you know, 24  
 19 others.  
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Got you.  
 21 DR. MAGUIRE: So that's actually really

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1 nice technology to have so that we can know.  
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: That's great.  
 3 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah.  
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: I appreciate that. I just  
 5 wanted the listeners to understand that.  
 6 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. Sure thing. And just  
 7 finishing up with, yeah, with influenza. So we  
 8 do have obviously a vaccine for flu. What  
 9 we're seeing this year is that the uptake rate  
 10 of flu vaccination is a bit lower than normal.  
 11 It's not a vaccine that we have as high rate of  
 12 uptake as say other vaccines like the regular  
 13 kid vaccines. But usually we have about 40,  
 14 45 percent of people get a flu vaccine.  
 15 We're still deep in the winter season. So  
 16 there's still time to get vaccinated. But so  
 17 far in both Maryland and Talbot County, we only  
 18 have a vaccination rate of about 30 percent.  
 19 And so the recommendation is that everybody  
 20 get, six months and older, get a flu vaccine  
 21 every year. So I'm here to remind everyone

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1 that that's something we should be doing. Even  
 2 with flu going down in terms of the prevalence  
 3 currently, it can, you know, take a turn and  
 4 increase through the rest the winter. And  
 5 yeah. So it's never too late to get protected  
 6 against the flu.  
 7 And the Health Department, we're actually  
 8 offering free flu vaccines over at our COVID  
 9 center. And so you can walk in anytime Monday  
 10 to Friday, one to five, to get a flu vaccine  
 11 and/or COVID booster. So if that's what you  
 12 need, then please stop by and we'll help you  
 13 out.  
 14 The other virus in the triple-demic is  
 15 RSV. And that actually stands, that's an  
 16 abbreviation for respiratory syncytial virus.  
 17 This one is really interesting because it's one  
 18 we see every year. It typically affects babies  
 19 and toddlers. Everyone can get it. And  
 20 usually adults and healthy people will just get  
 21 a mild cold and not really notice it. But with

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1 babies and toddlers, typically it can  
 2 hospitalize them and cause them to be pretty  
 3 severely ill.  
 4 So we actually saw a really interesting  
 5 trend this year where there was a huge peak in  
 6 October in Maryland due to this virus. And it  
 7 was making kids, even older kids really, really  
 8 sick. And that's when the hospitals were just  
 9 jam packed full of kids and there was no, you  
 10 know, Tylenol or Ibuprofen on the shelf.  
 11 So that is an interesting virus because  
 12 that usually peaks somewhere between December  
 13 and February. And it just behaved completely  
 14 differently this year. It also behaved  
 15 differently last year in that it peaked in the  
 16 summer. So that was very unexpected.  
 17 And this is an illness or this is a virus  
 18 where we don't have a vaccine available. For  
 19 very few highly at risk infants, there's a  
 20 medication. But there's really not much we can  
 21 do to prevent that other than good hand washing

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1 and, you know, staying home when you're sick  
 2 and everything. So that is what's going on  
 3 with our typical winter viruses.  
 4 And so the good news is that they're all  
 5 trending down currently, even though we're in  
 6 the middle of winter.  
 7 I wanted to just give out a little PSA  
 8 about American Heart Month. So given it's  
 9 Valentine's Day, February is Heart Month. So  
 10 let's remember our heart. And like I said  
 11 before, heart disease is the number one killer  
 12 of Talbot residents. And about 245,000  
 13 Marylanders actually do have coronary heart  
 14 disease. So that is the most common cause of  
 15 heart disease.  
 16 But luckily, 80 percent of heart disease  
 17 and strokes can be prevented by knowing your  
 18 risks. So one way to know your risk is to make  
 19 sure you know your blood pressure and also get  
 20 your cholesterol levels. If you know those,  
 21 then you can act to lower your risk by making

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1 healthy choices.  
 2 And so generally, there's four ways you  
 3 can make healthy choices to lower your risk of  
 4 heart disease and stroke, including regular  
 5 physical activity, quality sleep, eating heart  
 6 healthy foods with, you know, low saturated fat  
 7 and high fiber and vegetables and managing  
 8 stress.  
 9 And the interesting thing about heart  
 10 attacks, in case you didn't know, is most of  
 11 them occur in the mornings and most of them  
 12 occur on Mondays. So it's a good --  
 13 MR. LESHAR: So we should avoid Mondays?  
 14 DR. MAGUIRE: We should avoid Mondays,  
 15 Monday mornings.  
 16 And so you know, I don't know if it's that  
 17 thought of sort of anxiety in starting your  
 18 week or not. But stress management and sleep  
 19 are actually extremely important. It's not  
 20 just if you can run a mile. And so you know,  
 21 those are things to be mindful about.

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1 And there's some good resources about  
 2 Heart Month at the National Heart Lung and  
 3 Blood Institute website and a website the CDC  
 4 has called Live to Defeat where you can learn  
 5 about what you can do to keep your heart  
 6 healthy and also about CPR.  
 7 So that is a brief update to you guys.  
 8 And thank you for your attention, and I'm happy  
 9 to take any questions.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Well, thank you.  
 11 That's great.  
 12 I'll start down here. Ms. Haythe.  
 13 MS. HAYTHE: Yeah. I just want to say  
 14 that you have some awesome staff that's been  
 15 testing for COVID. I've had COVID twice. And  
 16 every time I went to the center to be tested, I  
 17 mean awesome nurses there and just great  
 18 employees. So I just commend you on how they  
 19 handled the COVID testing.  
 20 And thank you and just tell your staff.  
 21 DR. MAGUIRE: Thank you. I will tell

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1 them. Thank you.

2 MR. CALLAHAN: Ms. Mielke.

3 MS. MIELKE: Thank you for all that you

4 do. I did have two questions.

5 One is the ORF Advisory Council, is there

6 an Eastern Shore representative or

7 representatives on this Council?

8 DR. MAGUIRE: I know there are

9 representatives on that group from the Eastern

10 Shore. I don't know if in legislation it's

11 required that there be one from the group, but

12 I know there are. And I don't know if we count

13 Cecil County as the Eastern Shore or not.

14 Sometimes we do. The health officer from that

15 county is on that Council.

16 MS. MIELKE: I just want to make sure our

17 voice is heard.

18 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah.

19 MS. MIELKE: And the local group that

20 oversees the plan that they come up with, you

21 said there's one for the Eastern Shore.

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1 What counties are included?

2 DR. MAGUIRE: So when I meant local, I

3 meant Talbot County.

4 And so yeah. I could dive deep in all

5 this stuff.

6 But yeah. So what we're using locally is

7 our Local Drug and Alcohol Committee. And so

8 that is -- so we're actually meeting next week

9 or two. And so, you know, Department of Social

10 Services, Health Department, Sheriff's Office,

11 law enforcement and Mid Shore Behavioral

12 Health, which is our local behavioral health

13 authority, are some of the many members on that

14 group that are working together to develop

15 strategies to, you know, use this funding and

16 figure out how the county could best benefit

17 from the funds.

18 MS. MIELKE: Thank you.

19 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Leshner.

20 MR. LESHER: You told us a remarkable

21 story about the decline in the opioid epidemic.

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1 For years now, we've been hearing only bad news

2 on that front. And to hear good news on this

3 front is something that caught my attention.

4 You credited that decline to some of the

5 efforts being put forth I guess in prevention

6 and treatment.

7 Could you tell us more about how that is

8 occurring?

9 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. Sure thing. So

10 certainly one of the -- when you think about

11 something as embedded as the opioid epidemic,

12 you really have to approach it from many

13 directions.

14 And so in terms of one of the more

15 important things and more useful things that

16 has occurred is the distribution of Narcan,

17 which can really, you know, change a fatal

18 overdose to non-fatal one because it blocks

19 that opioid's effect and can really prevent the

20 death from occurring in the moment. And so

21 that's something where I don't have the -- I

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1 didn't show that, but we have some really great

2 data where we distributed actually across the

3 midshore much more Narcan than even our target

4 goal. Something like I think three or four

5 times as much as we wanted to.

6 And so we're doing a lot of teaching.

7 Both the Health Department and law enforcement

8 are doing a lot of teachings on how to use

9 Narcan and trying to get that out there.

10 And in terms of prevention, one of the

11 activities that we do is go into schools and

12 meet with groups and talk about, you know, what

13 are opioids and what's addiction. And then

14 upstream from that is actually making sure we

15 invest in, you know, mental health for everyone

16 so that we can prevent, you know, prevent the

17 addictive behaviors before they start.

18 And so really it's kind of a wide range of

19 strategies you need to have. And I think just

20 there's so much awareness now. We can credit

21 the Sheriff's Office a lot with the Project

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1 Purple for raising awareness. And so I think  
 2 now we're starting to see -- and you know, I  
 3 can guess as to exactly, I can speculate on the  
 4 cause of the decline from 2021 to 2022. But  
 5 you know, we won't really know if that trend  
 6 continues, of course. And this is really the  
 7 first year that we've seen that decline in  
 8 Maryland.

9 So yeah. But it really takes a village to  
 10 really combat that. And that's one of the  
 11 reasons why we're excited anytime we can get  
 12 providers in this space who can provide the  
 13 necessary treatment because it's a long  
 14 treatment for people suffering from substance  
 15 use disorder.

16 MR. LESHER: Thank you. And well done.  
 17 DR. MAGUIRE: Thanks.  
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Mr. Stepp.  
 19 MR. STEPP: Dr. Maguire, thank you. I  
 20 appreciate the updates.  
 21 I did some preparation here. I had some

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1 questions that I had, as well as some of the  
 2 constituents had that I wanted to ask you. But  
 3 a couple more popped up during your  
 4 presentation. So a couple of questions.

5 A lot of focus on the triple. What did  
 6 you call it, triple-demic, right?

7 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah.  
 8 MR. STEPP: But in your presentation, you  
 9 were talking about heart issues are the number  
 10 one cause of death here in Talbot County.  
 11 Are we doing anything to focus on that? I  
 12 mean what do you feel we can do better there to  
 13 help?

14 DR. MAGUIRE: Right. Well, and so with  
 15 heart issues, you know, that is one thing that  
 16 it's -- a lot of our physical activity, our  
 17 daily choices in life contribute to. And so  
 18 again, that's something where when we think  
 19 about heart health, you think about what's the  
 20 appropriate nutrition, what's the physical  
 21 activity we're getting.

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1 And I didn't actually include these  
 2 statistics on the presentation. But in Talbot  
 3 County, compared to the average in Maryland, we  
 4 actually have a bit less reported physical  
 5 activity and less access, amazingly, to, you  
 6 know, parks and places where people can  
 7 exercise, which I actually don't know if I  
 8 believe because it doesn't seem to make sense.

9 But at least on the behavior risk factor  
 10 surveillance survey, the reported physical  
 11 activity of moderate or higher activity is  
 12 lower for Talbot County than it is for the rest  
 13 of the State.

14 So that's one thing. We can always  
 15 encourage exercise. You know, the  
 16 recommendation is about say 30 minutes of  
 17 exercise about every day. And then, you know,  
 18 counseling on nutrition.

19 So actually today there was our local  
 20 health improvement coalition, which is a  
 21 five-county midshore coalition to improve the

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1 health of all residents in the region. They  
 2 had their quarterly or bimonthly meeting and  
 3 were talking about different ways to both  
 4 decrease diabetes and encourage overall health.

5 And one of the ways is trying to teach  
 6 young people and students about healthy, you  
 7 know, nutrition and starting early in terms of  
 8 getting health nutrition.

9 And so, again, it's one of those things  
 10 that you have to approach from several angles,  
 11 you know, and start early. And we can all, I'm  
 12 sure most of us in this room, can admit that we  
 13 probably don't exercise as much as we want to.

14 MR. STEPP: It definitely sounds like we  
 15 have some room maybe to try to get that message  
 16 out, especially hearing that's the number one.  
 17 If we can somehow get that -- it sounds like we  
 18 have the steps in place. But if we can do a  
 19 better job of getting that out, that will  
 20 hopefully make a big improvement on the county.  
 21 DR. MAGUIRE: Right, right, right.

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1 MR. STEPP: Thank you. A couple more  
 2 here.  
 3 The slide you have in here for COVID, the  
 4 end of COVID national public health emergency  
 5 May 11th. How is it that we can predict a date  
 6 that that's going to go? Is that trends? Is  
 7 that...  
 8 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. So --  
 9 MR. STEPP: That doesn't make sense to me.  
 10 DR. MAGUIRE: -- this is something that  
 11 the -- this is a federal decision.  
 12 And so what the CDC did, and of course, I  
 13 wasn't in the room, but they're looking at  
 14 trends and they're looking at hospitalization  
 15 rate and death rate and vaccination rate.  
 16 And what's happened is just the  
 17 accumulation of immunity from both natural  
 18 immunity from people who have had COVID one or  
 19 two times, plus vaccination rate, means that  
 20 overall most people are protected to some  
 21 extent, you know.

