



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

June 9, 2026

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 for Tuesday, June 9, 2026, was brought forward for approval. Ms. Haythe made a motion to amend the Agenda to include a Proclamation for Cassandra Vanhooser; the motion was seconded by Ms. Mielke. The Council approved the Agenda, 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, May 5, 2026.
- III. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, June 2, 2026, and Tuesday, June 9, 2026.
- IV. Update from University of Maryland Shore Regional Health Project – Ken Kozel, MBA, FACHE, President, University of Maryland Shore Regional Health – Mr. Kozel updated the Council on the following: (1) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) star ratings for Shore Regional Health – He stated that the CMS star ratings are national, publicly reported ratings which measure five key elements of performance: mortality, safety, readmissions, patient experience and timely care. Mr. Kozel stated that for the timeframe of July 2024 to July 2025, the Chester River Hospital (the University of Maryland Shore Medical Center in Chestertown) received five stars out of five; Easton Hospital (the University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Easton) received four stars out of five; noting that only 12% of hospitals in the nation receive five stars and only 29% receive four stars; (2) Sale of Easton Hospital property at 219 S. Washington Street – Mr. Kozel stated that Shore Regional Health has entered into a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Bluepoint Living for the hospital property located on 219 S. Washington Street in Easton but will retain ownership of the property and building until the closing period which he stated is 60 days from the date Easton Hospital relocates to the new regional medical center facility, anticipated to be on or before December 31, 2028. Mr. Kozel stated that the proceeds from the sale of the S. Washington Street property will be used to help offset the cost of the new facility; (3) Construction Progress – New Regional Medical Center – Mr. Kozel stated that the 1,728 wells of the geothermal well system on the new hospital property site have been vertically dug and connection to the utility plant located at the back of the hospital facility has begun. He stated that the state-of-the-art geothermal system will ensure that the appropriate temperatures and humidity levels are maintained throughout the regional medical center complex while also providing reduced operational costs. Mr. Kozel stated that the new regional medical center, which has a six-story East tower and a five-story West tower, will have had concrete flooring laid by the end of June, with exterior panels beginning to enclose the structure; once enclosed, interior work will begin. He stated that construction of the intersection

of US Rt. 50 and Medical Center Parkway is anticipated to be completed in July 2026 and reopened; the reopening of the entrance to the Talbot County Community Center and the hospital take place following the US Rt. 50 and Medical Center Parkway intersection. He stated that following testing of the traffic signal at the US Rt. 50/Medical Center Parkway by the State Highway Administration, the traffic signal will become operational soon afterward. Mr. Kozel concluded his presentation by stating that despite weather delays during the winter, the construction project is meeting its targeted timelines, with the first patients anticipated to be seen in late summer or early fall, 2028. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Kozel as various facets of the project were brought forward and he encouraged those members of the Council who had not done so to tour the new regional medical center. Mr. Kozel will continue to update the Council on a regular or as-needed basis.

- V. Presentation of Certificate of Recognition to Cassandra Vanhooser – Prior to presentation of the certificate of recognition, Ms. Vanhooser, who currently serves as the County’s Director of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, stated that she had accepted a job with the State of Maryland as Managing Director of the Maryland Department of Commerce, Office of Tourism. She expressed her appreciation to the Council for their support over the past 13 ½ years, stating that she always tried to give her all for Talbot County every day. She cited several projects during her tenure with the County, including the ongoing construction of the new regional medical center, the Easton Airport Modernization Project, and Talbot County having the distinction of being the first county in Maryland to make broadband available to every citizen. Council members expressed their appreciation to Ms. Vanhooser for her service to Talbot County and wished her the best in her new role with the State. The Clerk then read a certificate of recognition into the record which spoke of the professionalism, energy, enthusiasm, and knowledge Ms. Vanhooser brought to her position with Talbot County, first as the Director of the Office of Tourism, and for the last 10 years as the Director of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism, partnering with businesses, community organizations and governmental agencies to attract, retain, and expand the business sector of Talbot County, and marketing the county as a premier destination for visitors, while helping to preserve the exceptional quality of life that makes Talbot County unique. The certificate of recognition also spoke of Ms. Vanhooser’s efforts to assist the County with navigating the challenges to businesses and individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of an economic indicator dashboard to provide insight into the health and resilience of local economies and communities, and the preparation and adoption of the 2026-2030 Economic Development and Tourism Strategic Plan to act as a guide for the county’s economic development and tourism into the future.

