



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

August 12, 2025

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

- I. Agenda – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Agenda of Tuesday, August 12, 2025.
- II. Minutes – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, July 8, 2025, and Tuesday, July 22, 2025.
- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, July 29, 2025, Tuesday, August 5, 2025, and Tuesday, August 12, 2025.
- IV. Introduction of Amendment to Administrative Resolution Establishing a Senior Citizens Task Force: The Clerk read the administrative resolution into the record, and the amendment was brought forward for introduction. Mr. Leshner stated that, in his opinion, the proposed amendment appears to follow the discussion which took place at the work session with regard to including additional members in the task force. The amendment was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp. The Council approved the amendment to the Administrative Resolution Establishing a Senior Citizens Task Force by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

The Council approved the Amended Administrative Resolution Establishing a Senior Citizens Task Force by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

The Amended Administrative Resolution is effective immediately.

V. County Manager's Report:

- A. Local Emergency Planning Committee – Requested Council approval for the appointment of the following individuals to three-year terms on the Local Emergency Planning Committee:

Michael Copeland, Emergency Preparedness Manager, UMMS Shore Regional Health; Rich Taylor, Public Health Emergency Planner, Talbot County Health Department; Sara Jane Kershaw, Disaster Program Manager, American Red Cross of Delmarva; Raymond Bonner, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Citizen Representative; Mike “Carl” Owens, Talbot County Public Schools; Sarah Kilmon, Talbot County Communications Manager, and Marlin Hayma (State Highway Administration); said terms will expire on August 1, 2028. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the appointments by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- B. Local Emergency Planning Committee – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of the following individuals to three-year terms on the Local Emergency Planning Committee: Dana Meintzer (Fuel Oil representative); Nick Greenhawk, Superintendent of Operations, Easton Utilities (utilities representative); Matthew Spence, WCEI (media representative); Dr. Sharon Pepukayi, Superintendent, Talbot County Public Schools; Micah Risher, Manager, Easton Airport; and Joe Gamble, Talbot County Sheriff (law enforcement representative); said terms will expire on August 1, 2028. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the reappointments by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- C. Weed Control Committee – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Michael Weaver and Lloyd Pahlman to three-year terms on the Weed Control Committee; said terms will expire on July 1, 2028. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the reappointments by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- D. Announcement of Road Closure – Mr. Stamp stated that Goldsborough Neck Road in Easton, between Villa Road and Glebe Road, will be closed for approximately three (3) months, beginning on or about August 18, 2025, until November 17, 2025, in order to complete utility relocation, and culvert and road widening improvements. He stated that a detour route through Mistletoe Drive will be in place; a map and information regarding the closure and detour are available on the County website: www.talbotcountymd.gov.

- E. Update on Regional Medical Center Project – Mr. Stamp stated that the Regional Medical Center Project is progressing nicely. He stated that Talbot County participates as a member of

the Executive Project Team, and is involved with coordinating the upcoming closure of the U.S. Rt. 50 entrance to the Talbot County Community Center, beginning on October 1, 2025. He stated that work on the rear entrance to the Community Center is almost complete and will serve as the main entrance until work on the new regional medical center entrance off Rt. 50 is complete. Once completed, a spur of the entrance will bear off to the Community Center. Work on the regional medical center entrance is anticipated to take approximately two (2) years as the Maryland State Highway Administration will only permit work to be done at Rt. 50 between October and Memorial Day in order to not impede summer traffic.

VI. Request for Motion to Remove from the Table:

Resolution No. 368, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO RECLASSIFY AND REMAP CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 4502 OLD TRAPPE ROAD, TRAPPE, MARYLAND, SHOWN ON TAX MAP 54 AS PARCEL 302 FROM “UNPROGRAMMED” TO “W-1/S-1” IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS PURSUANT TO AN APPLICATION FILED BY BRIAN HAUSE, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for consideration of removal from the table. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe the Council approved removing Resolution No. 368 from the table by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

Ray Clarke, County Engineer, stated that the Council had requested additional information on proposed plans for the property outlined in the resolution. He stated that the Town of Trappe has indicated that there will be one (1) Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) appropriated to the property at the present time; pending approval by the County Council, it would have to go through the Town’s planning and zoning process and the Talbot County Office of Environmental Health would have to confirm that there is enough sewer capacity for each of the EDUs being proposed. Bryce Yelton stated that he and Mr. Clarke had met with the applicant’s attorney regarding the approximately 37-acre property, 27 acres of which could be developed and subdivided. He stated that there are remaining development rights; however, once any subdivision might be proposed, the proposal would be required to go through the Town of Trappe’s zoning requirements related to subdivision regulations. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Yelton and Mr. Clarke. Mr. Clarke stated that it is his understanding that the property owner would not have to come back before the Council for additional EDUs as the property is within the limits of the Town of Trappe. Council discussion again ensued with Mr. Clarke and Mr. Yelton. The Council approved Resolution No. 368 by voting 3 - 2 as follows:

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

Resolution No. 368 is effective immediately.