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1 We will always live with COVID. It's not  
 2 going to go away, just as the other coronavirus  
 3 cousins are always still out there.  
 4 But what they're predicting based on what  
 5 is going on around the world, you know, because  
 6 sometimes waves happen in other places, but  
 7 also what's happening here in terms of the  
 8 general trends. And what we've seen is across  
 9 the nation, since the new year basically, the  
 10 COVID rates go down.  
 11 And what we've learned over the past  
 12 couple of years is that really the peaks have  
 13 always been in January. And so once we get  
 14 past January and get people more outside and  
 15 less stuck indoors and just the behavior of  
 16 viruses, circulation kind of changes with the  
 17 seasons, we just predict.  
 18 Obviously if something majorly changes,  
 19 they'll change course, but that's really not  
 20 expected.  
 21 MR. STEPP: So basically it's an assumed

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1 date based upon historical trends?  
 2 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. And the public health  
 3 emergency, what happened was it's always  
 4 instituted on a certain date and it's for about  
 5 three months. And so they have to renew it.  
 6 And so they made the choice in January not to  
 7 renew it again. So then they decided on a  
 8 date.  
 9 And what that also means is what the  
 10 federal government can do. And one of those  
 11 things is, you know, funding. So we don't  
 12 expect there to be new COVID funding. We don't  
 13 expect Congress to take any action related to  
 14 COVID basically.  
 15 MR. STEPP: I some saw of the information  
 16 on our website here in Talbot County. Looks  
 17 like we're about one hospitalization a day or  
 18 less than one hospitalization per day.  
 19 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah, yeah.  
 20 MR. STEPP: Okay. That's very good to  
 21 hear.

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1 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. It's been lower.  
 2 And you know, sometimes statistically,  
 3 because our population is so small, it's hard  
 4 to really get good trends. One hospitalization  
 5 looks like a real high rate sometimes.  
 6 But yeah, we've been keeping it low. And  
 7 unfortunately, we are still seeing people  
 8 hospitalized and deaths occurring. But much,  
 9 much lower than certainly previous months and  
 10 years.  
 11 MR. STEPP: Good. What would you say,  
 12 being that we've been in this about almost  
 13 three years now, I mean in regards to COVID,  
 14 what would you say we've learned or what do you  
 15 think we could do better next time in regards  
 16 to if this comes out again?  
 17 DR. MAGUIRE: That's a great question.  
 18 Yeah. That's a great question.  
 19 And so that's what a lot of people are now  
 20 trying to pay attention to, which is, you know,  
 21 what did we learn.

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1 And I'd say the biggest lesson that I  
 2 believe is that we need to prepare for  
 3 long-term public health emergencies. Most of  
 4 what we prepare for is short-term, whether it's  
 5 hurricane or an acute epidemic. Even  
 6 monkeypox, Mpox, was a matter of a few months  
 7 to be honest. But with COVID, it was years,  
 8 basically years, much longer than I think most  
 9 people expected.

10 And so really having that idea of how can  
 11 we make this a marathon and not a sprint. And  
 12 you know, what we're seeing in the health care  
 13 sector and the public health sector is a lot of  
 14 people were just, they rose to the occasion and  
 15 then they got burned out and now they've left.  
 16 So there's a concern we've lost some  
 17 institutional knowledge maybe of people who had  
 18 great experience and learning opportunity  
 19 during the pandemic, and we want to make sure  
 20 we don't lose that.

21 So that's one of the reasons why a lot of

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1 entities are conducting after-action reports  
 2 and making sure we learn and change.

3 So I know at our local Health Department,  
 4 we're looking at all of our emergency plans,  
 5 which we've always had in place, and trying to  
 6 frame them both through the lens of a long-term  
 7 public health emergency, and then we're also  
 8 considering other types of impacts, like, you  
 9 know, cybersecurity emergencies, that kind of  
 10 thing.

11 So there's certainly a lot to be learned.  
 12 And you know, how -- I think one other thing  
 13 was just the importance of messaging and the  
 14 importance of coalition building. So things  
 15 that can be applied to any emergency really.

16 MR. STEPP: Awesome. Thank you.

17 A couple more here, some constituent  
 18 questions.

19 So there was a graph on our website, too.  
 20 This one struck me when I looked it up.  
 21 Percent of Talbot County residents vaccinated

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1 against COVID by age. This is on our  
 2 website --

3 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah.

4 MR. STEPP: -- right now.

5 There are a couple of stats there that are  
 6 statistically impossible, frankly. There's  
 7 108 percent and 110 percent of the groups of 75  
 8 to 84 and 85-plus that have been vaccinated  
 9 against COVID.

10 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah.

11 MR. STEPP: -- 108 and 110 percent of our  
 12 population --

13 DR. MAGUIRE: So what happens is, and  
 14 there used to be little disclaimer and I think  
 15 we ran out of room. But basically what  
 16 happened is when we -- we tallied how many  
 17 people got vaccinated who gave their addresses  
 18 as Talbot County.

19 And so, you know, there's often going to  
 20 be, with large data sets, you know, which you  
 21 don't have time to sort of deep dive clean up

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1 and take a year to really analyze, there may be  
 2 some weird things like that.

3 But it could be that we -- I know that we  
 4 had a lot of people come to Talbot County. And  
 5 I don't know if they gave their address or  
 6 people move or whatever.

7 So what actually the CDC did to clean that  
 8 up, because this was the case also in  
 9 Montgomery County and Howard County and a  
 10 couple of others, was they were getting rates  
 11 above 100 percent, was they just maxed it out  
 12 at 95 percent.

13 What we did see, too, was that some  
 14 people, very few, chose to get multiple  
 15 vaccines, more than was recommended. And so  
 16 they were kind of counted more than once  
 17 perhaps, you know.

18 And so another thing that we have here,  
 19 maybe not a huge number of people, is we do  
 20 have people with second homes or who visit.  
 21 And so certainly during the sort of peak time

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<p>1 of the pandemic, we had a lot of people who</p> <p>2 kind of moved, whether permanently or</p> <p>3 temporarily, to the Eastern Shore. And since</p> <p>4 we do have some second homeowners here, they</p> <p>5 gave their address as Talbot County. And we</p> <p>6 were basing our sort of denominator on the best</p> <p>7 population we have.</p> <p>8 The population number I gave initially was</p> <p>9 the 2022 estimate, but the number we used in</p> <p>10 those statistics was the 2019 estimate, which</p> <p>11 was the most current one.</p> <p>12 And so if someone is not counted in our</p> <p>13 census, because you can only give one residence</p> <p>14 as your census, then that will kind of inflate</p> <p>15 the numerator.</p> <p>16 So there's a few reasons. It's not</p> <p>17 perfect data, yeah. So that is statistically</p> <p>18 impossible, but that's the number we had. So</p> <p>19 we just felt it was best to just be transparent</p> <p>20 about we had X number of people, you know, who</p> <p>21 got it and just add the disclaimer some people</p>	<p>1 still recommended.</p> <p>2 And so one of the things that the CDC</p> <p>3 Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices</p> <p>4 does is they constantly -- and those committee</p> <p>5 meetings are public and you can watch them.</p> <p>6 They debate the pros and cons, the risks and</p> <p>7 benefits because every health intervention has</p> <p>8 a risk, whether it's giving IV fluids or not.</p> <p>9 And so with those particular issues, in</p> <p>10 certain populations there may have been a</p> <p>11 slight increase in the risk of myocarditis, but</p> <p>12 the counterfactual was actually if you got</p> <p>13 COVID, your risk of myocarditis was so much</p> <p>14 higher, about two or three times higher.</p> <p>15 And so the risk benefit calculation for</p> <p>16 that is that it's better to get a vaccine where</p> <p>17 you're likely to be protected from a much more</p> <p>18 serious outcome, including secondary effects of</p> <p>19 COVID, because one thing I didn't touch on was</p> <p>20 a lot of the secondary complications we're</p> <p>21 seeing from COVID, which is not only the long</p>
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<p>1 may have been counted twice or this data is not</p> <p>2 perfect.</p> <p>3 MR. STEPP: All right. Thank you.</p> <p>4 And on the same report, just looking at</p> <p>5 some of the trends, I mean it seems like the</p> <p>6 trends are going down as far as vaccinations.</p> <p>7 I guess as you get to second boosters and</p> <p>8 bivalent boosters.</p> <p>9 DR. MAGUIRE: Right.</p> <p>10 MR. STEPP: It looks like the trend is</p> <p>11 going down of folks getting that.</p> <p>12 I mean I tried to research and possibly</p> <p>13 figure out why that may be. I mean I have</p> <p>14 found some CDC stuff that showed potential side</p> <p>15 effects, serious side effects, like</p> <p>16 myocarditis, pericarditis, thrombosis.</p> <p>17 And is there a link there you think that</p> <p>18 why folks aren't, you know, why the trends are</p> <p>19 going down?</p> <p>20 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. And there were very</p> <p>21 few cases of those, such that, you know, it was</p>	<p>1 COVID, but also we're seeing increased rates of</p> <p>2 type one diabetes in children, we're seeing</p> <p>3 increased rates of certain autoimmune</p> <p>4 conditions.</p> <p>5 And so I think some people may have been</p> <p>6 afraid of some side effects, but the vast</p> <p>7 majority of side effects were very temporary</p> <p>8 and typical in terms of achiness or whatnot,</p> <p>9 fever.</p> <p>10 And I think what actually accounted more</p> <p>11 so for the lower rates of the booster was just</p> <p>12 the change in experience of COVID. By the time</p> <p>13 the boosters came out, you know, people -- it</p> <p>14 wasn't as scary let's say. And so the boosters</p> <p>15 first came out basically a year and a half ago,</p> <p>16 right. And so at that time, we weren't</p> <p>17 seeing -- it seemed like a manageable disease</p> <p>18 that we could potentially live with.</p> <p>19 And so I think a lot of people made the</p> <p>20 calculation in their own head, well, I'm a</p> <p>21 healthy whatever-year-old and I don't need a</p>

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1 booster. And so I think that's what happened.  
 2 We certainly in this county, with our  
 3 demographics, we had, we actually have I  
 4 believe is the third or fourth highest rate of  
 5 COVID vaccination overall compared to other  
 6 Maryland counties. And in our seniors, we have  
 7 a very high rate of vaccination uptake. So  
 8 what you're probably also seeing is that the  
 9 younger age groups have lower because --  
 10 MR. STEPP: It's considerably. It's  
 11 almost nonexistent. Ten percent or less --  
 12 DR. MAGUIRE: Right, right. Exactly.  
 13 And so you've got your individuals like  
 14 say me, who I'm a pediatrician. And so my  
 15 daughter was first one to get her vaccines and  
 16 boosters, you know. I did the risk  
 17 calculation. And then other people did a  
 18 different risk calculation that they didn't  
 19 think it was worth it.  
 20 It's definitely still recommended by all  
 21 the public health and medical societies to get

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1 COVID vaccines. And COVID vaccines were added  
 2 to the childhood immunization schedule as a  
 3 recommended vaccine going forward, too.  
 4 MR. STEPP: And I guess I'll wrap up here.  
 5 I have a few more questions. Maybe we can just  
 6 have a separate discussion.  
 7 You bring up the COVID center on Marlboro  
 8 Road.  
 9 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah.  
 10 MR. STEPP: I don't see hardly anybody  
 11 there. I mean if I'm having breakfast across  
 12 the street or something, I don't see a lot of  
 13 cars coming in and out of there.  
 14 DR. MAGUIRE: Right.  
 15 MR. STEPP: Is that facility even needed  
 16 anymore or can we move that operation to the  
 17 Health Department?  
 18 DR. MAGUIRE: Good question.  
 19 MR. STEPP: To save taxpayer dollars here  
 20 because it just doesn't look like it's being  
 21 used.