The Council presented the Certificate of Recognition to Ms. Vanhooser.

- VI. Request from Talbot County Public Schools for FY26 Categorical Budget Transfers – Sarah Jones, CPA, Chief Financial Officer, Talbot County Public Schools – Ms. Jones utilized a PowerPoint presentation to brief the Council on Talbot County Public Schools’ request for several categorical budget transfers for the purpose of incurring some expenses in FY26 in order to balance the FY27 budget, and to meet identified needs in other categories. Ms. Jones stated that Talbot County Public Schools is requesting to utilize \$164,000 in savings from Other Instructional Costs (tuition paid at Chesapeake College for estimated enrollment); \$75,000 from Student Services (Kinship Care and out-of-county living arrangements); \$25,000 from Transportation (savings from bus driver vacancies); and \$136,000 from Capital Outlay (ESSER [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief]) grant funding and to increase the budget of Operation of Plant by \$400,000 to cover projected overages in contract services and utilities. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the Categorical Budget Transfers as requested by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

VII. Introduction of Legislation:

Prior to the FY27 Capital Enabling Legislation being brought forward for introduction, Finance Director, Martha Sparks, stated that on May 26, 2026, the Council approved Bill No. 1625, the FY2026 – 2027 budget and appropriation ordinance, as amended, which includes the current expense budget and the capital program, an itemized list of the capital projects which the agency proposes to undertake in an upcoming fiscal year. She stated that although the funding sources for the projects were approved by Bill No. 1625, as amended, §612 of the County Charter requires each capital improvement project to have its own legislation; each bill is then subject to the referendum provisions of the Charter.

As each bill was brought forward for introduction, Ms. Sparks outlined the purpose of the capital enabling legislation and the process by which it is developed following approval of the County's annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance in accordance.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1607 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE REPLACEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS AT COUNTY COMMUNITY POOLS AND ASSOCIATED PROPERTY was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1628. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1600, 1368, AND 1343 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS AT FACILITIES AND PROPERTIES OWNED BY TALBOT COUNTY was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1629. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1539 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AND IMPROVEMENTS TO A DRIVING RANGE COMPLEX AT THE TALBOT COUNTY HOG NECK GOLF COURSE was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1630. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1594 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE GREENS AT

