



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

August 26, 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 26, 2025.
- II. Minutes – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, August 12, 2025.
- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, August 19, 2025, and Tuesday, August 26, 2025.
- IV. Proclamation: Children's Eye Health and Safety Month – August 2025 – The Clerk read a proclamation into the record which spoke of the importance of children's eye health and good vision, the role it plays in educational success and social development, the importance of recognizing and correcting vision issues in children and removing barriers to restoring vision for those children who cannot afford to do so. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the proclamation by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

Dr. Fahmi Fahmi, Talbot County Health Officer, and Megan Greenwood, BSN, RN, Director of Prevention, Preparedness and School Health Services, Talbot County Health Department, briefed the Council on the first Global Vision Clinic held in April 2025. Dr. Fahmi spoke of his personal experience as a child with vision issues and how being fitted with glasses changed the trajectory of his life. Ms. Greenwood spoke of the need for the services for Talbot County school children following discontinuation of a vision voucher program the Health Department had previously received through the National Association of School Nurses. She stated that the loss of the voucher program prompted the idea of a clinic. The clinic, sponsored through the generosity of Kevin White, founder of Global Vision 2020, local optometrists, an ophthalmologist, and volunteers from Talbot County Public Schools and the Health Department, provided 29 students in Talbot County Public Schools with comprehensive eye exams and eyeglasses, at no charge to the students. Additional clinics may be planned in the future.

Mr. Stepp presented the Proclamation to Dr. Fahmi, Ms. Greenwood, the physician volunteers and other volunteers in attendance.

- V. Update on Talbot Goes Purple Initiative and Festival of Hope (Friday, September 5, 2025) – Maj. Steve Elliott, Talbot County Sheriff’s Office; Kelley Callaghan, Executive Director, Grace Street Recovery – Maj. Elliott expressed his appreciation to the Council and the Talbot County community for their support of the Talbot Goes Purple initiative, which is in its 9th year. Talbot Goes Purple is a community substance use prevention initiative begun by the Talbot County Sheriff’s Office which focuses on educating the community, particularly youth, their parents and caregivers, about the dangers of drugs. Talbot Goes Purple also provides resources and tips on talking about substance use. Maj. Elliott commended Ms. Callaghan for her assistance in keeping the program going. He then briefed the Council on upcoming community events in support of Talbot Goes Purple, including the Festival of Hope on Friday, September 5, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Anchor Church on Goldsborough Street in Easton; the event includes free food, live music, a dunking booth, bouncy house and games, K-9 demonstrations, resource tables and a memorial to those lost to substance use. He stated that Ms. Callaghan has been working to get Talbot Goes Purple clubs up and running for the new school year in both the public and private schools in the county; other outreach efforts include a Resource Fair at Easton High School in October, “purple games” of football and volleyball at Easton High School, and soccer games at St. Michaels High School. Ms. Callaghan stated that she is working to coordinate with schools in neighboring counties on prevention efforts to “go purple” through various activities to get the message across to youth of the dangers of substance use. Maj. Elliott stated that one matter Talbot Goes Purple wants to promote this year is the Good Samaritan Law which, in his opinion, is important for both adults and youth to know – that if someone is having an episode, they can call the police without fear of retaliation or getting into trouble themselves. More information can be found at www.talbotgoespurple.org.
- VI. County Manager’s Report:
- A. Administrative Charging Committee – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Jennifer Williams to a two-year term on the Administrative Charging Committee; said term will expire on August 1, 2027. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 4 – 0 – 1 as follows:
- Mr. Callahan – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Abstain
Ms. Haythe – Aye
- B. Local Emergency Planning Committee – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Samuel Harrison and Holly Wahl to three-year terms on the Local Emergency Planning Committee as representatives of the University of Maryland Extension for Talbot County and the Town of Oxford, respectively; said terms will expire on August 11, 2028. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, 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

