



# TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

February 13, 2024

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 – The Agenda of Tuesday, February 13, 2024, was brought forward for approval. Mr. Stepp made a motion to add an item to the County Manager’s Report for a letter in support of the restoration of Cade funding for Chesapeake College; the motion was seconded by Mr. Leshner. The Council approved the Agenda of Tuesday, February 13, 2024, as amended, by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- II. Minutes – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, January 16, 2024, a Special Legislative Day, and Tuesday, January 23, 2024.

- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, January 30, 2024, Tuesday, February 6, 2024, and Tuesday, February 13, 2024.

- IV. Proclamation: American Heart Month – February 2024 – The Clerk read a proclamation into the record which spoke of the prevalence of heart disease as the leading cause of death of Americans each year, and preventive measures which can reduce risk of the disease including, maintaining a healthy weight, eating balanced and nutritious meals, increasing physical activity, and encouraging citizens to participate in healthier lifestyle initiatives to help eradicate the deadly disease. 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

County Manager, Clay Stamp, introduced Tina Kintop as the new EMS Division Chief, Talbot County Department of Emergency Services. He stated that Ms. Kintop comes to Talbot County as a retired Captain with the Annapolis Fire Department where she worked as a paramedic; she also serves as an active member of the Queen Anne-Hillsboro Volunteer Fire Department. Ms. Kintop introduced several individuals of the Talbot County Department of Emergency Services and Talbot Paramedic Foundation in attendance representing the teams who respond to calls for emergency service in Talbot County. Maria Maguire, M.D., Talbot County Health Officer, expressed her appreciation to the Council for bringing the matter of heart health to the public’s attention and reiterated that heart disease is preventable when individuals get adequate rest and exercise, monitor blood pressure, and eat a healthy diet. Dr. Maguire also encouraged everyone to become CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) certified. Council members expressed their appreciation to the

representatives for the role that they and their organizations play in saving lives and keeping citizens safe. The 2024 American Heart Association Friends & Family CPR and AED training will take place on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. at the Talbot County Community Center, 10028 Ocean Gateway, Easton, MD 21601.

Mr. Stepp presented the Proclamation to the representatives of the various organizations in attendance.

- V. Presentation on Bellevue Passage Museum Project and Request to Enter Into Memorandum of Understanding – Dennis De Shields, M.D.; Philip Logan, Architect, PLLC, DBA Preservation Green – Dr. De Shields and Mr. Logan utilized a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council on the Bellevue Passage Museum Project in order to preserve the history and culture of the historic, self-sustaining African-American maritime community in the village of Bellevue. Mr. Logan presented architectural renderings for the location of the historic building to be used as the museum, as well as an annex to the museum which would be used as a gallery housing artifacts used by previous generations of the village of Bellevue, and presentations on the history of Bellevue and a community center; a portion of the property proposed for the museum is located on property owned by Talbot County. Mr. Logan stated that the drawings have been submitted to the County Department of Planning and Zoning and the Critical Area Commission and that the Critical Area Commission has issued a conditional approval. Council members expressed their appreciation to Dr. De Shields and Mr. Logan for their efforts to bring the project to fruition. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bellevue Passage Museum for the project by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- VI. Council Discussion of Proposed Text Amendment:

- Application by 25876 Royal Oak, LLC (The Oaks) to Allow Inns and Hotels with Restrictions in Village Hamlet (VH) Zoning Districts by Special Exception

was read into the record. Prior to Council discussion, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, outlined the conditions and restrictions of the proposed text amendment, including that the parcel for the hotel be at least three (3) acres; not have more than 25 overnight rooms, not be located within 500 feet of an existing restaurant or overnight lodging, and be served by public sewer and accessed by a public road. Burry Parker, attorney for the applicant, stated that the change in the County's zoning ordinance in November 2018 which created the Village Hamlet (VH) zone, eliminated hotels and inns by either permitted use or special exception. Mr. Parker briefed the Council on the history of The Oaks as a hotel and inn almost continuously in operation since 1901. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Parker and Brennan Tarleton, Talbot County Planning Officer. At Council's request, Mr. Tarleton will provide a listing of Village Hamlet (VH) zones in Talbot County. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved moving the request forward to the Planning Commission for their review and recommendation by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