THE TALBOT COUNTY HOG NECK GOLF COURSE was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshar, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1631. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1595 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE CART PATHS AND PAVED AREAS AT THE TALBOT COUNTY HOG NECK GOLF COURSE was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshar, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1632. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1531, 1480, 1452, AND 1393 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS PARK ON THE TUCKAHOE LOCATED AT 13213 LEWISTOWN ROAD, QUEEN ANNE, MARYLAND was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshar, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1633. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1597, 1556, AND 1533 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TALBOT COUNTY DETENTION CENTER was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshar, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1634. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE ROOF AT EASTON MIDDLE SCHOOL was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshar, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1635. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE EXTERIOR REPAIR, IMPROVEMENT, AND PAINTING OF THE TALBOT COUNTY EDUCATION CENTER FACILITY was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshar, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1636. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1587, 1558, AND 1391 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF HVAC SYSTEMS AT FACILITIES OWNED BY TALBOT COUNTY was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1637. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE ASSESSMENT OF AND DESIGN FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TALBOT COUNTY COURTHOUSE MUSIC HALL was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1638. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1599, 1557, 1534, 1486, AND 1424 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION TO PURCHASE IMPROVED OR UNIMPROVED REAL PROPERTY FOR FUTURE COUNTY PURPOSES was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1639. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1605, 1507, 1361, 1332, 1307, and 1267 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE MAPPING, EVALUATION, AND REHABILITATION OR REPLACEMENT OF COUNTY CULVERTS was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1640. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE IMPROVEMENTS TO DEEP WATER POINT ROAD, ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1641. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE IMPROVEMENTS TO COUNTY ROADS IN AND SURROUNDING THE TOWN OF TRAPPE was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1642. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1613 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE SEWER SYSTEM EXTENSION TO THE MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (MEBA) ENGINEERING SCHOOL was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1643. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1573 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE VACUUM COLLECTION SYSTEM SERVING THE REGION II MARTINGHAM SEWER SERVICE AREA was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1644. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NO. 1616 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR REPLACEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO PUMP STATIONS AND SURROUNDING PROPERTY IN THE ST. MICHAELS AREA IN REGION II OF THE TALBOT COUNTY SANITARY DISTRICT was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1645. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1535 AND 1488 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE UPGRADE OR REPLACEMENT OF THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AT THE PRESERVE AT WYE MILLS was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1646. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AMEND BILL NOS. 1612 AND 1431 FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING THE APPROPRIATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE REGION V (TILGHMAN) WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND ENHANCED NUTRIENT REMOVAL (ENR) TECHNOLOGY was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1647. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE REPLACEMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE REGION II (ST. MICHAELS) WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND ENHANCED NUTRIENT REMOVAL (ENR) TECHNOLOGY was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the

proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1648. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE SEWER SYSTEM EXTENSION TO, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN IMPROVED APPROACH TO PROVIDING SAFE DRINKING WATER IN, THE VILLAGE OF CLAIBORNE was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1649. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE REHABILITATION OF, AND IMPROVEMENTS TO, THE REGION V (TILGHMAN) WASTEWATER TREATMENT COLLECTION SYSTEM AND ACCOMPANYING PUMP STATIONS was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, Ms. Sparks provided a brief outline of the purpose of the proposed legislation. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1650. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

VIII. Public Hearings:

Resolution No. 394, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 175, ENTITLED “A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH SEWER SERVICE CONNECTION POLICIES FROM THE UNIONVILLE, TUNIS MILLS AND COPPERVILLE SEWER SERVICE AREA LOW-PRESSURE FORCE MAIN COLLECTION SYSTEM TO THE ROYAL OAK PUMP STATION,” FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING THAT CONNECTION TO THE FORCE MAIN FROM PROPERTY OUTSIDE THE SEWER SERVICE AREA SHALL BE PERMITTED FROM IMPROVED PROPERTIES WHERE PUBLIC SEWER IS AVAILABLE, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, County Engineer, Ray Clarke, stated that the Council had requested that the Public Works Advisory Board review Resolution No. 175 as it relates to Resolution Nos. 388 – 391. He stated that the Board had done so and its recommendations for amendments to Resolution No. 175 were discussed at a work session with the Council on Tuesday, April 28, 2026; at Council’s request, the Office of Law was asked to draft legislation amending Resolution No. 175 to incorporate the Public Works Advisory Board’s recommendations. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Clarke. Members of the public were then afforded an opportunity to comment on the legislation. The Council approved Resolution No. 394 by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

Resolution No. 394 is effective immediately.

Bill No. 1626, A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 190 (ZONING, SUBDIVISION, AND LAND DEVELOPMENT) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXEMPTING

CORPORATE FLAGS FROM THE SIGN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN § 190-42 OF THE COUNTY CODE, SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the proposed legislation, if approved, would permit a corporate flag, which can be no more than 40 square feet in size and no more than 30 feet high, to be flown along with one or more governmental flags. Members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on the legislation. Mr. Leshner requested that the Office of Law draft an amendment stating that the corporate flag not exceed the size of the government flag as outlined in the legislation. Council discussion ensued with County Attorney, Patrick Thomas. Bill No. 1626 will be eligible for vote on Tuesday, June 30, 2026.