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1 DR. MAGUIRE: So yeah. And so  
 2 decommissioning that space is something we've  
 3 been talking about for months and when to do  
 4 that.  
 5 And so basically we wanted to get through  
 6 the sort of winter surge. And so assuming that  
 7 flu, COVID, whatever was going to surge in sort  
 8 of the December, January time frame, we wanted  
 9 to be available because we serve not only  
 10 Talbot residents, but, you know, other  
 11 residents.  
 12 And so, you know, that is -- there's very  
 13 specific COVID funding. It expires in June.  
 14 And so --  
 15 MR. STEPP: Where do we receive that  
 16 funding from? Is that federal?  
 17 DR. MAGUIRE: The federal government,  
 18 yeah.  
 19 MR. STEPP: So they're funding that  
 20 facility?  
 21 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. COVID funds. There's

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1 very specific COVID funds that we received,  
 2 yeah, that can only be used for that purpose.  
 3 MR. STEPP: Okay. Thank you.  
 4 DR. MAGUIRE: And so if it's not used,  
 5 it's not used and goes back to the federal  
 6 government.  
 7 So our take is, again, it's a risk  
 8 balance. So we will be -- we have been scaling  
 9 back hours and we are continuing to do that.  
 10 We haven't publicized exactly when we're  
 11 going to scale back, but we're trying to leave  
 12 that space and figure out when is the best time  
 13 to do that.  
 14 MR. STEPP: Sounds like before June, would  
 15 it sound like then?  
 16 DR. MAGUIRE: Yeah. Well, our fiscal year  
 17 ends June 30th. Yeah.  
 18 And so you never know, though, because we  
 19 get told oh, that funding is -- hey, we've  
 20 decided you can have it. So you know.  
 21 But yeah. Over the, I anticipate over the

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<p>1 next few months we won't need a center. And</p> <p>2 then we just have to make sure that that</p> <p>3 service is available and that we direct people</p> <p>4 to go to where they need to, whether it's their</p> <p>5 own primary care doctor, the pharmacy, or the</p> <p>6 Health Department to make sure that if there is</p> <p>7 a demand, because there still is a demand, it's</p> <p>8 very small, but there still is one. So we just</p> <p>9 want to make sure that people don't, you know,</p> <p>10 have questions about that.</p> <p>11 MR. STEPP: Thank you.</p> <p>12 MR. CALLAHAN: Good. Well, I appreciate</p> <p>13 it. Thank you. Thank you thanks a lot.</p> <p>14 DR. MAGUIRE: Thank you very much.</p> <p>15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Talk to you soon.</p> <p>16 Okay.</p> <p>17 Moving on here, we've got economic</p> <p>18 development and tourism. You guys want to come</p> <p>19 on up. Hello, Ms. Cassandra.</p> <p>20 MS. VANHOOSER: Hey, there.</p> <p>21 MR. CALLAHAN: Ms. Judy, how are you?</p>	<p>1 all. And my colleague, Rich Setter in the</p> <p>2 back, with his, you must note his tie, which</p> <p>3 says love, has little hearts on it. So it's</p> <p>4 good to see everybody.</p> <p>5 And hopefully, everyone is out tonight</p> <p>6 except for these two, which I cheated out of a</p> <p>7 night out with their honeys. But everybody is</p> <p>8 out at restaurants and the cash registers are</p> <p>9 ringing.</p> <p>10 MR. CALLAHAN: Good.</p> <p>11 MS. VANHOOSER: And Talbot County is full</p> <p>12 of love birds tonight.</p> <p>13 MR. CALLAHAN: Great, great.</p> <p>14 MS. VANHOOSER: I appreciate your time</p> <p>15 because I know that the sacrifices that you all</p> <p>16 make to be here. And I do think it's important</p> <p>17 that we talk about economic development and</p> <p>18 tourism from time to time.</p> <p>19 Now, these two people who I robbed out of</p> <p>20 a cozy night, I want to introduce them as well.</p> <p>21 I brought the big guns tonight.</p>
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<p>1 MS. BIXLER: How are you?</p> <p>2 MR. CALLAHAN: We need a third chair. We</p> <p>3 got a third wheel over here. We got a third</p> <p>4 wheel. Yeah, we do. You know.</p> <p>5 MR. KOZEL: All this talk about flu, I</p> <p>6 better sit in the back here.</p> <p>7 MR. CALLAHAN: I was going to say.</p> <p>8 Exactly.</p> <p>9 MS. VANHOOSER: Six feet.</p> <p>10 MR. CALLAHAN: You're pretty important</p> <p>11 right now. So you're coming up. Okay.</p> <p>12 How you doing, guys? You want to</p> <p>13 introduce yourself to the public, please.</p> <p>14 MS. VANHOOSER: I will introduce myself.</p> <p>15 I'm Cassandra Vanhooser. I'm your director of</p> <p>16 economic development and tourism for Talbot</p> <p>17 County.</p> <p>18 And first, let me say Happy Valentine's</p> <p>19 Day. It's great to see all the color in the</p> <p>20 room. I didn't wear my red. I've been</p> <p>21 chastised for that. But it's great to see you</p>	<p>1 So Ken Kozel is my chairman of the</p> <p>2 Economic Development Commission. And it's very</p> <p>3 important that you note that it's a good year</p> <p>4 for him to be the chairman. They are our</p> <p>5 largest single employer in Talbot County, is</p> <p>6 the health care industry and UM Shore Regional</p> <p>7 Health. So our largest employer.</p> <p>8 And also Ken has proposed what I think</p> <p>9 will be the largest economic development</p> <p>10 project probably to ever happen on the Eastern</p> <p>11 Shore when we get that hospital moving.</p> <p>12 So Ken, thank you for your service. These</p> <p>13 are volunteer positions.</p> <p>14 And then Captain Judy Bixler has been my</p> <p>15 chairman for a long time on the Tourism Board.</p> <p>16 By the way, I've been here ten years in</p> <p>17 February. So February the 4th was my first</p> <p>18 day, and Captain Judy has been by my side the</p> <p>19 whole time.</p> <p>20 Not only is she my chairman, but she's the</p> <p>21 State Tourism Development Board chairman. And</p>

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1 we both serve on that State Board. And so Judy  
 2 is a powerhouse in the tourism industry. So  
 3 like I said, I brought the big guns tonight.  
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: Good.  
 5 MS. VANHOOSER: And we're here to talk  
 6 about economic development and tourism, and I'm  
 7 excited to be here. This is my first  
 8 presentation, real presentation to the Council.  
 9 And we have so many different things going on,  
 10 it's hard to sort of curate it.  
 11 So I'm going to start with our vision,  
 12 mission, and value proposition, just to make  
 13 sure we're all on the same page.  
 14 When we put together our strategic plan in  
 15 2018, and we're coming up on a new strategic  
 16 plan, our vision was that we have strong  
 17 communities, empowered businesses, and that we  
 18 offer innovative solutions for helping our  
 19 businesses start and grow and be successful  
 20 here in Talbot County.  
 21 And our mission is to enhance and promote

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1 business friendly environment for current and  
 2 prospective enterprises and to advocate for  
 3 policies that benefit businesses. So if y'all  
 4 are working on something that is a policy  
 5 oriented, certainly we bring information to the  
 6 table that I think can help you do that. And  
 7 we're advocating for those policies that  
 8 benefit businesses.  
 9 And then, of course, we serve as a conduit  
 10 to resources for businesses. That's what the  
 11 value we bring to the business community, is  
 12 that we know who to take you to talk to about  
 13 financing or regulations or what have you.  
 14 And also, we help businesses remove those  
 15 barriers that stand in their way. And so when  
 16 somebody has a problem, often they'll come to  
 17 us or the county manager will refer them to us.  
 18 So we help remove those barriers.  
 19 And then one thing I didn't really put on  
 20 there is the marketing and communications  
 21 aspect that we do. And I always say that I'm

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1 Talbot County's chief storyteller. And you  
 2 know, it is our goal and our mission to tell  
 3 those stories, those great business stories.  
 4 We have so many fantastic businesses here in  
 5 Talbot County. And not just in tourism, but  
 6 all across the board. We have great businesses  
 7 and business owners and managers here in Talbot  
 8 County. So I just wanted you to understand the  
 9 way we see what we do.  
 10 So let's do a 2022 overview. And this is  
 11 important because it's going to set the stage  
 12 for what we're going to do in 2023. Additional  
 13 resources was sort of the buzz words for 2022.  
 14 So we -- the pandemic brought an  
 15 unprecedented amount of funding across the  
 16 board. Dr. Maguire talked about that. And  
 17 economic development benefited from that. That  
 18 did not take away our day-to-day work. But we  
 19 added some things. And we'll talk about the  
 20 four things that I have listed here in depth.  
 21 First, the Rural Economic Development

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1 Fund. I know you all probably know about this.  
 2 We've talked about it ad nauseam. I'm just  
 3 going to give you an update and give you the  
 4 numbers.  
 5 So the governor put in his budget last  
 6 February \$50 million, that 10 million for each  
 7 of the five regional Councils. We are part of  
 8 the Mid-Shore Regional Council, along with  
 9 Caroline and Dorchester Counties.  
 10 And our Regional Council decided to divide  
 11 the money evenly. We got \$3.233333 million to  
 12 distribute amongst projects.  
 13 The County Council approved 14 projects,  
 14 and five of those are county projects, four of  
 15 which I oversee and one Ray oversees. And we  
 16 have until 2024 to complete those projects.  
 17 So I just wanted to let you know where we  
 18 are. We worked with the Office of Law, the  
 19 County Manager's Office and Finance Office to  
 20 develop a sub-recipient agreement. It's  
 21 multi-pages and down to the fine details, but

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1 all of those have been signed by our  
 2 sub-recipients. They received a copy of those  
 3 by registered mail.  
 4 We have processed advances for three  
 5 organizations. We made it possible for each  
 6 recipient to receive up to 25 percent of their  
 7 money in advance so that that didn't put a  
 8 burden on small organizations. We had three  
 9 request an advance. We have processed those  
 10 through the Finance Office with Martha's help.  
 11 And they have those in hand. And the other  
 12 money will come to the organizations on a  
 13 reimbursement format.  
 14 It's very important to us that our  
 15 projects meet their goals, their milestones,  
 16 and deliverables. And we're monitoring them  
 17 every step of the way.  
 18 So we've just had our first report round  
 19 due. All of the reports have to turn in a  
 20 monthly report to the Mid-Shore Regional  
 21 Council. I get a copy of those. If at any

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1 time you want to see where any of the projects  
 2 are, I can tell you. We can pull their report,  
 3 and we're monitoring those closely.  
 4 We will be setting up a mechanism in my  
 5 department to monitor those before we give  
 6 reimbursements. And that's clearly stated in  
 7 our grant agreements. So we're moving forward  
 8 with those. And we'll be reporting out on  
 9 those projects as they come to fruition.  
 10 I wanted to touch on this one briefly. We  
 11 have all talked about this one, the Eastern  
 12 Shore economic resiliency tool kit. This was  
 13 part of our EDA funding. We had the grant with  
 14 the Mid-Shore Regional Council, ten partners.  
 15 That ended in June after 50-plus meetings every  
 16 Tuesday at two o'clock, you can find me, every  
 17 other Tuesday, you can find me on a Zoom  
 18 meeting with these same people.  
 19 And what we've built is tools you can use.  
 20 If you want information about the economy or  
 21 about the economy on the Eastern Shore or about

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1 a certain business segment, we can typically  
 2 find that on the Delmarva index. And our tool  
 3 kit became part of the Delmarva index.  
 4 And what is important to note is that it  
 5 continues. We have a survey that we do every  
 6 six months of Eastern Shore businesses. I'm  
 7 going to go over some of the results here  
 8 momentarily. And our success was recognized,  
 9 not just in the state, not just in the nation,  
 10 but internationally. We have been awarded  
 11 accolades for the work that we've done on this  
 12 project. So I'm very proud of that. I never  
 13 thought, Keasha, I'd have an IADC award, but I  
 14 have one. So we're proud of the work that  
 15 we've done.  
 16 And the EDA was so impressed by the work  
 17 that we did, they gave an additional \$1 million  
 18 to the State of Maryland Department of Commerce  
 19 and this work continues. We just finished a  
 20 manufacturing dashboard, we've done a State  
 21 Parks dashboard, and there will be several more

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1 tools that will come out of that money.  
 2 So again, every other Tuesday, come to my  
 3 office at two o'clock if you want to meet with  
 4 these people. And we've now expanded the  
 5 partnership to include the Department of  
 6 Commerce and many others around the state. So  
 7 if you need information, you want information,  
 8 we can direct you on how to find that.  
 9 We did an ARPA survey last year where we  
 10 polled our constituents, our citizens. We had  
 11 more than 600 people. If you have an afternoon  
 12 where you have nothing to do and you want to  
 13 read 96 pages of input that we got from people,  
 14 and it's a very informative document. And  
 15 Councilman Leshner led this project.  
 16 Forty-five percent of those people  
 17 answered that the expansion of broadband was  
 18 important to them. And so we allocated  
 19 \$1.75 million of the ARPA funding, in addition  
 20 to all that we've done, which, you know,  
 21 includes that USDA grant that we got and many

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1 of the other grants that Easton Utilities has  
 2 gotten. And Choptank is working on this as  
 3 well. So we allocated that money.  
 4 Broadband is so important to the economic  
 5 future of Talbot County, to the health of  
 6 Talbot County, to the education of Talbot  
 7 County that I just wanted to stress that, you  
 8 know, we did work with Councilman Leshner and  
 9 the group, the ARPA group from the county to  
 10 allocate this funding to broadband.  
 11 Now, we also work with many, many  
 12 partners. But the Small Business Development  
 13 Center we help fund. You'll see this in my  
 14 budget request. We fund them at a level of  
 15 \$6,000 a year, which in my mind is not nearly  
 16 enough. But that's what they ask for and  
 17 that's what we appropriate to them.  
 18 And I just want to point out we have 43  
 19 active clients in their fiscal year. They're  
 20 on an October through September fiscal year.  
 21 We had 43 active clients with them last year.