VII. Public Hearings:

Resolution No. 338, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN (CWSP) FOR CONSISTENCY WITH DISCHARGE PERMIT NO. 19-DP-3460, ISSUED BY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON OCTOBER 27, 2022 AND TO REQUIRE THAT ANY FUTURE EXPANSION OF THE NEW LAKESIDE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SHALL REQUIRE AN AMENDMENT TO THE CWSP, was read into the record by the Clerk and the resolution and Amendment No. 1 were brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that Resolution No. 338 proposes to amend the County's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan for consistency with the discharge permit issued by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for the Lakeside wastewater treatment plant in October 2022 and to require that any future expansion of the wastewater treatment plant beyond the initial 100,000 gallons per day allocation under the MDE permit would require an amendment to the Plan. Mr. Thomas stated that Amendment No. 1 to Resolution No. 338 clarifies that the amendment is consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Environment § 9-506(a)(1)(ii). Members of the public were then afforded an opportunity to comment on Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 and Council discussion ensued. The public record on Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 will remain open. Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 are eligible for vote on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Resolution No. 347, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO PROVIDE THE EQUIVALENT DWELLING UNITS FOR ALL PHASES OF THE LAKESIDE DEVELOPMENT, was read into the record by the Clerk and the resolution and Amendment Nos. 1 and 2 were brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that in April 2023, MDE forwarded a letter to the County requesting that the County amend its Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan to provide the EDUs (Equivalent Dwelling Units) for all phases of the Lakeside development and to address the water and sewer classifications of certain parcels whose classifications were incorrectly shown in Exhibits A and B to Resolution No. 281, even though those parcels were not part of the resolution. He stated that Resolution No. 347 provides all phases for the Lakeside development, along with the EDUs for each phase; the EDUs for phases two (2) through six (6) are all estimated, and that the information was provided by the Town of Trappe and the developer. Mr. Thomas stated that Amendment No. 1 to Resolution No. 347 deletes the language "*The phases represent defined land uses only and do not represent the timing or sequence of development; provided, however,*" in both with respect to the water and sewer future planning. He stated that Amendment No. 2 to Resolution No. 347 incorporates the substantive provisions in Resolution No. 338 and Amendment No. 1 to same into Resolution No. 347. Members of the public were then afforded an opportunity to comment on Resolution No. 347 and Amendment Nos. 1 and 2. The public record on Resolution No. 347 and Amendment Nos. 1 and 2 will remain open. Resolution No. 347 and Amendment Nos. 1 and 2 are eligible for vote on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Resolution No. 348, A RESOLUTION REGARDING THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO CLARIFY AND CONFIRM THE

WATER AND SEWER CLASSIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN PARCELS INCORRECTLY SHOWN IN EXHIBITS A AND B TO RESOLUTION NO. 281, AS AMENDED, was read into the record by the Clerk and the resolution and Amendment No. 1 were brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that Resolution No. 348 is the second of two resolutions which were requested by MDE in April 2023. He stated that the resolution confirms the existing water and sewer classifications of the parcels incorrectly shown in Exhibits A and B to Resolution No. 281, includes a map as an exhibit which shows the current water and sewer classifications of all parcels in the Town (Trappe) for clarity, and identifies the resolutions that established all the classifications. He stated that Amendment No. 1 to Resolution No. 348 clarifies and confirms the existing W-2/S-2 status of certain parcels in the Lakeside development that were established in Resolution No. 281. Members of the public were then afforded an opportunity to comment on Resolution No. 348 and Amendment No. 1. The public record on Resolution No. 348 and Amendment No. 1 will remain open. Resolution No. 348 and Amendment No. 1 are eligible for vote on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Resolution No. 352, A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE PROPOSED ANNEXATION BY THE TOWN OF TRAPPE, MARYLAND (THE “TOWN”) OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE TOWN, EAST OF MARYLAND HIGHWAY NO. 565 AND SOUTH OF BACKTOWN ROAD, IN THE THIRD ELECTION DISTRICT OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND, CONSISTING OF 5.125 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, AND BEING A PORTION OF PARCEL 302, SHOWN ON TAX MAP 54 (THE “PROPERTY”), FINDING THAT THE PROPERTY’S PROPOSED REZONING FROM TALBOT COUNTY’S TOWN RESIDENTIAL (“TR”) ZONING TO THE TOWN’S INDUSTRIAL (“M”) ZONING UPON ITS ANNEXATION WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIALLY DIFFERENT USES OR SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER DENSITY, EXCEEDING 50%, THAN COULD BE GRANTED FOR PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE COUNTY’S TR ZONING, AND WAIVING, THE FIVE-YEAR HOLD IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 4-416 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for vote. Zach Smith, attorney for the owner of the property the subject of the resolution, stated that approximately 33 acres of the 38-acre parcel had previously been zoned by the Town of Trappe as Industrial (“M”); the remaining approximately 5 acres is zoned by the County as Town Residential (“TR”). He stated that, if approved, the owner plans to create a small industrial park on the property, similar to the industry on Brooks Drive or Talbot Commerce Park in Easton, partially for his own use, with the remainder available for other similar uses. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Smith and members of the public were provided an opportunity to comment on the proposed resolution. The Council approved Resolution No. 352 by voting 4 – 1 as follows:

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

Resolution No. 352 is effective immediately.

VIII. County Manager’s Report:

- A. Talbot County Agricultural Resolution Board – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Bret Gannon to a four-year term on the Talbot County Agricultural Resolution Board as a representative of the agricultural community; said term will

expire on January 1, 2028. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the appointment by voting 5– 0 as follows:

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

- B. Talbot County Local Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council – Requested Council approval for the appointment of James “Jim” Reed to a four-year term on the Talbot County Local Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council as a citizen representative; said term will expire on July 1, 2028. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved the appointment by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- C. Request for Letter of Support – Requested Council approval for a letter in support of Eastern Shore Land Conservancy’s FY25 Mid-Shore Rural Legacy applications which prioritize the following: Eastern Shore Heartland Rural Legacy Area and the Tuckahoe Rural Legacy Area. Council discussion ensued with Brennan Tarleton, Talbot County Planning Officer, and Elisa Deflaux, Planner II. 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

- D. Request from Hog Neck Golf Course – Requested Council approval of the recommendation of Rich Setter, General Manager and Head Golf Professional, Hog Neck Golf Course, to approve the 2024 Golf Course Rates and Fee Schedule. Mr. Setter stated that the small increases requested are the result of an increase in the minimum wage, the increased cost of the golf cart fleet and continuing increases in costs of supplies (chemicals, fertilizer, etc.). Mr. Setter stated that the Golf Board had reviewed and approved the proposed increases. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the request as presented by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

The 2024 Golf Course Rates and Fee Schedule will be posted on the Hog Neck Golf Course website.

- E. Bid No. 23-02, GRASS CUTTING SERVICES - PARKS, BALL FIELDS AND LANDINGS – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Requested Council approval of the recommendation of the Director of the Department of Parks & Recreation to renew the existing contract with Riverside Lawn Service for the 2024 season in the sum of \$44,944; funding is available for renewal of the contract. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the recommendation as outlined by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- F. Request from Department of Parks & Recreation – Requested Council approval of the recommendation of the Director of the Department of Parks & Recreation to renew the existing contract with Coastline Pool Services for operation and maintenance of the Bay Hundred Community Pool (St. Michaels) and the George Murphy Pool (Easton) for the 2024 season in the total sum of \$275,000. Mr. Stamp stated that the sum reflects an increase of \$5,000 over the 2023 season. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved renewal of the contract with Coastline Pool Services for the 2024 season as outlined by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- G. Request from the County Manager – Requested Council approval of a Contract of Sale for the acquisition of approximately 120 acres of land known as the “Poplar Hill Farm” in Easton in the sum of \$6 million; the property was appraised in January 2024 at \$6.99 million market value. Mr. Stamp stated that the purpose of the acquisition is for future County use, the preservation of open space and Critical Area. He stated that funding for the acquisition of the property, if approved, was authorized by Capital Enabling Legislation Bill No. 1534 and there are sufficient funds for the purchase. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved acquisition of the property by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- H. Request for Letter of Support – Requested Council approval to forward a letter to the Maryland State Legislature in support of full restoration of Cade funding for community colleges throughout the state; currently the cuts represent a 10% decrease

for Chesapeake College over last year's allocation. Council discussion ensued. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved forwarding a letter of support by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- I. Goldsborough Neck Road Closure – Mr. Stamp stated that Goldsborough Neck Road between Villa Road and Glebe Road in Easton will be closed to thru traffic beginning on or about Monday, February 19, 2024, for approximately 30 days in order to replace the culvert at that location; the detour route has been posted and the status of the project is available on the County's website.
- J. Announcement by Talbot Family Network – Nancy Andrew, Executive Director, Talbot Family Network stated that Talbot Family Network is partnering with the Department of Economic Development and Tourism to host a presentation by the new Maryland Department of Service and Civic Innovation. The presentation will be held during a "Lunch and Learn" on Wednesday, February 21, 2024, from Noon to 1:00 p.m. at the Talbot County Free Library. The invitation is open to businesses, nonprofits and anyone 18 years of age and older who lives or works in Talbot County and will provide an opportunity to learn about workforce development opportunities.
- K. County Offices Closed – Mr. Stamp stated that County offices will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024, in recognition of Presidents' Day.