- IX. Presentation of FY27 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) Easement Applications – Elisa Deflaux, Senior Planner, Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning; Brennan Tarleton, Planning Officer – Ms. Deflaux provided an update on the FY25-26 MALPF Easement funding cycle, stating that the County’s matching funds in 2025 contributed to three (3) first round offers placing approximately 500 acres under easement. She stated that for the FY27-28 MALPF Easement Application cycle, the County received 16 applications (ranked by staff according to MALPF criteria) and that Planning and Zoning will be requesting matching contributions in Spring/Summer of FY27. Mr. Leshner made a motion to concur with the motion of the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board and the Planning Commission to forward the 16 applications to MALPF for the FY27 Easement cycle; the motion was seconded by Mr. Stepp and the Council approved forwarding the applications to the State for review and consideration by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

- IX. Council Consideration of Recommendation from Planning Commission on Request for Proposed Text Amendment to § 190-61 and § 190-62 Concerning Developer Agreements and Waivers – Brennan Tarleton, Planning Officer; Elisa Deflaux, Senior Planner, Talbot County Department of Planning and Zoning – County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that a Council member had requested a text amendment to amend the referenced sections of the County Code to provide a waiver for certain requirements related to provisions in developer agreements by the Planning Officer, upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, for bona fide nonprofits upon showing of need that the waiver would be in the public interest. Mr. Tarleton stated that the Planning Commission had reviewed the proposed text amendment at its March 2026 meeting and had offered an amendment to the language referencing a section of the Talbot County Code. He stated that the Planning Commission unanimously voted to forward the proposed text amendment to the Council for consideration of approval. Ms. Haythe stated she had requested the proposed text amendment after being contacted by a citizen on behalf of the Bellevue Passage Museum. Mr. Tarleton outlined the Bellevue Passage Museum project and the reason for the request for a text amendment. Ms. Haythe requested that the Office of Law draft legislation for introduction at an upcoming meeting.

- X. County Manager’s Report:

- A. Animal Control Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Karen Roberts, Donna Haddaway, and Margel Highet to three-year terms on the Animal Control Board; said terms will expire on July 1, 2029. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, 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

- B. Economic Development Commission – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Ted Bautz to a three-year term on the Economic Development Commission; said term will expire on June 30, 2029. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, 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. Ethics Commission – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Dr. Reginal Harrell to a three-year term on the Ethics Commission; said term will expire on July 1, 2029; and requested the appointment of Mr. Vernon Jones to the Ethics Commission to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Anthony Kern; said term will expire on July 1, 2027. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, 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

- D. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of David Fisher to a four-year term on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board as an at-large member; said term will expire on July 1, 2030. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, 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. Department of Social Services Board of Directors – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Geoffrey Cooke and the reappointment of Dorri Gowe-Lambert to

three-year terms on the Department of Social Services Board of Directors; said terms will expire on June 30, 2029. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the appointment and 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 for a letter in support of Habitat for Humanity Choptank’s Critical Health & Safety Home Repair Program’s application for funding from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development’s Local Rehabilitation Agency Services; if approved, the funding will be used to partner with eligible homeowners who need assistance in making critical health and safety repairs to their homes; no County funding is required. Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the letter in support of Habitat for Humanity Choptank’s application for funding 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 Department of Emergency Services – Requested Council approval to have the Department of Emergency Services purchase a new 2026 Chevrolet Tahoe PPV at a cost of \$57,829.00; said purchase will be made by piggybacking on a Maryland State Contract; funding for the purchase was included in the FY26 capital budget. 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

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

Following comments by members of the public, Sarah Kilmon, Communications Manager, provided an update on upcoming events being held in the Town of St. Michaels beginning on Thursday, June 11 through Flag Day, June 14, 2026. Details may be found at www.Talbot250.org.