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1 Now, those 43 people, and Councilman  
 2 Haythe can tell you, Councilwoman Haythe can  
 3 tell you that this is a very important service.  
 4 These 43 are working through the process to  
 5 either start or expand a business. So we are  
 6 working with them on business plans, on cash  
 7 flow, on valuation of their businesses. And  
 8 everyone who comes to us with a small business  
 9 idea, we refer them for free and confidential  
 10 counseling to the Small Business Development  
 11 Center.  
 12 We have two counselors who are assigned to  
 13 Talbot County, that's Rich Loffler and Greg  
 14 Barto. And they share office space with me  
 15 over at Bay Street. They're there on a Tuesday  
 16 afternoon and also meet with them monthly to  
 17 review all of our clients.  
 18 A lot of these are long-term clients. And  
 19 you know, we've been through them with several  
 20 different things. Sometimes it takes a long  
 21 time for their projects to come to fruition.

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1 But this is an essential service to us here in  
 2 Talbot County. And again, we do help fund them  
 3 and work with them often.  
 4 Now, let's switch gears just a little bit.  
 5 And I'm going to point out some things about  
 6 the survey.  
 7 Now, as I was working on my PowerPoint, I  
 8 ended up with about 30 slides just on the  
 9 survey. But I took those out, and I'm going to  
 10 condense it down for you.  
 11 Now, this is very difficult to see here.  
 12 In fact, I can't even see it myself. But those  
 13 online are probably having a hard time seeing  
 14 this, but there's some important things, and  
 15 you all probably can see it on your screens  
 16 there, that we need to talk about.  
 17 And the biggest concerns, and this is  
 18 right there in the middle, the top three  
 19 impacts on price increases on businesses.  
 20 Number one, payroll and benefits. Number two,  
 21 fuel and transportation. Number three,

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1 utilities.  
 2 This will not come as a surprise to you as  
 3 we are experiencing those same things in the  
 4 local government. But those are the things  
 5 that our businesses have. And by the way, this  
 6 is businesses all across the Eastern Shore.  
 7 All nine counties participate in this survey.  
 8 But these are the things that are concerning  
 9 people.  
 10 We put some questions in there about  
 11 remote work. We've heard Anirban Basu and  
 12 other economists talk about how important it is  
 13 to offer remote work options to employees now  
 14 that a lot of employees don't want to come back  
 15 to work if they can't work remotely. And we  
 16 asked that question, and 54 percent of the  
 17 businesses that offer remote, which still it's  
 18 a relatively small number on the Eastern Shore,  
 19 but 54 percent said that it is helpful in  
 20 recruiting and retaining employees.  
 21 This is something just for us to be aware

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1 of and know about as something that is  
 2 happening here across the Eastern Shore. We  
 3 have more than 4,000 non-employer  
 4 establishments just in Talbot County, which  
 5 means that a lot of people are -- these are  
 6 businesses without W-2 employees.

7 We already have a lot of people who are  
 8 working remotely, but the people who answered  
 9 this survey are largely business owners or  
 10 managers. And so we're not really hitting that  
 11 demographic of our businesses. So we have a  
 12 lot of people working remotely on the Eastern  
 13 Shore and particularly in Talbot County. But  
 14 this is businesses offering that to their  
 15 employees.

16 And then the barriers to starting and  
 17 expanding a business. And this has flipped as  
 18 we've done this survey now. I think this is  
 19 our fourth one. Labor costs have really risen  
 20 to the top as the number one concern. And I  
 21 can't read that.

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1 Financing has really risen to the top as  
 2 well. And that was not a concern when we  
 3 started this survey two years ago.

4 Inflation is very much a concern.

5 And regulations has dropped down, and that  
 6 was much higher than it is now. But  
 7 regulations are more of a concern I think when  
 8 things are easier.

9 And 43 percent believe that we are in a  
 10 recession, according to the economist that we  
 11 had speak. Dan North, one of the top  
 12 economists in the country who spoke at our  
 13 business series the other night, says that's  
 14 not true yet, but he's predicting that we will  
 15 be in recession. But perception counts, and 43  
 16 percent of the people answering this survey  
 17 said that they believe we're in a recession.

18 Also, 83 percent believe that our  
 19 household incomes are falling below the cost of  
 20 living. And I think that that is significant,  
 21 too.

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1 But there is very much a bright spot, and  
 2 here is the bright spot. So when we asked do  
 3 you think your business or institution will be  
 4 operating locally five years from now, an  
 5 overwhelming yes. And not only that, but  
 6 almost 35 percent of the businesses who  
 7 answered this survey said that they will be  
 8 growing within five years. So that is a bright  
 9 spot.

10 And when we worked on -- you have a full  
 11 report. If you have any questions about the  
 12 full report, you can read that. If you have  
 13 any questions, I'm happy to circle back with  
 14 you and answer anything.

15 But when we were writing that, way down in  
 16 the report was this statistic. So I sent John  
 17 Hickman a note and said I believe you buried  
 18 the lead, you know. There are concerns, but  
 19 the bright spot is that our businesses are  
 20 confident about the future.

21 And just in case you think that this is

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1 not Talbot County saying these things. Your  
 2 next slide shows that 25 percent of the people  
 3 who took this are from Talbot County. Our  
 4 businesses have been super stars when it comes  
 5 to answering this survey.

6 Now, our number was down. We didn't have  
 7 as many people take the survey. So we're  
 8 trying to work on how to better engage people  
 9 and let them know how important this is because  
 10 this is something that we plan to continue into  
 11 the future every six months asking these  
 12 questions, modifying these questions to current  
 13 standards, and then looking at the information  
 14 over time, which I think is very valuable.

15 Now, quickly, we'll turn our attention to  
 16 2023. So it's go time. And I just laid out  
 17 for you why it's go time. We have a lot of  
 18 projects in the hopper. We have a small  
 19 department, and it is very important that we  
 20 make good on the promises we made on that Rural  
 21 Economic Development Fund. So we're going to

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1 be working really hard to do those things.  
 2 Also, we came out of the gate swinging  
 3 on -- gate. Gate running I guess. Mixing my  
 4 metaphors there. At the beginning of the year  
 5 here. So we had a business resource fair that  
 6 really was our first stab at doing this. And  
 7 we had over 100 people attend this event. For  
 8 the first one, we were very excited.  
 9 We partnered with Building African  
 10 American Minds, with Talbot Mentors, with  
 11 Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center, and  
 12 others to sponsor this event. And the people  
 13 who came are budding business owners or they  
 14 already have a business and they wanted to know  
 15 how to grow it. I think we really overwhelmed  
 16 our Small Business Development Center  
 17 counselors because we had a wave. I think  
 18 you'll see that number of clients grow because  
 19 we've been referring people over and over to  
 20 them.  
 21 So we had 12 of our resource partners

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1 there. It started out as a financing  
 2 resources. Maryland Capital Enterprises, the  
 3 Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center has a  
 4 revolving loan fund. And trying to bring those  
 5 people to the table. So if you have a  
 6 financing need, then we're connecting you with  
 7 that resource.  
 8 So I was delighted by the response to this  
 9 event. We had a lot of people turn out. And  
 10 so now we'll be following up with a job fair in  
 11 March, also sponsored by BAAM and the same  
 12 partners.  
 13 And we're talking about how to make this  
 14 more successful in the Spanish-speaking  
 15 community. We have translated some of our  
 16 materials. We'll be translating more. But  
 17 we've sort of done a debrief at the end to try  
 18 and think about how we can more adequately  
 19 connect with our Spanish-speaking audience.  
 20 We started a business speaker series,  
 21 Let's Talk Business. And we started out on

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1 February the 6th with, as I said, a renowned  
 2 economist, Dan North, who happens to be from  
 3 St. Michael's and is remote working largely  
 4 from his house in St. Michael's now. But he  
 5 gave a great overview of the economy. And I  
 6 have his slides. He just sent me his slides.  
 7 I spoke to Jessica this morning about getting  
 8 those to you. And we also had that videotaped.  
 9 We're waiting for the final cut on that.  
 10 When I get that, I'll send it to you  
 11 because it was very interesting some of the  
 12 things that Mr. North had to say.  
 13 Our next speaker series, our guest is here  
 14 with us. Ken Kozel will be speaking about the  
 15 new proposed region medical center, and that's  
 16 on April the 6th. March.  
 17 MR. KOZEL: March 6th.  
 18 MS. VANHOOSER: March the 6th. Sorry.  
 19 And then April 3rd, Dick Willy, who is the  
 20 former president of Perdue Agra Business, will  
 21 be talking about the grain situation and how

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1 the Ukrainian war is impacting grain prices.  
 2 So we're really looking forward to this.  
 3 We had a great turnout for our first one. We  
 4 expect that to continue as people really want  
 5 to know the information. We have great experts  
 6 living in our own community.  
 7 We're going to shift gears yet again and  
 8 talk a little bit about tourism. I can do a  
 9 full presentation about tourism. And Captain  
 10 Judy and I would like to come back during  
 11 National Travel and Tourism Week in May and  
 12 actually do a full-on presentation.  
 13 But as I said, we came out of the gate  
 14 running. And we debuted our new website  
 15 tourtalbot.org. We rebuilt it. When I very  
 16 first came here in 2013 and we spent over a  
 17 year redoing it, it is a content-heavy resource  
 18 that is great for visitors but also for locals.  
 19 And I think it makes the best use of modern  
 20 technology.  
 21 I want to give a shout out to my

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1 colleague, Krista Boothby. I come in and say  
 2 move that there, turn that blue, make that  
 3 here, use that picture, those types of things.  
 4 She really has been in the weeds every day  
 5 making this come to fruition.  
 6 This is the website that I envisioned when  
 7 I started this job. I am extremely proud of  
 8 this.  
 9 And I don't recommend this, but we are  
 10 about to launch a second website. So I don't  
 11 recommend doing two at a time, but we are  
 12 relaunching our frederickdouglassbirthplace.org  
 13 website. We're hoping to have it done by today,  
 14 which is his 205th birthday, but we have really  
 15 made great strides in telling the Frederick  
 16 Douglass story here on many fronts and our web  
 17 presence. We continue to pursue that digital  
 18 first approach with tourism.  
 19 We are working with our partners on the  
 20 Eastern Shore to do an interpretive plan for  
 21 the Chesapeake Country All American Road. Two

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1 years ago, we cut the ribbon on the All  
 2 American Road here in Talbot County. And the  
 3 road runs from Cecil County all the way down to  
 4 Crisfield. And we have formed an alliance.  
 5 And it's with our three heritage areas and the  
 6 nine counties and are really looking at how to  
 7 pursue opportunities for regional storytelling  
 8 and more marketing along these lines.  
 9 And then I'm going to stop here. But I do  
 10 want to invite you all on Saturday to the flag  
 11 raising and ribbon cutting for the tourism  
 12 deliverables for the Frederick Douglass mural.  
 13 Mr. Callahan, you helped get this to come  
 14 to fruition when we put the mural up. But now  
 15 we've added the details.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah.  
 17 MS. VANHOOSER: So we put the spit and  
 18 shine on this thing and we've added some  
 19 benches for people to be able to sit and admire  
 20 the mural and also have put up an interpretive  
 21 panel. The Town of Easton has been our partner

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1 in this, and they have done that work, put up  
 2 the interpretive panel and have mulched out  
 3 there. So we'll be doing that ribbon cutting  
 4 on Saturday at three o'clock.  
 5 I think it's on your calendars, and I'd  
 6 love to see you all there.  
 7 I'm going to stop there and I'll take any  
 8 questions you may have or also let Captain Judy  
 9 or Ken weigh in on what they'd like to say.  
 10 MS. BIXLER: Go ahead.  
 11 MR. KOZEL: I'll go first and I'll be  
 12 brief.  
 13 I just wanted to probably say what  
 14 everybody is thinking. And that is that how  
 15 fortunate we are to have Cassandra helping lead  
 16 our economic development and tourism for the  
 17 county.  
 18 It's just a pleasure to work with you, and  
 19 it's a pressure to work for the Council so that  
 20 we get you the information that you need.  
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: That's great. That's