IX. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

X. Council Comments:

Mr. Stepp – Mr. Stepp stated that he had met earlier in the day with Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Sarah Kilmon and Cassandra Vanhooser to begin the conversation about Talbot Day. He reminded everyone that the Council had approved a proclamation (2023) designating April 25<sup>th</sup> as Talbot Day to celebrate all things Talbot. He stated that conversations are already underway as to how we are going to make that day special in Talbot County and he is looking forward to seeing what the community helps contribute to make what the Council unanimously envisioned come to fruition and to growing the program in the future.

Mr. Leshner - No comments.

Ms. Mielke - No comments.

Ms. Haythe - No comments.

Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan stated that, in his opinion, he was glad the Council had the opportunity to acquire the Poplar Hill Farm property, and that, in his opinion, it is something we can all be proud of in years to come.

The transcript of the February 13, 2024, County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. in Open Session and adjourn into Closed Session as listed on the statement for closing that meeting, and for the regularly scheduled meeting at 6:00 p.m. by voting 5 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan - Aye

Mr. Stepp – Aye

Mr. Leshner - Aye

Ms. Mielke – Aye

Ms. Haythe – Aye

The meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

- XI. Work Session on Update to the County's Impact Fees – Julie Herlands, AICP, Vice-President, TischlerBise, Inc. – The Council held a work session on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room with Julie Herlands, Vice-President, TischlerBise, Inc., the consultant hired by the County to conduct a review of the County's current impact fee schedule and to make recommendations on updating the schedule. TischlerBise, Inc. (formerly Tischer & Associates) prepared the County's original impact fee schedule in 2004. Martha Sparks, Talbot County Finance Director, and Bryce Yelton, Assistant Planning Officer were also in attendance. Ms. Herlands outlined the requirements for imposing impact fees, which are one-time payments for growth-related infrastructure collected at the time building permits are issued, including the need for system improvements; the payee receives a benefit; and the payee only pays their fair share. She emphasized that impact fees are not a tax, but do provide revenue which can be used as an extra tool to offset infrastructure related to growth. Such items include capital improvement planning, the capacity of infrastructure to accommodate new development, and assuring that new growth pays its fair share of infrastructure. She also outlined what costs cannot be covered by impact fees, including, among others, operating costs and maintenance costs. Ms. Herlands then provided information on current and projected population (permanent, seasonal and visitor) for Talbot County for a 10-year timeframe from 2022 through 2032; the number and types of housing within Talbot County; the number and types of businesses in Talbot County and increases anticipated during said timeframe. She stated that the methodology used to compile the information was based on the existing population. Ms. Herlands stated that the following categories were studied: Library; Parks & Recreation; General Government; Transportation; Schools; Community College; Public Safety – Law Enforcement (new impact fee category); and Public Safety – EMS (new impact fee category) for which she provided information for the same 10-year timeframe, with the exception of the Community College which was a 20-year timeframe, anticipated needs for same and the projected increase or decrease in impact fees. Ms. Herlands concluded her presentation by stating that construction costs have increased 88% since 2004 (when the original impact fee study was completed). County Manager, Clay Stamp stated that he would provide Council with a report detailing where impact fees were directed for Capital Projects over the past 10 years as well as the amount of impact fees collected over that same period of time. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Herlands, Ms. Sparks and Mr. Yelton as various matters were brought forward.
- XII. Meeting with Elected Officials from Easton, Oxford, Queen Anne, St. Michaels and Trappe – The Talbot County Council met with elected officials from the incorporated municipalities of Talbot