- XII. Council Comments:

Mr. Stepp - Mr. Stepp stated that the Council has one more meeting before the 250th anniversary of the birth of our country and that he was looking forward to

it; in the meantime, individuals have the ability to exercise one of our rights in this great country – the right to vote. He reminded everyone that early voting will begin on Thursday, June 11th and will take place at the Easton Fire Department from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. every day. He stated that he is looking forward to seeing everyone at the polls and encouraged everyone to enjoy the process, as it is, in his opinion, an awesome part of being a citizen to be able to vote.

Mr. Lesher– Mr. Lesher congratulated the graduates of Easton High School, St. Michaels Middle High School and Chesapeake College, and congratulated Ms. Haythe who was honored as the graduation speaker at Chesapeake College and who, in his opinion, spoke very well.

Ms. Mielke - Ms. Mielke concurred with Ms. Lesher’s comments and stated that she appreciated the comment regarding the Senior Citizens Task Force. She stated that, in her opinion, it is a wonderful group and she is glad that the Council established the Task Force. She stated that the Council held a work session with the Task Force prior to today’s Council meeting, and in her opinion, it went very well – the Council received a full, up-to-date report. Ms. Mielke stated that the Council will be authorizing a Feasibility Study to determine what options the County has for providing housing for homeless seniors and will be looking to community organizations to assist with the project.

Ms. Haythe - Ms. Haythe echoed Mr. Lesher’s comments about the graduates of Chesapeake College, St. Michaels Middle High School and Easton High School. She stated that she, Mr. Lesher, and Mr. Callahan were able to attend the Easton High School graduation. She stated that every time she goes to a graduation she tears up and that, in her opinion, it is an amazing time to see the kids celebrating their four years in high school and who are on to new beginnings.

Following Ms. Haythe’s comments, Mr. Stepp reminded everyone that June 23, 2026 is Primary Day.

Mr. Callahan – Mr. Callahan echoed his colleagues’ comments regarding graduation. He stated that it was fun being a part of one of the most important times in the kids’ lives.

Upon motion by Ms. Haythe, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. in Open Session, then adjourn into Closed Session as listed on the statement for closing that meeting, and for the regularly scheduled meeting at 5:00 p.m. by voting 5– 0 as follows:

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

The meeting ended at 6:29 p.m.

The transcript of the Tuesday, June 9, 2026, County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

- XII. Work Session with Senior Citizens Task Force – The Council held a work session with members of the Senior Citizens Task Force on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 2:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland. Nancy Andrew, Director, Talbot County Office of Community Partnerships, and Jenna Marchi, Chair, Talbot County Commission on the Aging, and Julie Lowe, Executive Director, briefed the Council on the housing shortage in Talbot County, specifically affordable housing for those seniors on a fixed income, the 6 to 7 year wait times at affordable senior communities in Talbot County, and the impact the lack of a low-barrier shelter in the county has on the growing number of homeless senior citizens in the county. Ms. Marchi utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline factors which can cause homelessness or insecurity within the senior citizen population, including unsafe housing, utility insecurity, cost of housing, lack of adequate transportation, health issues, and accessibility to available resources. Ms. Marchi stated that the Task Force extensively reviewed what other communities on the Eastern Shore, in the state of Maryland and throughout the nation are doing to keep senior citizens housed, provide short-term intervention and provide long-term solutions for permanent housing. She stated that the Task Force found that there is no single solution; instead communities respond to their local needs. Ms. Andrew stated that at the present time, there are approximately 40 to 60 senior citizens who are in immediate need of housing in Talbot County. Ms. Marchi then outlined the three categories on the continuum to address homelessness: (1) Prevention – assisting individuals with connecting to available resources to assist them with remaining in their homes for as long as possible, providing home repairs and modifications, support services and financial assistance (rent, fuel, Meals on Wheels); (2) Crisis Response – the Task Force identified a senior specific shelter as the most urgent need, a low-barrier, year-round shelter which is open 24/7 which would prioritize immediate access to safety for those who are facing a sudden housing crisis, fleeing abuse, or are in unsafe living conditions; provide rapid rehousing to help transition individuals who are homeless back into permanent housing through rental assistance on a short-term basis, and provide support services; and transitional housing which would provide temporary housing, along with support services, prior to the individual's move into permanent housing; and (3) Permanent Housing Solutions – New construction which would provide accessible, affordable subsidized housing; Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU's) – a secondary, self-contained dwelling unit located on the same property as a primary dwelling; Home sharing – a program connecting individuals willing to share their housing; Set Asides – reservation of a certain number of percentage of housing units for a specific population. Ms. Marchi stated that the different categories require different expertise and different partners, *i.e.*, Human Services, Emergency Response Systems, Developers/Planners, respectively. She concluded the presentation by identifying potential areas for consideration by the Council: Prevention – preserving current local senior services, improving service navigation, strengthening coordination, and gap analysis; Crisis Response – conduct a Feasibility Study for a year-round 24/7 low-barrier shelter and explore models that can safely serve seniors; Permanent Housing – explore affordable and subsidized housing opportunities and evaluate County owned properties for public/private partnerships. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Marchi, Ms. Andrew, Ms. Lowe and other representatives of the Senior Citizens Task Force in attendance.