- C. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Tim Kearns to a four-year term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board as a representative of the Town of Oxford; said term will expire on July 1, 2029. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- D. Police Accountability Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of William Belding to a four-year term on the Police Accountability Board as a representative of the Oxford District; said term will expire on August 1, 2029. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- E. Tourism Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Judy Bixler to the Tourism Board as a representative of the Town of Oxford; said term will expire on July 1, 2029. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- F. Request for Letter of Support – Requested Council approval of the Talbot Watermen Association's request for a letter in support of the Oyster Recovery Agreement, which, in the past has provided funding for the mitigation, critical replenishment and restoration of Maryland's oyster sanctuaries. Funding for the program had previously been provided through the Maryland Port Administration. No County funds are required. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the letter of support by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- G. Request from Easton Airport – Micah Risher, Manager, Easton Airport, stated that on July 1, 2025, he had requested to apply for an Airport Infrastructure Project (AIP) grant from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in a sum up to \$17,000,000 for a revised, reduced scope for Package 3 of the airfield modernization project; Council had approved the request. He stated that the FAA has verbally notified the Airport that funding in the sum of \$8,713,750.55 has been approved. Mr. Risher requested to accept the Federal Aviation Administration Airport Improvement Program (FAA AIP) funding which, upon written notification of the grant award, will be used for the Base Bid of Bid No. 25-11 to provide new primary electrical infrastructure, new lighting, new regulators, and a new airfield lighting control system for the Air Traffic Control Tower. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved acceptance of the FAA AIP funding by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

Mr. Risher stated that grant funding for Add Alternate 5 will be requested from the State.

- H. Bid No. 25-11, PACKAGE 3: IMPROVE RSA AND EXTEND RUNWAY 4-22 EASTON/NEWNAM FIELD AIRPORT (ESN) – EASTON, TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND (Base Bid and Add Alternate 5 only) – Mr. Risher requested Council approval to award the Base Bid and Add Alternate 5 for Bid 25-11 to the lowest bidder, David A. Bramble, Inc., in the sum of \$8,220,260, contingent upon formal notification of the FAA AIP grant award. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the award, with the condition as outlined, by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- I. Request from Easton Airport – Mr. Risher requested Council approval of Airport Consultant, AECOM's Price Proposal dated July 18, 2025, for Professional Engineering and Construction Phase Services for Package 3: Improve RSA and Extend Runway 4-22 (Construction) in the sum of \$837,166 for the Base Bid and Add Alternate 5 only of Bid 25-11, contingent upon formal notification of the FAA AIP grant award. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the Price Proposal as submitted, with the condition as outlined, by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- J. Request from Department of Emergency Services – Brian LeCates, Director, Department of Emergency Services requested Council approval to utilize FY26 Capital funding for the purchase of a new Horton ambulance on a Ford F-550 chassis at a cost of \$363,969.00; the new ambulance will replace an aging ambulance in the fleet and the purchase will be made using the HGAC (Houston-Galveston Area Council) cooperative buying contract. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the purchase by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- K. Request from Department of Emergency Services – Mr. LeCates requested Council approval to purchase a new 2024 Ford F-350 truck from the lowest of three (3) proposers, Preston Automotive Group, in the sum of \$55,582.00. Mr. LeCates stated that the vehicle will serve as a pool vehicle for emergency services and will be capable of towing the Department's largest trailers; funding for the purchase was approved in the FY26 Budget. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the purchase by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- L. Request from Department of Emergency Services – Mr. LeCates requested Council approval to enter into an agreement with Flex Financial, a division of Stryker Medical Sales, for the purchase, service and maintenance of medical services equipment including new LP-35 heart monitors/defibrillators, stair chairs, and power stretchers at an annual cost of \$198,798.63 for the next seven (7) years; funding for the purchase was approved in the FY26 Budget. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the request by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

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

- VIII. Council Comments:

- Mr. Stepp Mr. Stepp stated that he hoped everyone has a safe, happy Labor Day weekend and that they get to spend time with family and friends. He wished all students, from elementary school through college, a great school year as they return to school.
- Mr. Leshner - Mr. Leshner stated that he had recently had the privilege of touring County projects and facilities with members of the Public Works Advisory Board, including the new Public Safety facility where the future 9-1-1 Center will be located. He stated that, in his opinion, a lot of work has gone into that facility, along with a lot of good coordination and planning by Mr. LeCates and County staff. Mr. Leshner stated that the group also toured the Biosolids Facility and the Royal Oak Pump Station, which is part of the sewer infrastructure for the St. Michaels Collection System, and the construction progress on, in his opinion, the exciting project at the St. Michaels Library which is expanding. He stated that, in his opinion, all the projects are important work to better serve the citizens of Talbot County. Mr. Leshner concluded his comments by stating that he and several Council colleagues and staff had attended the MACo (Maryland Association of Counties) Summer Conference where the Council had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Maryland Department of Transportation and to advocate for local transportation needs. He stated that the Council specifically mentioned the Airport Modernization Project at Easton Airport which is partially supported by the State, and funding for oyster recovery, for which the Council authorized a letter of support this evening.
- Ms. Mielke - Ms. Mielke stated that the Planning Commission is holding public meetings at various locations throughout the county where citizens will have an opportunity to learn about the update to the Comprehensive Plan and to provide input. Ms. Mielke encouraged citizens to attend the sessions, listen and to provide their thoughts and comments.
- Ms. Haythe - Ms. Haythe expressed her appreciation to the Department of Emergency Services for the work they do in the community. She then recounted a recent personal experience when a family member required emergency services and stated that, in her opinion, the employees of the Talbot County Department of Emergency Services are a remarkable team. Ms. Haythe concluded her comments by again expressing her appreciation to the Department of Emergency Services for their service to the community.
- Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan concurred with Mr. Stepp's comments and stated that he hoped everyone has a safe, happy Labor Day weekend.

Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council voted to reconvene on Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 2:30 p.m. for a work session to discuss the Claiborne water system with representatives from the Health Department, Department of Public Works and the Claiborne community; and to convene 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 5:44 p.m.

The transcript of the Tuesday, August 26, 2025, County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

IX. Summary of Closed Session Held on August 26, 2025:

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

Time of closed session: 2:30 p.m. End 4:50 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 conduct interviews for lobbyist in response to Bid No. 25-12	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)(14)	Discussion involves a specific individual and to protect the County's bargaining position before a contract is awarded	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris	No action
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	No action

To discuss possible acquisition of property in Easton for a public purpose	GP § 3-305(b)(3)	To protect the County's bargaining position regarding the possible acquisition of real property for a public purpose	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris	No action
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		TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT 8/19/2025	
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK			
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/12/2025	\$ 81,526,174.94
Total ADP Payroll PPE 8/1/2025			(1,054,631.40)
Airport Merchant Portal Hosting 7/2025			(11.00)
Repurposing Merchant Portal Hosting 7/2025			(15.00)
Roads Merchant Portal Hosting 7/2025			(15.00)
Returned Checks #1825, #3197, #535, #321			(6,378.89)
Returned Paymentus Payments			(500.00)
Bank Charges 6/2025			(12,595.91)
Interest on Accounts 7/2025			222,271.58
Deposits			5,824,455.92
Checks			(182,335.58)
ACH Disbursements			(749,065.66)
EFT's			(176,341.69)
Wire Transfers			(8,062,394.28)
Voided Checks			5,066.00
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/19/2025	\$ 77,333,684.03
PETTY CASH FUNDS			\$ 18,105.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		4.32%	\$ 23,498,534.50
Bayvanguard Bank		4.15%	\$ 11,293,108.83
Shore United Money Market Account		4.33%	\$ 63,225,498.04
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL			\$ 98,035,246.37
TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS			\$ 175,368,930.40

		TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT 8/26/2025	
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK			
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/19/2025	\$ 77,333,684.03
Total ADP Payroll PPE 8/15/2025			(1,096,368.59)
Returned Checks #995002, #694			(11,300.19)
Community Center Sales & Use Tax Due 8/20/2025			(39.14)
Golf Course Sales & Use Tax Due 8/20/2025			(4,319.51)
Roads Sales & Use Tax Due 8/20/2025			(833.75)
Deposits			2,310,697.11
Checks			(97,561.47)
ACH Disbursements			(3,142,628.69)
EFT's			(247,562.76)
Wire Transfers			(710,181.99)
Voided Checks			489.17
OPERATING FUNDS AT		8/26/2025	\$ 74,334,074.22
PETTY CASH FUNDS			\$ 18,105.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		4.32%	\$ 23,498,534.50
Bayvanguard Bank		4.15%	\$ 11,293,108.83
Shore United Money Market Account		4.33%	\$ 63,225,498.04
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL			\$ 98,035,246.37
TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS			\$ 172,369,320.59