County on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Easton Branch of the Talbot County Free Library. The following were in attendance: Megan Cook, Mayor, Town of Easton, Frank Gunsallus, President, Easton Town Council; Rev. Elmer Davis, Jr. and Don Abbatiello, Members, Easton Town Council; Don Richardson, Easton Town Manager; Sharon Van Emburgh, Attorney, Town of Easton; Miguel Salinas, Director of Planning and Zoning, Town of Easton; Tom Costigan, Commissioner, Town of Oxford; Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager, Town of Oxford; Phil Starkey, Mayor, Town of Queen Anne; Nate Hoxter, Commissioner, Town of Queen Anne; Rob Straebel, Town Administrator, Town of St. Michaels; Brian Schmidt, Michael Sullivan, Members, Trappe Town Council; Chuck Callahan, President, Talbot County Council; Pete Leshner, Vice-President, Talbot County Council; Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Members, Talbot County Council; Clay Stamp, County Manager; Jessica Morris, Assistant County Manager; Martha Sparks, Talbot County Finance Director; Kaitlin Foster-Clark, Talbot County Assistant Finance Director; Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Brian LeCates, Director of Talbot County Department of Emergency Services; Sarah Kilmon, Talbot County Communications Manager; Patrick Thomas, Talbot County Attorney; Ken Kozel, President & CEO, University of Maryland Medical System Shore Regional Health; and Arvin Singh, Ed.D., MBA, MPH, MS, FACHE, Vice-President, Strategy and Communications, University of Maryland Medical System Shore Regional Health. Mr. Kozel provided an update on the Regional Medical Center project, stating that unanimous approval of the Certificate of Need for the facility had been received from the Maryland Health Care Commission. He stated that the State has committed \$100 million to the project and funding has been included in the Governor's CIP (Capital Improvement Budget), with \$90 million committed over the next four fiscal years (FY25 – FY28); the State Legislature is scheduled to vote on the FY25 Budget on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Kozel stated that the Maryland Health Service Cost Review Commission (HSCRC) has docketed the new Regional Medical Center's request for rate increases to help offset the \$30 million mortgage which will be due each year; if no increase in rates is approved, Mr. Kozel stated that the project would not be viable; a response from HSCRC is anticipated sometime in April 2024 at the earliest. Mr. Kozel outlined next steps to securing \$50 million in funding from various sources including philanthropy (estimated \$25 - \$30 million); surrounding counties; various Shore Regional Health foundations; and various Shore Regional Health auxiliaries; our U.S. Senators and House of Representatives will also be contacted regarding possible federal funding which may be available. Mr. Kozel concluded his presentation by providing a timeline for the project: a best-case scenario for final approvals by Shore Regional Health Boards is June 2024; shovels in the ground in 2025 and opening of the new Regional Medical Center in 2028. Discussion ensued with representatives of the various municipalities. Cassandra Vanhooser stated that Talbot, Caroline, and Dorchester counties had received, through Mid-shore Regional Council, equal portions of \$10 million in grant funding designated by the Maryland Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Fund; the funding was part of \$50 million distributed statewide to rural counties under former Governor Hogan to support economic development activity, stimulate private investment and grow jobs in the state's rural counties. She stated that Talbot County has 14 projects, all of which were vetted and approved by the County Council which made sure that each jurisdiction had at least one (1) project. She stated that projects include a welcome center at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels; new state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment for the Oxford Community Center; funding for BAAM (Building African-American Minds) and a start-up bio-tech company in Easton; funding for pre-development engineering, design interpretation for the Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe in Queen Anne; and funding for the Town of Trappe Wastewater Treatment Plant. Ms. Vanhooser then outlined the four (4) Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund projects her department is working on: Talbot Works Business Academy, Feasibility Study for a Talbot County Visitors Center; development of a strategic plan for economic development and tourism; and oversight of the Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe project. Sarah Kilmon introduced herself to those in attendance and stated that a Public Information Office (PIO) affiliate