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1 great. Appreciate that.  
 2 MS. BIXLER: And when it comes to thank  
 3 yous, we want to thank you, the Council, for  
 4 supporting the Economic Development and Tourism  
 5 Office.  
 6 It's really an important function here in  
 7 Talbot County. Tourism gives back. We make an  
 8 impact on our businesses. And tourism really  
 9 is economic development.  
 10 So from my perspective, that's where  
 11 things come from. And we really thank you for  
 12 your support and hope you'll continue to  
 13 support us because we are a sound investment.  
 14 That's our new tag line from the State. And we  
 15 really feel that it's been a great opportunity  
 16 for us to be able to be a part of the State  
 17 Tourism Board because we've gotten Talbot  
 18 County on their map.  
 19 MR. CALLAHAN: Great. That's good.  
 20 MS. BIXLER: We really have. It's been  
 21 really a pleasure to be a part of it. And

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1 having Cassandra there now as well, it's just  
 2 great. So thank you again.  
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Ms. Haythe.  
 4 MS. HAYTHE: Well, I'm a little biased, of  
 5 course. But great job, colleague, Cassandra.  
 6 I really appreciate all that you do.  
 7 And economic development and tourism, like  
 8 Judy said, tourism is economic development,  
 9 which is so true.  
 10 So thank you for presenting to us this  
 11 evening.  
 12 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you.  
 13 MS. MIELKE: Ditto.  
 14 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you.  
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. Mr. Leshner.  
 16 MR. LESHER: Thank you for the update.  
 17 And I appreciate particularly the good news  
 18 that we saw on the business sentiment survey.  
 19 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good.  
 20 Mr. Stepp.  
 21 MR. STEPP: Just, again, thank you to all

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1 three of you for being here and presenting.  
 2 Ken, just wanted to call out again just to  
 3 the whole county and congratulate you on the  
 4 official filing of the Certificate of Need just  
 5 a little over a month ago now. Right?  
 6 MR. KOZEL: It has been. January 6th is  
 7 the date we filed. So a little over a month.  
 8 MR. STEPP: Excellent, excellent.  
 9 Definitely a well -- a huge need for our  
 10 community. So thank you for that.  
 11 MR. KOZEL: Thank you for your support.  
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you.  
 13 MR. STEPP: Just one question, if I may,  
 14 Cassandra. And we had kind of spoken about  
 15 this earlier, too.  
 16 Back in October 2021, there was a  
 17 partnership that was out there with the -- we  
 18 were a small part of it. We partnered with the  
 19 Mid-Shore Community Foundation and the local  
 20 philanthropist for the \$50 gift cards for the  
 21 students of Talbot County for those who got

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1 fully vaccinated against COVID.  
 2 A lot of folks in the community reached  
 3 out to me and just had some concerns with that  
 4 as kind of influencing health decisions on  
 5 youth.  
 6 I was just curious. We just wanted to  
 7 confirm. We don't have any more plans in place  
 8 for any programs like that in the future; do  
 9 we?  
 10 MS. VANHOOSER: We don't have any plans  
 11 for that.  
 12 MR. STEPP: Thank you.  
 13 MS. VANHOOSER: I can give you a little  
 14 bit of background, just briefly.  
 15 MR. STEPP: Yeah, please. Thank you.  
 16 MS. VANHOOSER: We partnered with the  
 17 Mid-Shore Community Foundation because we are  
 18 that conduit to the businesses.  
 19 And I don't even know who the donors were.  
 20 We put no money toward it.  
 21 But what we said is if you're going to get

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1 vaccinated and if you're going to get a gift  
 2 card, we want you to spend that money with our  
 3 local businesses. And so it was our role to  
 4 get the businesses to sign up, which is what we  
 5 did.  
 6 But no, we don't have any plans for that.  
 7 And I will also say that if I perceive  
 8 something to be overly political, I wouldn't do  
 9 that because I don't ever want to make Talbot  
 10 County look bad in any way.  
 11 MR. STEPP: Yeah. I never looked at it --  
 12 MS. VANHOOSER: I'm the chief storyteller.  
 13 MR. STEPP: Absolutely.  
 14 MS. VANHOOSER: And I know you're not  
 15 implying that. But I just want to say that  
 16 clearly that, you know, those were  
 17 extraordinary times, and we were there to try  
 18 and help our businesses through that time.  
 19 MR. STEPP: Got you. I just, as we had  
 20 spoken about prior to, just to make sure that  
 21 those are decisions that are between families

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1 or individuals and their health care providers.  
 2 So I just wanted to make sure that we weren't  
 3 planning on doing that. So thank you.  
 4 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you.  
 6 And just to end it, Cassandra. Talbot  
 7 County is so lucky to have you. And you know,  
 8 been working with you for nine years now. And  
 9 you're pretty special for Talbot County.  
 10 That's for sure.  
 11 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you.  
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: And you know, you've been  
 13 up here many times in front of us. And the  
 14 knowledge you have and the drive you have and,  
 15 you know, just trying to help these businesses  
 16 and stuff, we're very blessed to have you. We  
 17 really are.  
 18 And to bring top-notch people like Judy  
 19 and Ken with you, and that really just shows  
 20 that these people really look up to you and we  
 21 look up to you, how professional and the

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1 experience you have, you know, for Talbot  
 2 County.  
 3 So we need to stand and give you a little  
 4 applause.  
 5 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you. So that's my  
 6 Valentine.  
 7 MR. CALLAHAN: It's Valentine's Day.  
 8 MS. VANHOOSER: It's my Valentine for the  
 9 day.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: That's exactly right.  
 11 So I just want to give you kudos.  
 12 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: And we truly mean it.  
 14 MS. VANHOOSER: Well, it is a real  
 15 pleasure to serve for you and with you for the  
 16 citizens of Talbot County. And I sincerely  
 17 appreciate your Valentine.  
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: You're welcome, you're  
 19 welcome.  
 20 MS. VANHOOSER: Thank you.  
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Thanks a lot, guys.

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1 MS. BIXLER: Thank you.  
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: I appreciate it. Okay.  
 3 All right.  
 4 So next up is going to be introduction of  
 5 administrative resolution here. So Madam  
 6 Secretary, could you go ahead and read it in  
 7 the record, please.  
 8 SECRETARY: Administration Resolution  
 9 repealing enforcement resolution, COVID-19,  
 10 adopted August 25, 2020.  
 11 Whereas, on August 25, 2020, the County  
 12 Council of Talbot County, Maryland, the County  
 13 Council, adopted an administrative resolution  
 14 entitled Enforcement Resolution COVID-19, the  
 15 August 25th administrative resolution, adopting  
 16 appropriate enforcement rules and regulations  
 17 to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Talbot  
 18 County, the county, in accordance with guidance  
 19 from the Talbot County Health Officer and the  
 20 authority granted pursuant to the governor of  
 21 Maryland's Executive Order 20-08-03-01 and the

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1 constitution and laws of the State of Maryland.  
 2 And whereas, the August 25th  
 3 administrative resolution requires compliance  
 4 with the Executive Order number 20-08-03-01 and  
 5 sets forth penalties for noncompliance  
 6 therewith.  
 7 And whereas, Executive Order 20-08-03-01  
 8 was last amended on May 14, 2021, pursuant to  
 9 Executive Order 21-05-14-01.  
 10 And whereas, Executive Order 21-05-14-01  
 11 was rescinded and of no further force and  
 12 effect as of 12:01 a.m. on July 1, 2021,  
 13 pursuant to Executive Order 21-06-15-01.  
 14 And whereas, the county is no longer  
 15 enforcing the August 25th administrative  
 16 resolution, as Executive Order Number  
 17 21-05-14-01 is no longer in effect.  
 18 And whereas, the County Council is  
 19 desirous of repealing the August 25th  
 20 administrative resolution.  
 21 Now, therefore, be it resolved by the

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<p>1 County Council of Talbot County, Maryland, that 2 the administrative resolution entitled 3 Enforcement Resolution COVID-19 adopted by the 4 County Council on August 25, 2020, is hereby 5 repealed in its entirety and of no further 6 force and effect. 7 Be it further resolved that this 8 administrative resolution shall take effect 9 immediately upon adoption. 10 Introduced by the County Council of Talbot 11 County, Maryland, at a regular meeting on 12 February 14, 2023, at which meeting copies were 13 available to the public for inspection. 14 Adopted by the County Council of Talbot 15 County, Maryland, at a regular meeting on 16 February 14, 2023, at which meeting copies were 17 available to the public for inspection. 18 Given under our hands and the great seal 19 of Talbot County, this 14th day of February in 20 the year of our Lord 2023. 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Madam Secretary.</p>	<p>1 further force and effect. 2 So this administrative resolution that the 3 county still has in effect is enforcing 4 something -- is based on something that's no 5 longer of any force and effect. 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Right, right. 7 MR. THOMAS: So there's really no point -- 8 MR. CALLAHAN: So we're just cleaning it 9 up. 10 MR. THOMAS: There's no point for the 11 county to have that resolution in place. 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Exactly, exactly. 13 So Mr. Stepp, you want to? 14 MR. STEPP: Yeah. Just as Patrick said, 15 it's just, I think it's just a matter of good 16 legislative hygiene that we still have these 17 enforcements. 18 And I don't want any business owner in 19 Talbot County to feel like they could 20 potentially be under the threat of any of that. 21 So again, just a matter of good</p>
<p>Page 95</p> <p>1 Mr. Thomas, you want to go ahead and kind 2 of walk us through what we're going to try to 3 achieve here? 4 MR. THOMAS: Sure. 5 MR. CALLAHAN: That would be great. 6 MR. THOMAS: When I drafted this, I tried 7 to tell the story in the recitals as well. 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. 9 MR. THOMAS: And not to rehash it too 10 much. 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. 12 MR. THOMAS: But the administrative 13 resolution that was adopted by the County 14 Council on August 25, 2020, had certain 15 enforcement rules and regulations pertaining to 16 wearing face coverings and things like that. 17 And the authority came from an Executive 18 Order passed by the governor. I believe it was 19 Executive Order 20-08-03-01. 20 And that Order was last amended in May of 21 2021 and was ultimately rescinded and of no</p>	<p>Page 97</p> <p>1 legislative hygiene to clean this off the 2 books. And hope they're in support of Council. 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Good. Mr. Leshner. 4 MR. LESHER: Well, this was an utterly 5 feckless piece of legislation that was intended 6 to do just as little as possible, and it lived 7 down to that purpose. 8 It's time for this to go. Good riddance. 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Exactly. 10 MS. MIELKE: No comment. 11 MS. HAYTHE: I'm good. 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Well, Madam 13 Secretary, is there a motion? 14 MR. STEPP: I'll make the motion. 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion. Do 16 I have a second? 17 MS. HAYTHE: Second. 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Got a motion and 19 section to go ahead and approve the 20 administrative resolution as presented. Madam 21 Secretary, can you call the vote.</p>

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<p>1 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.                  2 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.                  3 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.                  4 MR. STEPP: Aye.                  5 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.                  6 MR. LESHHER: Aye.                  7 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.                  8 MS. MIELKE: Aye.                  9 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.                  10 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.                  11 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right.                  12 Mr. Stamp, you're up next.                  13 MR. STAMP: Good evening.                  14 MR. CALLAHAN: Good evening.                  15 MR. STAMP: Mr. Council President and                  16 Members of the Council, under county manager                  17 report tonight, we have several boards and                  18 committee appointment.                  19 The first one, requesting the                  20 reappointment of Zach Krebeck and Gregg Gannon                  21 to serve as alternates to the Board of Appeals.</p>	<p>1 Trappe District to the Emergency Services                  2 Advisory Board.                  3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.                  4 MR. LESHHER: I'll move to approve.                  5 MS. HAYTHE: Second.                  6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and                  7 second. Madam Secretary, could you call the                  8 vote, please.                  9 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.                  10 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.                  11 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.                  12 MR. STEPP: Aye.                  13 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.                  14 MR. LESHHER: Aye.                  15 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.                  16 MS. MIELKE: Aye.                  17 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.                  18 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.                  19 MR. STAMP: The next is the Town of Trappe                  20 is requesting the appointment of Commissioner                  21 Michael Sullivan to serve on the Local</p>
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<p>1 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Do I have a motion?                  2 MR. LESHHER: Move to approve.                  3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. I have a motion and                  4 second.                  5 MS. HAYTHE: Second.                  6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Got a motion and                  7 second. Madam Secretary, could you call the                  8 vote.                  9 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.                  10 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.                  11 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.                  12 MR. STEPP: Aye.                  13 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.                  14 MR. LESHHER: Aye.                  15 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.                  16 MS. MIELKE: Aye.                  17 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.                  18 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.                  19 MR. STAMP: The next would be requesting                  20 the reappointment of Terry Satchell from the                  21 Easton District and Ruth Sullivan from the</p>	<p>1 Emergency Planning Committee.                  2 MR. LESHHER: I'll move to approve the                  3 appointment.                  4 MR. STEPP: Second.                  5 MS. MIELKE: Second.                  6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and                  7 second. Madam Secretary, could you call vote                  8 the, please.                  9 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.                  10 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.                  11 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.                  12 MR. STEPP: Aye.                  13 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.                  14 MR. LESHHER: Aye.                  15 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.                  16 MS. MIELKE: Aye.                  17 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.                  18 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.                  19 MR. STAMP: The next item, requesting                  20 Council's consideration for the appointment of                  21 Mr. Gagy Irving, III to the Police</p>

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1 Accountability Board representing the Oxford  
 2 District.  
 3 MR. LESHER: I'll move the nomination.  
 4 MS. MIELKE: Second.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and  
 6 second. Madam Secretary, could you call the  
 7 vote, please.  
 8 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 10 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.  
 11 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 12 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.  
 13 MR. LESHER: Aye.  
 14 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 15 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 16 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.  
 17 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 18 MR. STAMP: And finally, under boards and  
 19 committee appointments, requesting the  
 20 appointment of Dr. James Bell to serve on the  
 21 Talbot County Ethics Commission.