XIII. Summary of Closed Session Held on June 9, 2026:

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

Time of closed session: 3:30 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, 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:

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 the Department of Economic Development and Tourism	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Discussion involves specific individual	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
For legal advice on potential litigation involving Talbot County	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
For legal advice on implications of enactment of SB 791 on County operations	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

<p>For consideration of proposed easement on County owned property</p>	<p>GP § 3-305(b)(3)</p>	<p>Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice</p>	<p>Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas</p>	<p>Council concurred with the recommendation</p>
<p>To consider the acquisition of real property in Easton for a public purpose</p>	<p>GP § 3-305(b)(3)</p>	<p>To protect the County’s bargaining position regarding the possible acquisition of real property for a public purpose</p>	<p>Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas</p>	<p>Council concurred with the recommendation</p>



**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT
5/19/2026**

OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK

OPERATING FUNDS AT **5/12/2026** **\$ 16,240,914.09**

Total ADP Payroll PPE 5/8/2026	(1,036,355.89)
Returned Paymentus Payments	(533.10)
Returned Check #5433	(1,500.00)
Community Center Sales & Use Tax Due 5/20/2026	(32.31)
Golf Course Sales & Use Tax Due 5/20/2026	(1,736.05)
Roads Sales & Use Tax Due 5/20/2026	(772.06)

Deposits	1,041,715.82
Checks	(127,523.51)
ACH Disbursements	(1,456,768.66)
Voided Checks	127,416.50

OPERATING FUNDS AT **5/19/2026** **\$ 14,784,824.83**

PETTY CASH FUNDS **\$ 17,855.00**

INVESTMENT FUNDS

	<u>Yield</u>		
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	3.69%	\$	24,126,563.18
Bayvanguard Bank	3.89%	\$	11,630,995.65
Shore United Money Market Account	3.64%	\$	65,086,604.30

INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL **\$ 100,862,018.13**

TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS **\$ 115,646,842.96**



**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT
5/26/2026**

OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK

OPERATING FUNDS AT	5/19/2026	\$	14,784,824.83
Returned Check #1011			(125.00)
Deposits			990,646.66
Checks			(144,449.68)
ACH Disbursements			(2,973,154.62)
EFT's			(405,306.40)
Wire Transfers			(6,909,266.98)
OPERATING FUNDS AT	5/19/2026	\$	5,343,168.81

PETTY CASH FUNDS		\$	17,855.00
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INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	3.67%	\$	24,199,719.09
Bayvanguard Bank	3.89%	\$	11,630,995.65
Shore United Money Market Account	3.64%	\$	65,086,604.30
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL		\$	100,935,174.04

TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS		\$	106,278,342.85
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