group, including representatives from municipalities, Talbot Family Network and Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center, among others, has been formed for the purpose of helping the County and its municipalities better communicate with constituents; she encouraged the elected officials to have someone from their municipality attend the meetings, currently scheduled for April 3, July 3, and October 3. Megan Cook provided an update on-going or completed projects which were recipients of bond funding received by the Town, including the dog park and skate park, and stated that the Town is working on plans for east/west bike trails. She stated that the Town is working on affordable housing and inclusionary zoning with Town staff and 16 members of the community. Don Abbatiello expressed the Town's appreciation for increased funding to the fire departments and stated that there are not enough volunteer firemen, but Easton is hoping to incentivize the volunteer status of the Easton Volunteer Fire Department a little longer. He stated that Easton would like to see: (1) a \$500 tax property tax credit; \$5,000 toward closing costs on residence in Talbot County and noted that Harford County offers student loan repayment assistance of \$5,000 per year for a maximum of \$20,000. Discussion ensued with Mr. Abbatiello. Tom Costigan provided an update on the Strand Resiliency Project, stating that a good portion of the work related to the shoreline improvements, including man-made islands and beach restoration along the Oxford Strand, had been completed. He stated that the Oxford Department of Public Works is in the process of growing plants to be used for the living shoreline man-made islands along the Strand which will serve as breakwaters to provide resiliency for flooding and sea level rise which threaten the town. Mr. Costigan stated that Oxford had experienced its second 50-to-100-year storm in three years as of January 2024. Phil Starkey stated that the Town of Queen Anne is still waiting for the State to mark the portion of the Tuckahoe State Park Trail which traverses the town. Rob Straebel stated that the Town is working on a Masterplan for the 7.4 acre parcel on San Domingo Creek (the former Environmental Concern property), 5.9 acres of which the Town hopes to leave as open space. He stated that the Town is seeking a \$1.7 million reimbursement of the \$2.9 million cost of the property through Stateside Program Open Space. He stated that the Town had received a \$210,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant for the Mill Street/Muskrat Park flood mitigation project; stated that stormwater pumps had been installed on West Harbor Road and East Chew Street which will pump rainwater into the Bay; stated that the Town had received a Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) grant for extension of the nature trail to Perry Cabin Park; stated that there had been a large fire at the town's pump station and that at present, the pump stations are being operated manually; and that two new businesses had opened in St. Michaels – a tavern and a Mexican food restaurant. Brian Schmidt stated that the Town of Trappe has issued 106 occupancy permits for the Lakeside development to date and that the development's wastewater treatment plant should be operational by Summer 2024. He stated that the Town has submitted an application to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) for upgrades to the Town's wastewater treatment plant; a Dollar General store is planned for U.S. Rt. 50 in the town limits; the Town is conducting an inventory of lead pipes in the town; and that the temporary moratorium on cannabis applications, etc. will expire in April 2024. Mike Sullivan stated that the Town has two apprenticeship openings for wastewater treatment plant engineers and that Old Trappe Tavern had recently opened on Main Street. Megan Cook encouraged all the towns to participate in the 911 Ceremony this year. Frank Gunsallus called the group's attention to *Maryland Senate Bill 747, Local Government – Annual Audit Reporting Requirements – Alterations*, which, if approved, would require that a certain amount of State aid to be discontinued if a jurisdiction does not submit an audit report within a certain amount of time after the deadline. The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m. Future meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, June 4, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the Talbot County Community Center and Tuesday, October 29, 2024 in the Meeting Room of the Talbot County Free Library, Easton Branch, at 5:00 p.m.

- XIII. Joint Meeting with the Talbot County Board of Education – The County Council and the Talbot County Board of Education held a joint meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in Conference Room 1 at the Talbot County Education Center, 12 Magnolia Street in Easton.

**In attendance:**

Board of Education Members: Emily Jackson, Candace Henry, Mary Wheeler, Jymil Thompson, Deborah Bridges, Anna Howie, and Amy Dodson

Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS) staff: Dr. Sharon Pepukayi, Dr. Helga Einhorn, Lynne Duncan, Sarah Jones, and Charlene Gould

Talbot County Council members: Chuck Callahan, Dave Stepp, Lynn Mielke, Pete Leshner, and Keasha Haythe

Talbot County staff: Clay Stamp, Martha Sparks, and Sarah Kilmon

Mrs. Emily Jackson, Talbot County Board of Education President, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Dr. Pepukayi thanked everyone for coming, and instructed attendees to use the Post-It notes provided to jot down ideas, questions, and/or comments.

**Update on the Blueprint for Maryland's Future**

Dr. Helga Einhorn, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching and Learning, shared a brief update on the Blueprint with emphasis on Pillar 3, College and Career Readiness Pathways – Dual Enrollment and Pillar 4, Resources to ensure all students are successful – Community Schools.

The highlight for Pillar 3 was the emphasis on the partnership with Chesapeake College to develop and provide dual enrollment opportunities for students during high school. All related costs for dual enrollment including tuition, books, and fees, are covered and there is no cost to the student or the student's parents. This program allows students to earn an Associate Degree, and up to 60 college credits.