VII. Eligible for Vote:

Bill No. 1618, A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 190 (ZONING, SUBDIVISION, AND LAND DEVELOPMENT) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSES OF PROVIDING THAT CANNABIS GROWING AND THE PROCESSING OF CANNABIS GROWN ON-SITE SHALL BE PERMITTED USES IN THE AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION (“AC”), COUNTRYSIDE PRESERVATION (“CP”), AND WESTERN RURAL CONSERVATION (“WRC”) ZONING DISTRICTS, PROVIDING THAT THE PROCESSING OF CANNABIS NOT GROWN ON-SITE SHALL BE PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN THE AC, CP, AND WRC ZONING DISTRICTS, AND PROVIDING THAT CANNABIS DISPENSARIES SHALL BE PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN THE LIMITED COMMERCIAL (“LC”), GENERAL COMMERCIAL (“GC”), AND LIMITED INDUSTRIAL (“LI”) ZONING DISTRICTS, EACH SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS, AND DEFINING TERMS ASSOCIATED THEREWITH, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for vote. Prior to the vote, Bryce Yelton, Assistant Planning Officer, stated that the proposed text amendment, if approved, would change the County zoning regulations to permit certain growers, processors, and dispensaries of cannabis in Talbot County as approved by the State of Maryland. Mr. Yelton stated that the Planning Commission, at its meeting on Wednesday, August 6, 2025, discussed Bill No. 1618 and recommended the following changes to the legislation: (1) Separate the Cannabis Grower and Processor, if cannabis grown on-site, to only permit Cannabis Processing by Special Exception; and (2) Change the Minimum Lot Size for both Growers and Processors from 20 acres to 40 acres. Mr. Leshner offered an amendment to the legislation which would address the recommendations of the Planning Commission so that the legislation would read as follows: ***THAT CANNABIS GROWING AND THE PROCESSING OF CANNABIS GROWN ON-SITE SHALL BE A PERMITTED USES IN THE AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION (“AC”), COUNTRYSIDE PRESERVATION (“CP”), AND WESTERN RURAL CONSERVATION (“WRC”) ZONING DISTRICTS, PROVIDING THAT THE PROCESSING OF CANNABIS NOT GROWN ON-SITE SHALL BE PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN THE AC, CP, AND WRC ZONING DISTRICTS, AND PROVIDING THAT CANNABIS DISPENSARIES SHALL BE PERMITTED BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN THE LIMITED COMMERCIAL (“LC”), GENERAL COMMERCIAL (“GC”), AND LIMITED INDUSTRIAL (“LI”) ZONING DISTRICTS, EACH SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS, AND DEFINING TERMS ASSOCIATED THEREWITH;*** the amendment also proposed changing the minimum lot size from 20 to 40 acres. The amendment was introduced by Mr. Leshner and Mr. Stepp as Amendment No. 1. The Council did not approve Amendment No. 1 by voting 2 – 2 – 1 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Nay
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Nay
Ms. Haythe – Abstain

Mr. Stepp offered an amendment which, if approved, would change § 190-26.18(A)(1) Minimum setbacks, and § 190-26.19(A)(1) Minimum setbacks of Bill No. 1618 to read as follows:
500 feet from any lot line of a property containing a pre-existing residential use, unless consent to reduce the setback is obtained from all owners of residential properties within the 500-foot setback. In no event shall the setback be reduced to less than 200 feet. The amendment was introduced by Mr. Leshner and Mr. Stepp as Amendment No. 2 to Bill No. 1618. The Council did not approve Amendment No. 2 by voting 2 -2 -1 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Nay
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Nay
Ms. Haythe - Abstain

Bill No. 1618, as originally introduced, was brought forward for vote. The Council did not approve Bill No. 1618 by voting 1 – 2 – 2 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Nay
Mr. Stepp – Abstain
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Nay
Ms. Haythe – Abstain

Therefore, the provisions of Bill No. 1618 will not become effective.