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1 MR. LESHER: I'll move to approve.  
 2 MS. HAYTHE: Second.  
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and  
 4 second to put Mr. Bell on what committee?  
 5 MR. STAMP: Ethics Commission.  
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Ethics. Madam Secretary,  
 7 could you call the vote.  
 8 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 10 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.  
 11 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 12 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.  
 13 MR. LESHER: Aye.  
 14 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 15 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 16 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.  
 17 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 18 MR. STAMP: And now I'd like to invite  
 19 Terry Kokolis up, your director of corrections,  
 20 for a presentation.  
 21 As he comes up, Terry this evening is

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1 asking for permission to approve a bid. The  
 2 request is, to Council, is the Department of  
 3 Corrections utilize FY23 contingency funds to  
 4 replace an HVAC condenser coil that has failed.  
 5 As you read in your agenda packet,  
 6 requesting Council approval to utilize \$31,804  
 7 in FY23 contingency funds to repair an HVAC  
 8 condenser at the Department of Corrections.  
 9 Martha Sparks, our finance director, has  
 10 confirmed that sufficient funds are in place in  
 11 the contingency fund for this purpose.  
 12 And secondarily, that the Council approve  
 13 and award to Electrical Automation Services,  
 14 Incorporated in the amount of \$31,804.  
 15 Quotes were received. And again, money is  
 16 available in the budget.  
 17 And Terry is here to speak to you further  
 18 about this and answer any questions you might  
 19 have.  
 20 MR. KOKOLIS: For the record, Terry  
 21 Kokolis, director of the Department of

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1 Corrections.  
 2 And Mr. Stamp did such a wonderful job  
 3 explaining the entire project, that I'm here to  
 4 accept any questions anybody might have on  
 5 condenser coils and a chiller.  
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Council.  
 7 MS. HAYTHE: No questions.  
 8 MS. MIELKE: No questions.  
 9 MR. STEPP: No questions.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Do I have a motion?  
 11 MR. LESHER: I'll move to approve.  
 12 MR. STEPP: Second.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and  
 14 second to approve the new heating replacement  
 15 part for the HVAC system. Madam Secretary,  
 16 could you call the vote.  
 17 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 19 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.  
 20 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 21 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.

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1 MR. LESHER: Aye.  
 2 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 3 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 4 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.  
 5 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 6 MR. STAMP: And before Director Kokolis  
 7 steps down, I did want to recognize him for his  
 8 service to the county as well. And we had  
 9 Cassandra in here earlier.  
 10 We have the most amazing department heads.  
 11 And in this county, Terry is certainly one of  
 12 those. He's done an exemplary job. And his  
 13 tenure here, he inherited a building that's an  
 14 old building.  
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.  
 16 MR. STAMP: And he's worked very  
 17 diligently to replace the infrastructure in his  
 18 tenure, and not to mention the wonderful  
 19 programs that he's brought to the county.  
 20 So thank you, Terry. I'm sure the Council  
 21 feels the same way. Thank you for your

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1 service.  
 2 MR. KOKOLIS: Thank you very much for the  
 3 compliment.  
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: Exactly. And I want to  
 5 jump on that, too. I really appreciate.  
 6 We took a tour with you today with  
 7 Mr. Leshner, Ms. Haythe. And I tell you, it  
 8 brought light to the gentleman that was talking  
 9 to us that was incarcerated and turned his life  
 10 around. And trying to, you know, once again,  
 11 he's from here.  
 12 And you know, it just, it just, you know,  
 13 the perception of going to jail is in a sense a  
 14 time to rehabilitate yourself and get your life  
 15 straight. And I seen that today, that what  
 16 you're trying to do over there.  
 17 And it's really encouraging that trying to  
 18 help. And people's money, tax money, what is  
 19 going into that. And you see the benefit of  
 20 that gentleman going out in the public and  
 21 going to be working and hopefully he's

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1 successful.  
 2 And that was gratifying today for you to  
 3 put us in that position to see that. And that  
 4 just shows you, that just shows you that your  
 5 program and the experience that you're trying  
 6 to provide over there, and the staff you have  
 7 over there was top-notch. You know, because  
 8 those jobs are hard.  
 9 Not only dealing with the inmates, but  
 10 just the employees and the quality of employees  
 11 that you have over there, that's a tough job  
 12 day in and day out.  
 13 So I want to commend you with what you're  
 14 doing and your experience over there. And  
 15 you've done a great job over there. Just like  
 16 Mr. Stamp said, you're top-notch.  
 17 MR. KOKOLIS: Thank you very much,  
 18 Mr. Callahan.  
 19 Very few people see what happens behind  
 20 the walls.  
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: They do.

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1 MR. KOKOLIS: So it's really incumbent  
 2 upon my staff to ensure that they have, not  
 3 only the empathy, but the security mindedness  
 4 to ensure that the population is discharged in  
 5 better condition than when they arrive.  
 6 And they are Talbot County residents. And  
 7 today's exposure was just to see what you  
 8 generally don't see.  
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.  
 10 MR. KOKOLIS: And that was to see  
 11 everything from the knitting class.  
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Right.  
 13 MR. KOKOLIS: To an inmate who just  
 14 provided a lot of information. And I think  
 15 he's going to begin an LLC, as Ms. Haythe  
 16 suggested to him, upon his discharge.  
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.  
 18 MR. KOKOLIS: And we try to work with him  
 19 as best we can.  
 20 But my staff is also from Talbot County.  
 21 And so the reflection of a community to a

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1 corrections department is very close to  
 2 reflecting what the community should want from  
 3 a corrections department. So I think we're  
 4 very close and very parallel.  
 5 So the fact that you recognized it is  
 6 extremely important to me and to my staff  
 7 because it shows that my staff have committed  
 8 to doing the things that you said that you  
 9 noticed today.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Absolutely.  
 11 MR. KOKOLIS: So I thank you on behalf of  
 12 all my staff and Mr. Stamp.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: No problem. Yup.  
 14 Any other Council would like to say  
 15 anything?  
 16 MS. HAYTHE: Just echo what you said,  
 17 Chuck. It was an experience to take the tour  
 18 today.  
 19 And when he gets out, make sure that he  
 20 does, you know, connect with Cassandra so that  
 21 he has the resources to start that LLC

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1 properly.  
 2 And any help at any time that I can give,  
 3 you know, to your inmates, come in and talk  
 4 with them about anything, just let me know.  
 5 But great job.  
 6 MR. KOKOLIS: I'll take you up on that.  
 7 Thank you very much.  
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. You guys good? Okay.  
 9 Thanks a lot, Terry. We really appreciate  
 10 it.  
 11 MR. KOKOLIS: Thank you.  
 12 MR. STAMP: Council, the next item, I'll  
 13 invite your manager of the Hog Neck Golf  
 14 Course, Rich Setter, to come forward, please.  
 15 He has three items for you this evening.  
 16 He's going to be discussing fees with you  
 17 this evening, he's going to be seeking approval  
 18 for an equipment lease, and he's going to talk  
 19 to you about a creative solution to provide  
 20 some lighting in the parking lot area of the  
 21 golf course.

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1 He continues to do a good job out there.  
 2 And passing things out to you. Okay. He  
 3 has a tie that has love written all over it.  
 4 MR. CALLAHAN: A watch, a watch?  
 5 MR. SETTER: Well, they all get to spend  
 6 the night here with me and they don't get to  
 7 spend it with who they want to. So you have to  
 8 do a little something nice, right?  
 9 MR. STAMP: Okay. Yeah. Wow. Look at  
 10 this. I'll probably do well just to turn this  
 11 over to Rich Setter.  
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: You know what Rich has  
 13 forgot?  
 14 MR. STAMP: What's that?  
 15 MR. CALLAHAN: Three votes. There's three  
 16 votes.  
 17 MS. HAYTHE: These are the only two that  
 18 really count.  
 19 MS. MIELKE: We count. How many golfers  
 20 are here?  
 21 MR. STAMP: Rich, the floor is yours.

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1 MR. SETTER: The floor is mine. Where  
 2 would you like me to start?  
 3 MR. STAMP: Fees, please.  
 4 MR. SETTER: Which one?  
 5 MR. STAMP: Fees.  
 6 MR. SETTER: Fees. Fees is where you'll  
 7 start.  
 8 So we have two fees that you've received  
 9 the sheets on prior. One is the daily fees,  
 10 which are the fees that we charge for people  
 11 who come in on a daily basis to play the golf  
 12 course. And then the other fees are the  
 13 membership fees, which are our annual fees.  
 14 And those fees run from March 1st to  
 15 February 28th.  
 16 We have slight increases in all of the  
 17 fees. Many reasons why. It's pretty obvious.  
 18 Minimal wage increases, 75 cents per  
 19 person. Most of our employees down there are  
 20 minimum wage earners, part-time employees.  
 21 Increases in everything from fertilizers to

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<p>1 chemicals, sand, seed, equipment lease</p> <p>2 increases in fees, golf cart lease increases in</p> <p>3 fees, utilities. I mean it just goes on and</p> <p>4 on.</p> <p>5 So we have to increase those fees to take</p> <p>6 care of the costs that it takes to operate the</p> <p>7 golf course.</p> <p>8 When I increase fees there, I don't do it</p> <p>9 halfheartedly. Golf is a luxury. We don't</p> <p>10 have to play golf. It's not like going to the</p> <p>11 doctor, the lawyer, insurance agent, where you</p> <p>12 have to have those things. This is an amenity</p> <p>13 for the county, and I want to try and keep it</p> <p>14 as reasonable as possible so people will feel</p> <p>15 comfortable coming out there and playing on a</p> <p>16 daily basis.</p> <p>17 So we do have to do this to operate the</p> <p>18 business effectively, but it doesn't come with</p> <p>19 an easy hand to raise some of those fees.</p> <p>20 Any questions on any of the fee structures</p> <p>21 there?</p>	<p>1 \$2,900 rate. For the same thing at River</p> <p>2 Marsh, it's \$3,595. And for the same thing at</p> <p>3 Queenstown, it's \$4,600. So you can see we're</p> <p>4 considerably less than those others. And in my</p> <p>5 mind, I think we put just as good of a product</p> <p>6 out there as those other two places.</p> <p>7 MS. MIELKE: Thank you.</p> <p>8 MR. STEPP: You start first.</p> <p>9 MR. LESHHER: Just we've seen over the last</p> <p>10 several years all that you have done, both to</p> <p>11 upgrade the experience at the golf course and</p> <p>12 also, frankly, to run a more effective business</p> <p>13 there, to cut costs.</p> <p>14 And this is a modest step in that</p> <p>15 direction. And thank you for being attentive</p> <p>16 to that.</p> <p>17 MR. SETTER: You're welcome.</p> <p>18 MR. STEPP: And to just kind of kick off</p> <p>19 right where Pete left off here, you do an</p> <p>20 incredible job out there, anything from the</p> <p>21 junior PGA to just the maintenance of the</p>
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<p>1 MR. CALLAHAN: The only one I have, so the</p> <p>2 top one on the very beginning. During the</p> <p>3 weekdays, it's 65 and weekends 75?</p> <p>4 MR. SETTER: Uh-huh.</p> <p>5 MR. CALLAHAN: So what did it go to?</p> <p>6 MR. SETTER: It went from 60 to 65 and 70</p> <p>7 to 75, \$5 increase.</p> <p>8 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Got you.</p> <p>9 MS. MIELKE: Can you explain how your</p> <p>10 rates compare with the rates of the other two</p> <p>11 golf courses that are local?</p> <p>12 MR. SETTER: Sure. So when we look at</p> <p>13 these rates, the first thing I do is I look at</p> <p>14 River Marsh Golf Club down in Cambridge at the</p> <p>15 Hyatt and see where their rate structure is.</p> <p>16 And I also look at Queenstown Harbor down in</p> <p>17 Queenstown to see where they're structured.</p> <p>18 And we make sure that we come in under</p> <p>19 those two, as our competitors. For example, on</p> <p>20 the membership rates, for a full single</p> <p>21 membership at our place, we're proposing a</p>	<p>1 course.</p> <p>2 Keep me honest here. At one point, we</p> <p>3 were ranked one of the top in the nation as far</p> <p>4 as public courses?</p> <p>5 MR. SETTER: We were. When the course</p> <p>6 opened back in the mid '70s and from the mid</p> <p>7 '70s all the way through to the late '90s, Hog</p> <p>8 Neck Golf Course was one of the top 25 public</p> <p>9 golf courses in the entire country that you</p> <p>10 could play.</p> <p>11 Now, with a big boom of courses in the</p> <p>12 late '90s and 2000s, we fell off those</p> <p>13 rankings, but it's still a very high quality</p> <p>14 golf course.</p> <p>15 MR. STEPP: And those capital investments,</p> <p>16 like you said, the irrigation and the pavilion</p> <p>17 updates, I mean what a great facility we have.</p> <p>18 So thank you for that.</p> <p>19 MR. SETTER: Thank you.</p> <p>20 MR. CALLAHAN: And just a note here. The</p> <p>21 Talbot residents I see in red here, is 50 and</p>

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1 65?