Dr. Einhorn shared the number of students currently enrolled in Dual Enrollment and the number of classes being taken. She also shared a chart that showed the past, current and projected costs associated with Dual Enrollment. Previously, TCPS paid tuition for students who qualified for Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS), now Blueprint requires 100% of the costs be paid for all students beginning in 2023. The overall costs have increased.

Dr. Pepukayi also shared that the Eastern Shore of Maryland Education Consortium (ESMEC) met with Dr. Cliff Coppersmith, President of Chesapeake College, and several of his staff to discuss dual enrollment. ESMEC is monitoring the program and there is collaboration to close any loose ends and ongoing discussion about the program.

Next steps in the process are to update the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the district and Chesapeake College, discussion regarding asynchronous/synchronous learning opportunities, communicating the offerings to families, promotion of student success, and discussions regarding transportation and other logistics. In addition, there are ongoing discussions regarding Early College Development and students starting college early, and TCPS policy creation and updates for Dual Enrollment.

Pillar 4 – Community Schools – Community schools promote positive, equitable outcomes by providing students and families with the physical and mental health, academic, and extracurricular supports needed to thrive.

Community Schools provide wraparound services such as vision and dental services and extended learning time, before and after school, weekends, summer school and an extended school year. Currently in FY2023 there are 358 community schools receiving Concentration of Poverty Grants in Maryland.

Dr. Einhorn shared a slide detailing the Concentration of Poverty funding grants for Easton Elementary and Easton Middle Schools. There are two types of grants, the personnel grant used to hire a Community School Coordinator and a professional Healthcare Practitioner, and remaining funds for providing wraparound services, and the Per-Pupil Grants calculated based on the number of students living in poverty attending the school. These funds are used to provide wraparound services.

### **FY25 Budget Discussion**

Mrs. Jones and Dr. Pepukayi shared an overview of the FY25 Proposed Budget. Details of the discussion included:

1. The FY25 Budget Timeline
2. Data Points considered in formulating the TCPS FY25 Budget
3. TCPS Board and Superintendent Priorities
4. 2023-24 Enrollment: 4,504
5. FY24 Demographics highlighting Hispanic growth in enrollment figures
6. FY25 Budget Priorities
  - a. Increase salary and professional learning efforts to recruit and retain high quality and diverse teachers and leaders
  - b. Ensure the highest level of safety and security at all TCPS buildings
  - c. Invest in additional resources to improve student achievement in mathematics and reading.
7. The Layer Cake approach was used to demonstrate funding no longer by district, but by school. (an example was provided)
8. Several grants, MD LEEADS and the ESSER will expire on September 30, 2024
9. Grant Positions will be included in the FY25 budget request for a total of 41 positions
10. Additional Staffing needs for a total of 16 positions.
11. The summary of major increases for a total of \$7,989,000.
12. The Budget request is \$80,039,841(estimated).

The budget was prepared to meet TCPS goals with revenue estimates. Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) will provide the actual revenue figures in mid-January.

### **Update on Chapel District Elementary School renovation project and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Talbot County Board of Education, the Talbot County Council and the Maryland Stadium Authority**

Mr. Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations, indicated that since the last meeting, the Maryland Stadium Authority has approved funding for the Chapel District Elementary School project and asked the Board and Council to endorse the MOU with the Stadium Authority and sign the agreement. Legal counsel from the Talbot County Council and the Talbot County Board of Education have each reviewed the document. Once signed, \$3.8 million dollars will be available immediately for the project.

**Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) Health Center program through Everside Health – Milton Nagel**

Mr. Milton Nagel and Mr. Stewart Sutley provided an overview of a health care program with Everside Health through MABE Health Solutions. Everside Health provides direct access to primary care and mental health solutions as an option to the fee for service system benefit. Participating members would have access to this option in addition to their existing health benefits. The service Everside Health would provide would be private and is not open to the public. Talbot County Public Schools is considering joining Everside Health, and invited the County to consider joining as well.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

**XIV. Summary of Closed Session Held on February 13, 2024:**

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

Time of closed session: 4:30 p.m. to 5:15 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, Haythe, Leshner, 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:**

<b>Topic Description</b>	<b>Statutory Authority</b>	<b>Reason for Closed Session Discussion</b>	<b>Persons Present</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
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, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
For update on Talbot Integrity Project et al v Talbot County, Maryland	GP § 3-305(b)(7)(8)	Attorney-client privilege regarding status of litigation	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action