VIII. Public Hearing:

Bill No. 1619, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND (THE “COUNTY”) TO BORROW NOT MORE THAN SEVEN MILLION EIGHTEEN THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED FORTY-TWO DOLLARS (\$7,018,942) IN ORDER TO FINANCE AND REFINANCE IMPROVEMENTS TO CERTAIN WASTEWATER FACILITIES AND SANITARY DISTRICT FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY AND TO EFFECT SUCH BORROWING BY THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF ONE OR MORE SERIES OF ITS GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS PAYABLE FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO BE LEVIED BY THE COUNTY; EXEMPTING THE BONDS FROM THE PROVISIONS OF SECTIONS 19-205 AND 19-207 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND; AUTHORIZING THE CONSOLIDATION OF SEPARATE SERIES OF BONDS INTO ONE OR MORE BONDS; AUTHORIZING THE REFUNDING OF SUCH BONDS AND RELATING GENERALLY TO THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF SUCH BONDS FOR SUCH PURPOSES was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, Ray Clarke, County Engineer, stated that the resolution is associated with improvements to wastewater facilities for extension of sewer service to the various properties outlined in Resolution No. 235, along Rt. 33 toward St. Michaels. If approved, the legislation would authorize the County to borrow not more than \$7,018,942 to reimburse construction costs related to the financing and refinancing of improvements to various Sanitary District facilities for the sewer extension project, with said costs to be repaid by users. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, Bill No. 1619 was brought to third reader, with the Council voting 5 - 0 as follows:

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

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner and unanimous consent of the Council, a full reading of Bill No. 1619 was waived. The Council approved Bill No. 1619 by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

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

X. Council Comments:

Mr. Stepp No comments.

Mr. Leshner - Mr. Leshner stated that, in his opinion, the Council finds itself in an interesting position figuring out the course forward with regard to regulating cannabis since the State has told the County it must do so but for now the County does not have a plan. He stated that he looks forward to what the Council comes up with. Mr. Leshner provided an update on the detaining of Pastor Daniel Fuentes Espinal, an Easton religious leader, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), accused of overstaying his visa and that the event made national headlines. He stated that Pastor Espinal had been separated from his family and is believed to now be housed at an ICE facility in Louisiana. Mr. Leshner stated that he had been in contact with Congressman Harris' office and will continue to inquire and follow up on the matter.

Ms. Mielke - Ms. Mielke stated that she was pleased that the administrative resolution establishing a Seniors Task Force was approved by the Council and that she looks forward to being on the task force and to working on issues facing homeless senior citizens in Talbot County.

Ms. Haythe - No comments.

Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan stated that the Council will be attending the MACo (Maryland Association of Counties) Summer Conference for the remainder of the week and noted that the Conference is a good learning and networking opportunity.

Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council voted to reconvene on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, at 3:30 p.m. in Open Session and immediately adjourn into Closed Session as listed on the statement for closing that meeting, then for the regularly scheduled meeting at 5:00 p.m. by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

The meeting ended at 5:43 p.m.

The transcript of the Tuesday, August 12, 2025, County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

- XI. Work Session to Discuss Senior Citizens Task Force Administrative Resolution As Introduced on July 1, 2025 – The Council met with representatives of the Commission on Aging, Talbot County Department of Social Services, Talbot Interfaith Shelter, Talbot County Health Department, and Patrick Thomas, County Attorney, to discuss the administrative resolution proposing to establish a Senior Citizens Task Force. The Council had introduced the administrative resolution at its meeting on July 1, 2025, and requested that a work session be held prior to vote on the administrative resolution for the purpose of learning more about the needs facing the senior homeless population and establishing a plan to assist the senior homeless population of Talbot County. Members of the Council in attendance were Vice President Pete Leshner and Council members Keasha Hayth (via telephone); Lynn Mielke, and Dave Stepp. Representatives of the various agencies which serve the senior citizen population in Talbot County in attendance included Rachel Smith, Chairperson, Talbot County Commission on the Aging; Kimberly Mitchell, R.N., Talbot County Health Department Senior Care Program; Dr. Fahmi Fahmi, Talbot County Health Officer; Lee Newcomb, LCSW-C, Adult Services Social Worker, Talbot County Department of Social Services, Julie Lowe, Executive Director, Talbot Interfaith Shelter; and Andy Hollis, President & CEO, Delmarva Community Services, Inc. Mr. Thomas stated that the administrative resolution had been drafted at the request of Ms. Mielke for the purpose of making recommendations to the Council regarding services needed for the homeless senior population in Talbot County including housing, transportation, healthcare and meals. Mr. Thomas outlined the membership of the proposed Senior Citizens Task Force and stated that the administrative resolution incorporated membership guidelines as well as administrative and legal support. Ms. Mielke stated that information and statistical data provided to the Council by the Commission on Aging and Talbot Interfaith Shelter, outlined, in her opinion, why a Senior Citizens Task Force should be established. Council discussion ensued with the representatives of the various agencies in attendance regarding factors which contribute to the homelessness of senior citizens in the county, including the cost of housing and healthcare, food insecurity, and mental illness. The representatives outlined the role of their respective organizations in assisting homeless senior citizens in Talbot County and the challenges faced in the provision of assistance. All in attendance agreed that a more multi-faceted approach to the issue of homeless senior citizens in Talbot County was warranted, and Council requested that Mr. Thomas amend the administrative resolution to also include representatives from Mid-Shore Behavioral Health and the Talbot County Mobile Integrated Health Program. The amended resolution will be scheduled for Council's consideration at their August 12, 2025, meeting.