2 MR. SETTER: Correct.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

4 MR. SETTER: Again, trying to be mindful

5 of our citizens here, the amenity that we have,

6 their tax money goes into that.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. So that's really

8 important for them to know that we're trying to

9 really look out for the people that live here,

10 too.

11 MR. SETTER: Correct.

12 MR. STEPP: You need a motion?

13 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. Do you want to do

14 each one of them?

15 MR. STAMP: Please.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. No problem.

17 MS. MIELKE: So moved.

18 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Do I have a second?

19 MR. STEPP: I'll second it.

20 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Got a motion and

21 second to go ahead and bump these fees up a

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1 little bit. Madam Secretary, could you call

2 the vote.

3 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

4 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

5 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

6 MR. STEPP: Aye.

7 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.

8 MR. LESHNER: Aye.

9 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

10 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

11 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

12 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

14 MR. STAMP: So next item Rich is going to

15 ask you for, and I'll try not to steal your

16 thunder too much, but he's requesting Council's

17 approval to enter a lease agreement with Finch

18 Turf Equipment, John Deere, to begin in

19 November 2023. Rich needs to start early

20 because of the delay in being able to obtain

21 this equipment.

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1 Total of three quotes were received, and

2 Turf Equipment was the lowest.

3 The new lease agreement would be a fair

4 market value lease for a term of 60 months in

5 the amount of \$369,859.40.

6 Again, he's requesting approval now

7 because there's a need for a lead time. This

8 would be an FY24 budget.

9 And he is here to answer any further

10 questions on the matter.

11 MR. SETTER: So just to clarify, the

12 equipment that we use on the golf course to

13 maintain the golf course, we lease that

14 equipment. Purchasing it and how much wear and

15 tear it takes is just not a good business

16 practice.

17 And our current lease with Jacobson

18 Equipment expires in November of this year.

19 It's about a year lead to get this stuff.

20 So we're trying to stay out in front of it so

21 that we don't get to a point where we can't

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1 maintain the golf course to the ability we need

2 to.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Any questions?

4 MS. MIELKE: No questions.

5 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Do I have a motion?

6 MS. MIELKE: I'll move.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

8 MR. LESHNER: Second.

9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and

10 second to go ahead and lease this equipment.

11 Madam Secretary, could you call the vote,

12 please.

13 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

14 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

15 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

16 MR. STEPP: Aye.

17 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.

18 MR. LESHNER: Aye.

19 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

20 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

21 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

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1 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 2 MR. STAMP: Finally, Rich is going to talk  
 3 to you about a creative solution.  
 4 So obviously, those of you who have been  
 5 out at Hog Neck Golf Course at night know that  
 6 there is a lighting issue, generally speaking,  
 7 but certainly in the parking lot.  
 8 But Rich was able to work with others on  
 9 our team to identify some light poles that are  
 10 going to be decommissioned in the Black and  
 11 Decker facility.  
 12 So he's going to be asking you tonight to  
 13 approve a lighting project for the parking lot  
 14 at Hog Neck Golf Course.  
 15 The project will repurpose nine 30-foot  
 16 light poles from the Talbot County Business  
 17 Center property. The golf course has FY23  
 18 budgeted funds of \$75,000 for this project.  
 19 The quote from Must Go Lighting, which  
 20 he's recommending, is \$83,707. He believes  
 21 that he can cover it in his budget. We've

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1 looked at that, and we agree.  
 2 So he is here to have your permission to  
 3 move forward with this project. And he can  
 4 answer more questions.  
 5 MR. SETTER: So we're a sun up to sun down  
 6 business currently. And with the new pavilion,  
 7 we'd like to be able to sell events into the  
 8 evening hours. And we need to get the lighting  
 9 out there for safety purposes.  
 10 We are repurposing some of the light poles  
 11 to help save some money. Taking those from the  
 12 Black and Decker building, nine 30-foot poles  
 13 and bringing them over to the golf course.  
 14 And I may be able to have some additional  
 15 savings, too, because my good friend back here  
 16 behind me, Brian Moore, has said he's willing  
 17 to help me out there, too, a little bit. So  
 18 we'll see what I can do to shave off any of  
 19 that overage also.  
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: So question. Is all do we  
 21 have is nine or is there more?

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1 MR. SETTER: There's nine.  
 2 MR. CALLAHAN: There's only nine?  
 3 MR. SETTER: The main parking lot  
 4 structure, which you know runs down. There's  
 5 going to be five light poles down through that  
 6 area.  
 7 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.  
 8 MR. SETTER: And then the area of the  
 9 parking lot, which heads down towards the  
 10 dumpsters there, there's three that would go in  
 11 there.  
 12 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.  
 13 MR. SETTER: And one additional pole over  
 14 in the small parking area by the pavilion.  
 15 That will cover all that parking lot lighting  
 16 that we need out there.  
 17 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good. Because when  
 18 you had that awesome party out there this  
 19 winter, I mean it definitely was dark.  
 20 MR. SETTER: And if you remember, we had  
 21 to rent two light towers.

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1 MR. CALLAHAN: I know you did.  
 2 MR. SETTER: To light it up out there.  
 3 They're not cheap on a regular basis to do  
 4 that. So this definitely solves that problem.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: That's great. But I was  
 6 just curious, though. When we're taking all  
 7 the lights down, there's only nine?  
 8 MR. SETTER: Correct. No. At the Black  
 9 and Decker building, there's way more than  
 10 nine.  
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Is it?  
 12 MR. SETTER: Oh, yeah. Way, way more. I  
 13 didn't get a full count, but there's probably  
 14 25 to 30 light poles over there. We just need  
 15 nine of them.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: So not to get hung up on  
 17 the light thing, that might be something that  
 18 we think about keeping some. Because actually  
 19 coming down that road is very dark, too. I'm  
 20 just saying out loud that might be something we  
 21 build off of.

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1 MR. SETTER: Correct.

2 MR. CALLAHAN: Down the road going out.

3 MR. SETTER: Yeah. I believe that, I

4 don't want to speak out of school, but I think

5 there might have been some talk, too, about

6 maybe the new Sheriff's Office maybe using some

7 of those, also.

8 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. We'll keep you busy,

9 Brian, out there. So it might be something.

10 Okay.

11 Any other questions, Council? Okay.

12 MR. STEPP: I love the idea, love the fact

13 that we can repurpose them, and I definitely

14 think it helps set us up long-term. I know

15 some of the conversation we had about some of

16 the long-term plans out to the golf course, I

17 think it helps set those up. And all good

18 things for the county.

19 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. Great. Mr. Leshner.

20 MR. LESHNER: I move approval.

21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay.

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1 MS. HAYTHE: Second.

2 MS. MIELKE: Second.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We've got a motion

4 and two seconds I think. Madam Secretary,

5 could you call the vote, please.

6 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

8 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

9 MR. STEPP: Aye.

10 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.

11 MR. LESHNER: Aye.

12 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

13 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

14 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

15 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: And once again, we've had a

17 lot of phenomenal department heads here. And

18 you know, we want to include you. That's for

19 sure. Because in the last two, three years

20 that you've taken things over, you know, you've

21 done a phenomenal job out there and your staff.

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1 You really, really have.

2 I mean what you did with, you know, the

3 pavilion is spectacular. And I hope we get --

4 we should be able to get a lot of people to

5 rent that, that's for sure, because you've done

6 a great job.

7 MR. SETTER: Thank you.

8 MS. MIELKE: There's more to come with the

9 pavilion.

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. I know it.

11 Rich, you're doing a great job out there.

12 It's just such a -- going down Route 50 and,

13 you know, you're such a big pillar with the

14 golf course here and the ice rink and we're

15 getting ready to start the gymnasium over

16 there, too. So we've got a lot of stuff going

17 on over there, you and Preston. So you guys

18 are doing a great job.

19 MR. SETTER: Thank you.

20 MR. CALLAHAN: Really appreciate it.

21 MR. SETTER: Thanks for letting me get

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1 ahead of Mr. Clarke. That's never happened

2 before.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: I know it.

4 MR. SETTER: This is like Christmas for

5 me.

6 MR. CALLAHAN: Well, it's close. It's

7 Valentine's Day. It's close.

8 MR. STAMP: Thank you, Rich.

9 MR. SETTER: Thanks, everyone.

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Appreciate it.

11 MR. STAMP: And Council, I'd like to

12 invite Brian Moore up. And as Brian comes up,

13 I would just like to announce to the public

14 that, as you know, Council, you approved. We

15 just finished a reorganization.

16 Mr. Warren Edwards is going to be

17 retiring, our superintendent of roads. We took

18 the opportunity to evaluate the process, and we

19 were able to consolidate two departments.

20 Brian is now the superintendent of roads

21 and facilities for the county. Brian has over

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1 28 years of service to Talbot County. And for  
 2 those of you that know Brian, he doesn't really  
 3 like to be up here tonight. He's a man of few  
 4 words, but he's very good at getting things  
 5 done.  
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah.  
 7 MR. STAMP: And so I'll say a few things  
 8 for him so he has to say less words.  
 9 But he's here tonight to ask Council  
 10 consideration to award Bid 22-03, reroofing  
 11 sections of the Talbot County Circuit  
 12 Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street.  
 13 As you read in your agenda packet,  
 14 requesting Council approval of this bid and add  
 15 alternate one to the low bidder, AKJ of  
 16 Stevensville, Maryland, in the sum of \$232,500,  
 17 contingent upon permit approval from the Town  
 18 of Easton's Historical Commission.  
 19 A total of five bids were submitted.  
 20 Additionally seeking approval to award add  
 21 alternate two, repainting of the dome roof of

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1 the courthouse, to AKJ in the amount of  
 2 \$14,750.  
 3 There are sufficient funds in the FY23  
 4 budget for both projects.  
 5 Brian is here to give you any more  
 6 information he'd like to and answer any  
 7 questions you have.  
 8 MR. MOORE: I just want to thank everybody  
 9 for their time. Appreciate, Clay, the  
 10 overview.  
 11 It's time to do something with the roof.  
 12 We've done patch repairs.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Can you come up to the  
 14 microphone?  
 15 MR. MOORE: I apologize.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: No problem.  
 17 MR. MOORE: It's just time to do the roof.  
 18 We're repairing -- the roof is 70 years old.  
 19 And it's failing, it's been failing. We've  
 20 been putting it off. We need to move forward  
 21 with this project.