For update on opioid settlement	GP § 3-305(b)(7)(8)	Attorney-client privilege regarding status of litigation	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	Council concurred with legal counsel's recommendation
For legal advice regarding proposed large-scale solar array project proposed for Talbot County	GP § 3-305(b)(7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
To discuss the proposal for acquisition of property in Easton	GP § 3-305(b)(3)	To protect the County's bargaining position regarding the potential acquisition of real property for a public purpose	Chuck Callahan, Keasha Haythe, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	Council concurred with acquisition of property



**TALBOT COUNTY,  
MARYLAND  
WEEKLY CASH  
STATEMENT  
January 30, 2024**

**OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK**

<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>1/23/2024</b>	<b>\$48,651,832.92</b>
ENTERPRISE LEASE PYMT 1/2024		(24,041.58)
COMMUNITY CENTER SALES & USE DUE 1/20/2024		(532.66)
ROADS SALES & USE DUE 1/20/2024		(237.63)

GOLF SALES & USE DUE 1/20/2024	(648.19)
RETURNED CHECK(S) # 476, 2214	(1,888.59)
RETURNED PAYMENTS THROUGH VALUE PAYMENTS	(60,396.24)
Deposits	1,964,887.41
Checks	(188,871.00)
ACH Disbursements	(599,482.90)
Voided Check	506.09

**OPERATING FUNDS AT 1/30/2024 \$49,741,127.63**

**PETTY CASH FUNDS \$18,105.00**

**INVESTMENT FUNDS**

	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.42%	\$21,650,244.69
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,506,291.40
Shore United Money Market Account	5.33%	\$76,274,097.10

**INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL \$108,430,633.19**

**TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS \$158,189,865.82**



**TALBOT COUNTY,  
MARYLAND  
WEEKLY CASH  
STATEMENT  
February 6, 2024**

**OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK**

<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>1/30/2024</b>	<b>\$49,741,127.63</b>
TOTAL ADP PAYROLL PPE 1/19/2024		(847,504.26)
TOTAL ADP PAYROLL PPE 1/31/2024		(18,774.72)
RETURNED CHECK(S) #1061, 3023		(1,224.20)
Deposits		1,917,942.50
Checks		(75,349.64)
ACH Disbursements		(767,422.12)
Wire Transfers		(4,243,535.00)
EFT'S		(87,179.44)
Voided Check(s) #370382, 370469, 370563		2,669.09
Previously Unposted Wire Transfers		(18,756,289.23)
Previously Unposted EFT's		(1,831,782.93)

<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>2/6/2024</b>	<b><u>\$25,032,677.68</u></b>
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<b>PETTY CASH FUNDS</b>		<b>\$18,105.00</b>
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**INVESTMENT FUNDS**

	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.39%	\$21,650,244.69
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,506,291.40



Shore United Money Market Account	5.33%	\$76,274,097.10
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS</b>		<b>\$108,430,633.19</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<hr/>
<b><u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u></b>		<b><u>\$133,481,415.87</u></b>



**TALBOT COUNTY,  
 MARYLAND  
 WEEKLY CASH  
 STATEMENT  
 February 13, 2024**

**OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK**

<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>2/6/2024</b>	<b>\$25,032,677.68</b>
AIRPORT MERCHANT PORTAL HOSTING 1/2024		(11.00)
REPURPOSING MERCHANT PORTAL HOSTING 1/2024		(15.00)
ROADS MERCHANT PORTAL HOSTING 1/2024		(15.00)
BANK CHARGES 12/2023		(3,965.87)
INTEREST ON ACCOUNTS 12/2023		194,385.98
Deposits		2,159,789.74
Checks		(83,756.12)
ACH Disbursements		(502,531.58)
Wire Transfers		(63,586.12)

EFT'S		(94,271.88)
		0.00
<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>2/13/2024</b>	<b><u>\$26,638,700.83</u></b>
<b>PETTY CASH FUNDS</b>		<b>\$18,105.00</b>
<b><u>INVESTMENT FUNDS</u></b>		
	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.37%	\$21,650,244.69
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,506,291.40
Shore United Money Market Account	5.33%	\$76,274,097.10
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b><u>\$108,430,633.19</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u></b>		<b><u>\$135,087,439.02</u></b>