XII. Summary of Closed Session Held on August 12, 2025:

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

Time of closed session:	4:00 p.m. Recess: 4:45 p.m. Reconvene: 4:48 p.m. End 5:00 p.m.
Place of closed session:	County Council Office
Purpose of the closed session:	To consider various matters as set forth in the statement for closing the meeting


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


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


Abstaining: None
Absent: None

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

Topic Description	Statutory Authority	Reason for Closed Session Discussion	Persons Present	Action Taken
To discuss appointments to various County boards and committees	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Public discussion would discourage individuals from volunteering to serve	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
To discuss personnel matter in Parks and Recreation	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Discussion involves a specific individual	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
To provide legal advice regarding opioid settlement	GP § 3-305(b)(7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	Council concurred with recommendation
To provide legal advice regarding project before the Public Service Commission – Case No. 9789	GP § 3-305(b)(7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
To provide legal advice regarding legislative procedural matter	GP § 3-305(b)(7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action

		TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT 7/29/2025	
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK			
OPERATING FUNDS AT		7/22/2025	\$ 52,775,729.22
Total ADP Payroll PPE 7/04/2025			(1,056,864.63)
Community Center Sales & Use Tax Due 7/20/2025			(46.46)
Golf Course Sales & Use Tax Due 7/20/2025			(4,344.31)
Roads Sales & Use Tax Due 7/20/2025			(1,042.86)
Returned Paymentus Payments			(6,557.25)
Returned Check #1107			(1,020.44)
Talbot County Owned Properties /Sewer			(947.88)
Deposits			13,169,690.39
Checks			(199,901.02)
ACH Disbursements			(2,182,530.58)
EFT's			(608,581.33)
Wire Transfers			(925,868.91)
OPERATING FUNDS AT		7/29/2025	\$ 60,957,713.94
PETTY CASH FUNDS			\$ 18,105.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		4.32%	\$ 23,412,561.77
Bayvanguard Bank		4.15%	\$ 11,254,141.36
Shore United Money Market Account		4.33%	\$ 62,993,427.18
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL			\$ 97,678,235.31
TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS			\$ 158,635,949.25

		TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT 8/5/2025	
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK			
OPERATING FUNDS AT		7/29/2025	\$ 52,775,729.22
Returned Paymentus Payments			(8,777.89)
Deposits			25,700,239.30
Checks			(185,221.21)
ACH Disbursements			(2,352,691.66)
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/05/2025	\$ 75,929,277.76
PETTY CASH FUNDS			\$ 18,105.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		4.33%	\$ 23,412,561.77
Bayvanguard Bank		4.15%	\$ 11,254,141.36
Shore United Money Market Account		4.33%	\$ 62,993,427.18
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL			\$ 97,678,235.31
<u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u>			<u>\$ 173,607,513.07</u>

		TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT 8/12/2025	
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK			
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/5/2025	\$ 75,929,277.76
Returned Paymentus Payments			(40,070.60)
Returned Checks #6553, #144, #114668 & #538			(12,792.36)
Deposits			9,294,331.78
Checks			(205,126.21)
ACH Disbursements			(1,449,640.00)
EFT's			(50,717.31)
Wire Transfers			(1,939,088.12)
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/12/2025	\$ 81,526,174.94
PETTY CASH FUNDS			\$ 18,105.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		4.31%	\$ 23,412,561.77
Bayvanguard Bank		4.15%	\$ 11,254,141.36
Shore United Money Market Account		4.33%	\$ 62,993,427.18
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL			\$ 97,678,235.31
<u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u>			<u>\$ 179,204,410.25</u>