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1 MR. LESHHER: Well, with the proposed  
 2 material, you ought to be able to get a good 50  
 3 years out of the next roof.  
 4 I understand that this award of bid is  
 5 contingent on approval, review and approval by  
 6 the Easton Historical District Commission?  
 7 MR. MOORE: That's correct, yes. This  
 8 would select the contractor and start that  
 9 process.  
 10 MS. MIELKE: What is the difference in the  
 11 lifespan between the artificial slate and  
 12 natural slate? Do you have any sense of that?  
 13 MR. MOORE: I do. The artificial slate,  
 14 which we're proposing, should have about an  
 15 80-year lifespan on it.  
 16 The real slate is about the same, 70 to  
 17 80. But the quality of the slate these days as  
 18 compared, you know -- the slates that we're  
 19 replacing are 70 years old, and they just  
 20 deteriorated to the point and it's -- you're  
 21 not going to get, in my opinion, from

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1 researching it, 70 years on a slate nowadays.  
 2 And it's a safety factor, too. With the  
 3 slates, we've had several incidents with slates  
 4 sliding off the roof. We've had them hit cars  
 5 on Dover Street. We've had some very near  
 6 misses with people. And so it's a bit of a  
 7 safety issue, too.  
 8 And we're eventually going to have to  
 9 replace in the north wing. So we're slowing  
 10 working through that process.  
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Any other questions  
 12 from Council?  
 13 MR. LESHHER: If not, I'll move approval.  
 14 MR. CALLAHAN: I just had one thing. You  
 15 feel pretty comfortable with AKJ?  
 16 The pricing, you know, it's -- I'm looking  
 17 at it here. And it's really good pricing.  
 18 But you're comfortable with that  
 19 fluctuation?  
 20 MR. MOORE: The price does concern me.  
 21 But I have done the research to visit their

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<p>1 jobs. They did a lot of work up to University 2 of Maryland College Park. 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. 4 MR. MOORE: And they spoke very highly of 5 them. Everything I've checked out seemed to 6 work. 7 So we are taking a little bit of a risk 8 because they are considerably the low bid. But 9 all the references have checked out. 10 MR. CALLAHAN: Great. 11 MR. MOORE: And comparable jobs have 12 checked out. 13 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good. 14 MR. MOORE: So I'm having a hard time 15 disqualifying them. So hope for the best and 16 it will work out. 17 MR. CALLAHAN: That sounds good. Okay. 18 MR. LESHHER: With that, I'll move 19 approval. 20 MS. MIELKE: Second. 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and</p>	<p>1 two heads. 2 So really appreciate you sort of taking on 3 that responsibility. You definitely, you 4 definitely earned it. You definitely have the 5 experience to do it. And it's a pleasure 6 working with you. 7 MR. MOORE: I appreciate your support. 8 Thank you, all. 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you, Brian. 10 MR. STAMP: And, Council, last item I 11 have, invite Ray Clarke up here, your county 12 engineer. 13 Ray is here this evening to ask Council's 14 approval to award Bid 22-17, Talbot County Free 15 Library. As you read in your agenda packet, 16 requesting Council approval to award that bid 17 to the low bidder, Daily Computers, in the 18 amount of \$85,048. 19 A total of two bids were received. There 20 are sufficient funds in the FY23 budget for 21 this project.</p>
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<p>1 second to go ahead and award the bid for the 2 roof on the courthouse here. Madam Secretary, 3 could you call the vote, please. 4 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan. 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye. 6 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp. 7 MR. STEPP: Aye. 8 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshher. 9 MR. LESHHER: Aye. 10 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke. 11 MS. MIELKE: Aye. 12 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe. 13 MS. HAYTHE: Aye. 14 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. 15 MR. MOORE: Thank you for your time. 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Hey, Brian, 17 congratulations. And once again, all kudos to 18 all the department heads. You've got two of 19 them now. So I want -- 20 MS. MIELKE: Two heads? 21 MR. CALLAHAN: You got two heads. Yeah,</p>	<p>1 Ray can answer any further questions on 2 this project or add any other information. 3 MR. CLARKE: I did work with the library. 4 The library did hire a consultant to prepare 5 the specifications as well as review the bids. 6 So we're just, in this situation, just 7 assisting the library in this bid process. 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Great, great. Mr. Leshher. 9 MR. LESHHER: Well, I know that this was a 10 project that was discussed and budgeted by the 11 previous Council, was identified as a top 12 priority for the library to update their 13 presentation equipment in the meeting room. 14 They're doing more and more in the way of 15 hybrid meetings, and this will increase their 16 capabilities and really bring them up. I think 17 the technology there is over ten years old now. 18 Giving them the modern meeting facilities that 19 a modern public library ought to have. 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Right. Well said. 21 Anybody, anything? Okay.</p>

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1 MR. LESHER: Then I'll move for approval.  
 2 MS. MIELKE: Second.  
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: We got a motion and second  
 4 to go ahead and buy the new computers for the  
 5 library. Madam Secretary, could you call the  
 6 roll, please.  
 7 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 9 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.  
 10 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 11 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.  
 12 MR. LESHER: Aye.  
 13 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 14 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 15 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.  
 16 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 17 MR. STAMP: Ray, you got off easy tonight.  
 18 MR. CLARKE: I did. Thank you.  
 19 MR. STAMP: I mean again, once again.  
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Once again.  
 21 MR. STAMP: Once again, as the county

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1 manager, one of the best parts of my job is to  
 2 work with such incredible department heads day  
 3 in and day out. They're professionals. They  
 4 work hard. They care for their community. And  
 5 you've seen just a snapshot of them.  
 6 So and Ray is certainly one of those you  
 7 see a lot up here.  
 8 MR. CLARKE: Unfortunately.  
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Thanks a lot, Ray. I  
 10 appreciate everything you're doing.  
 11 MR. CLARKE: No problem, no problem. I  
 12 enjoy it.  
 13 MR. STAMP: Mr. Council President and  
 14 Members of Council, that concludes your county  
 15 manager report for this evening.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. That's great. Good  
 17 job, Mr. Stamp. You've gone a great job  
 18 tonight.  
 19 MR. STAMP: Thank you, sir.  
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup. Okay.  
 21 Public comment. Do we have a list?

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1 MS. MORRIS: Nobody signed up this  
 2 evening.  
 3 MR. CALLAHAN: Nobody signed up. Okay.  
 4 So all right. We got three gentlemen out here.  
 5 Anybody want to come up for public comment?  
 6 MR. BERNARD: I'm fine.  
 7 MR. CALLAHAN: Are you sure?  
 8 MR. BERNARD: Yeah. I went to the meeting  
 9 this morning, the Police Accountability  
 10 meeting.  
 11 MR. CALLAHAN: Well, come on up here.  
 12 MR. BERNARD: It was excellent.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. All right.  
 14 MR. BERNARD: They're going to work  
 15 together.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Good. That's great. Well,  
 17 I'd like for you to come up here so people can  
 18 hear what you said because that's very  
 19 important. Yes. Tell everybody who you are  
 20 now.  
 21 MR. BERNARD: Yeah. I'm Terrence Bernard,

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1 citizen.  
 2 The meeting that I went to this morning, I  
 3 went to the first one. And the second one here  
 4 went really well.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Tell them what kind of  
 6 meeting you were at.  
 7 MR. BERNARD: The Police Accountability  
 8 meeting, the commissioners. Yeah, it went  
 9 well.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: That's great.  
 11 MR. BERNARD: They're planning how they're  
 12 going to perform and what their objectives are  
 13 and both sides. They asked each other across  
 14 the means there what do you think about this,  
 15 what do you need from me, what can I give you  
 16 back, what type of form do you want. And it  
 17 came down to the form wasn't important; it's  
 18 more the substance that you're paying attention  
 19 and documenting everything appropriately. And  
 20 there's no need to go back to it.  
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: That's great.

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1 MR. BERNARD: Yeah. It was curiosity  
 2 upfront when this Police Accountability Board  
 3 was coming to be, being a resident here in  
 4 Easton. And now I'm comfortable with it. The  
 5 two sides are ready to work together.  
 6 MR. CALLAHAN: Well, that's great.  
 7 MR. BERNARD: And get it done correctly  
 8 for us.  
 9 MR. CALLAHAN: Well, we really appreciate  
 10 you being involved and telling us all about  
 11 that.  
 12 MR. BERNARD: You're welcome.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: That's important to the  
 14 community, too, to throw a positive message on  
 15 that, because that's what we want. That's what  
 16 it's supposed to be doing.  
 17 MR. BERNARD: Yes.  
 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah.  
 19 MR. BERNARD: And that's the way, to  
 20 attend. Thank you.  
 21 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. Okay. All

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1 right. Anybody else? Jess?  
 2 MS. MORRIS: I'm good. Happy Valentine's  
 3 Day.  
 4 MR. STAMP: Very nice.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: All right. Let's start off  
 6 with Council comments. Start off with you,  
 7 Mr. Stepp.  
 8 MR. STEPP: Just kind of as usual. I mean  
 9 just a lot of things Council has been busy at  
 10 over the last, since we last met on, what was  
 11 it, the 24th of January.  
 12 I was in attendance at the Local Emergency  
 13 Planning Committee meeting. I had a great  
 14 meeting there. We had the National Weather  
 15 Service come in and speak to us.  
 16 We had our Public Works 2023 Report of the  
 17 Report thanks to the great efforts from Ray and  
 18 team.  
 19 Met with the towns, what was that, last  
 20 Tuesday I believe already now. Great meeting  
 21 to see where our municipalities are doing.

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1 So a lot of great things happening in  
 2 between these every-two-week meetings that we  
 3 have here. So a lot of great things in the  
 4 county.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: That's good. Mr. Vice  
 6 President.  
 7 MR. LESHER: Yeah. I will be on Capitol  
 8 Hill in two weeks for Museums Advocacy Day. I  
 9 have yet to have my final meeting schedule for  
 10 that day with our Congressional offices. But  
 11 I've requested early time so that I could be  
 12 back here for the workshop with Easton  
 13 Utilities. If there is anything that could  
 14 make me late, I will communicate that as soon  
 15 as I know it.  
 16 Reflecting on what Mr. Stepp said in the  
 17 beginning, the beginning of a Council term is  
 18 full of opportunities to learn anew about the  
 19 good work accomplished by our county  
 20 departments and agencies. And the past three  
 21 weeks have been no exception.

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1 With my first look at our Repurposing  
 2 Center on the St. Michael's Road, an  
 3 orientation for the services provided by the  
 4 University of Maryland Agricultural Extension,  
 5 and a tour of our Detention Center, as we  
 6 mentioned earlier, just this afternoon. But  
 7 perhaps the most impactful in this past period  
 8 was our meeting last week with the Talbot Fire  
 9 and Rescue Association with representatives of  
 10 our seven volunteer fire companies.  
 11 Several of these companies face serious  
 12 challenges in recruitment and retention of  
 13 volunteers. And significantly, they brought  
 14 concrete proposals forward, including  
 15 first-time homebuyers assistance for qualified  
 16 active volunteers and income tax assistance  
 17 reflecting one that is offered by the State and  
 18 that can also be offered by the county.  
 19 There can be no doubt that this and other  
 20 proposals will come at a cost to Talbot County  
 21 taxpayers if implemented, but we will have to

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1 weigh is that cost perhaps less than the cost  
 2 of not taking one or more of those actions. So  
 3 I'm posed to hear those, more from them, and to  
 4 give them serious consideration.  
 5 MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you, Mr. Leshner.  
 6 Ms. Mielke.  
 7 MS. MIELKE: I'd just like to wish  
 8 everybody a Happy Valentine's Day and let's go  
 9 eat chocolate.  
 10 MR. CALLAHAN: There you go.  
 11 Ms. Haythe.  
 12 MS. HAYTHE: I second that.  
 13 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Well, I'll end it.  
 14 I know we've had a great meeting, a lot of  
 15 information, great department heads tonight.  
 16 It was great.  
 17 I want to commend you guys up here, too,  
 18 Jess and Susan and Clay and Patrick. Really  
 19 appreciate all the hard work you're doing. You  
 20 make us look good. And I keep saying that all  
 21 the time, but you really do and look out for

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1 us.  
 2 So other than that, Mr. Leshner, you want  
 3 to go ahead and wrap things up for us.  
 4 MR. LESHNER: The County Council's next  
 5 meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 28th,  
 6 beginning at six o'clock p.m. The Council will  
 7 be convening at three o'clock p.m. for a work  
 8 session with Easton Utilities for an update on  
 9 the Connect Talbot project, and then adjourning  
 10 into closed session to discuss real estate,  
 11 legal, and personnel matters, as listed on that  
 12 statement for closing that meeting.  
 13 Therefore, is there a motion to adjourn  
 14 this meeting and reconvene as noted?  
 15 MS. HAYTHE: So moved.  
 16 MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. We got a motion and  
 17 second. Madam Secretary, could you call the  
 18 vote, please.  
 19 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.  
 20 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.  
 21 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

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1 MR. STEPP: Aye.  
 2 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.  
 3 MR. LESHNER: Aye.  
 4 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.  
 5 MS. MIELKE: Aye.  
 6 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.  
 7 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.  
 8 MR. CALLAHAN: All right. Appreciate it.  
 9 Thanks, guys, for coming out. Appreciate it.  
 10 (Meeting concluded at: 8:09 p.m.)  
 11  
 12  
 13  
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1 STATE OF MARYLAND  
 2 I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and  
 for the State of Maryland, County of Baltimore City,  
 3 do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot  
 County Council Audio, personally appeared before me  
 4 at the time and place herein set according to law,  
 was interrogated by counsel.  
 5  
 I further certify that the examination was  
 6 recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed  
 from my stenographic notes to the within printed  
 7 matter by means of computer-assisted transcription  
 in a true and accurate manner.  
 8  
 I further certify that the stipulations  
 9 contained herein were entered into by counsel in my  
 presence.  
 10  
 I further certify that I am not of counsel  
 11 to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel,  
 nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way  
 12 interested in the outcome of this action.  
 13 AS WITNESS my hand Notarial Seal this 21st  
 day of February, 2023, in Easton, MD.  
 14  
  
 15  
 16 Diane Houlihan  
 Notary Public  
 17  
 18  
 19  
 20 My commission expires September 16, 2025  
 21

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