



# TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

May 12, 2026

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

- I. Agenda – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Agenda of Tuesday, May 12, 2026.
- II. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, May 12, 2026.
- III. Proclamation: Community Action Month – May 2026 - The Clerk read a proclamation into the record in recognition of the role of Community Action Agencies in communities throughout the nation in strengthening the communities they serve by providing food, emergency financial assistance, energy assistance, eviction prevention and other vital services to help low-income families build long-term stability. The proclamation also spoke of the Neighborhood Service Center in Easton, which was founded in 1969 and for the past 37 years has served as Talbot County’s Community Action Agency, ensuring that programs and services reflect local priorities and needs. In 2025, the Neighborhood Service Center provided services to one in 13 residents in Talbot County. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the proclamation by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

Andy Hollis, Executive Director, Neighborhood Service Center (NSC), stated that the mission of the Neighborhood Service Center is to serve members of the Talbot County community who are impoverished or are on the brink of poverty. He stated that the organization is continuing to see an increase in requests from the food pantry and homelessness prevention services. He expressed his appreciation to the Council for the County’s continuing support of the NSC, particularly in light of reductions in funding at the federal and State levels and noted that Mr. Callahan currently serves as president of the Board of Directors for the Neighborhood Service Center. Mr. Hollis stated that the NSC has opened a temporary pop-up furniture mart on Dover Street in Easton, across from Shore United Bank in space generously donated for use by Mr. Richard Marks; the furniture mart sells good, used furniture donated by members of the community. He stated that volunteers pick up, deliver, and sell the furniture so that 100% of the proceeds go into the community. He stated that the pop-up has been open two weekends, and to date has brought in approximately \$8,000. Mr. Hollis expressed his appreciation to the community for their support. He concluded his comments by stating that the Neighborhood Service Center partners with donors, the St. Michaels Community Center, Talbot Interfaith Shelter and St. Vincent DePaul to provide food pantry and other services to those in need in the Talbot County community. Council members expressed their appreciation to Mr. Hollis and Yvette Robinson, Assistant Director, Neighborhood Service Center, for the work the Neighborhood Service Center does for Talbot County citizens in need.

Ms. Mielke presented the Proclamation to Mr. Hollis and Ms. Robinson, who accepted on behalf of the Neighborhood Service Center.

- IV. Presentation and Request by Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board – Ellen LaFrankie, Executive Director, Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board – Ms. LaFrankie expressed her appreciation to the Council for their continued support and the appointment of Talbot County representatives on the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board (WIB). She stated that the mission of the WIB is to provide high-quality career and training services to the residents of Talbot County with the goal of connecting individuals to meaningful employment in the region, thereby contributing to the economic health and economic stability of the communities served. She outlined the purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as the document which establishes the guidelines for workforce partner collaboration on the delivery of high-quality services to individuals and businesses. She stated that the MOU is required by the Maryland Governor’s Workforce Development Board Policy and that the MOU outlines the requirements for coordination, infrastructure funding and service delivery between the workforce system partners in order to effectively operate the local workforce system with the county; partners include the Maryland Department of Labor, Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Maryland Department of Social Services and Talbot County Department of Social Services and Chesapeake College. She stated that the residents of Talbot County benefit from access to workforce training funds, industry recognized credentials and certifications, and comprehensive employment services which support pathways to sustainable employment; businesses benefit from a skilled and prepared workforce. Ms. LaFrankie stated that the Resource Sharing Agreement outlines the financial and in-kind contributions made by each participating agency to ensure a clear framework for coordinating services and maximizing funds and efficiency; no County funds are required. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council concurred with the MOU by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- V. Update by Providence Strategies on 2026 Maryland General Assembly Session – Michael “Mike” Mason, Principal, Providence Strategies – Mr. Mason provided an update on his job as lobbyist on behalf of Talbot County during the 2026 Legislative Session to keep the Council apprised of legislation before the Maryland General Assembly which pertained to Talbot County specifically, or county governments throughout the state. He stated that he tracked a total of 234 proposed bills during the Legislative Session and he met with the Council each Thursday via Zoom to provide an opportunity for the Council to weigh in on various bills of interest to Talbot County. Mr. Mason stated that one achievement for Talbot County was the receipt of \$500,000 from the State for extension of water and sewer to the new University of Maryland Medical System Regional Medical Center. He stated that items discussed each week included, among others, proposed legislation on land use policies, education, housing, law enforcement and public safety. He stated that the Governor is still in the process of signing bills into law and that his office will continue to be engaged with the regulatory process for those bills which become law. Mr. Mason concluded his comments by expressing his appreciation to the Council for the opportunity to work with county government. A Legislative Report was provided to the Council.
- VI. Proclamation: National Emergency Medical Services Week – May 17–23, 2026 – The Clerk read a proclamation into the record which spoke of the commitment and dedication of those involved in

providing emergency care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year - first responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, nurses and physicians, firefighters, educators, trained members of the public, and out-of-hospital medical providers, and the thousands of hours which they expend on specialized training to continue to hone their lifesaving skills for the benefit of the public. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the proclamation by voting 4 - 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye

Mr. Stepp – Aye

Mr. Leshner – Aye

Ms. Mielke – Aye

Tina Kintop, Division Chief, EMS, expressed her appreciation to the Council for their continued support, stated that it was a pleasure to work for Talbot County and spoke of the partnership of EMS with various agencies in Talbot County to better assist county citizens. Ms. Kintop then introduced members of the Talbot County Department of Emergency Services in attendance: Lt. Jackie Reiss, Capt. Brian Micheliche, and EMT Drew Dickerson. Council members expressed their appreciation to all emergency services personnel for their dedication to the citizens of Talbot County.

Mr. Stepp presented the Proclamation to EMS Division Chief Tina Kintop and representatives of the Department of Emergency Services in attendance.

VII. Introduction of Numbered Resolution:

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 introduction. Prior to introduction, Ray Clarke, County Engineer, stated that the Council had recently held a work session with members of the Public Works Advisory Board and that the Board supports the proposed amendments to Resolution No. 175. The resolution was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 394. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601. If Resolution No. 394 is approved, it would update Resolution No. 175, which outlines the criteria for new sewer connections to the infrastructure being constructed for the properties listed in Resolution No. 250 to address the growing interest by citizens in connecting their properties to public sewer, and to resolve the conflict between the current verbiage of Resolution No. 175 and Resolution Nos. 387 through 391 which are outside the sewer service area set by Resolution No. 175.

VIII. Introduction of Legislation:

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 introduction. Prior to introduction, Patrick Thomas, County Attorney,

stated that at their meeting on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, the Council had received and reviewed the Planning Commission's recommendations with regard to exempting corporate flags from sign permit requirements and had directed the Office of Law to prepare legislation for same. Mr. Thomas then outlined the provisions of the proposed legislation and Council discussion ensued. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1626. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

IX. Public Hearings on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Projects:

- For All Seasons, Inc. (MD25-CD-27) – 300 Talbot Street, Easton, MD 21601 – For Renovations to the Behavioral Health and Rape Crisis Center \$750,000 CDBG award

As required by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) process, a second public hearing was held on renovations to the For All Seasons, Inc. facility located at 300 Talbot Street in Easton. Mary Kay Verdery, Talbot County Grants Administrator, utilized a PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of the renovation project at For All Seasons, Inc. which provides essential behavioral health and rape crisis services in the Mid-Shore Region. She stated the funding for the renovation project was provided by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) in the sum of \$750,000; additional funding of \$100,000 was provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA); \$300,000 from the Maryland Department of General Services; and a \$100,000 grant from the Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation. Ms. Verdery provided before and after photographs of the areas which were renovated or repurposed to support safe, private and emotionally comfortable environments for those affected by trauma. Ms. Verdery stated that the grant requires the tracking of 750 beneficiaries of services provided by For All Seasons, Inc., 675 of whom must be low- and moderate-income individuals. She stated that the CDBG grant began in September 2024 and funding is required to be spent by July 31, 2026; renovations are anticipated to be completed Summer 2026, with a ribbon-cutting planned for August 11, 2026. Total renovation cost was \$1.2 million. Ms. Verdery expressed her appreciation to the Council and the Department of Housing and Community Development for their support and stated that it had been a pleasure to work with the staff of For All Seasons, Inc., contractor, Harper & Sons, and Rauch Engineering on the project. Members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on the CDBG project.

- COVID CV-1-11 Food Pantry Program – Food, Equipment, Supplies and Staffing for the Food Pantries:
  - Neighborhood Service Center – 126 Port Street, Easton, MD 21601 – Project C: \$68,000; and Project E: \$75,000
  - St. Michaels Community Center – 103 Railroad Avenue, St. Michaels, MD 21663 – Project D: \$48,000; and Project F: \$75,000

Prior to the public hearing, Mary Kay Verdery, Talbot County Grants Administrator, stated that the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Block Grant Coronavirus Emergency Response Program was created under the federal CARES Act in response to COVID-19 to support food security and food service programs. Ms. Verdery utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline initial CARES Act grant funding provided to Talbot County through DHCD in 2020 of \$150,000 to support the St. Michaels Community Center and \$100,000 to support the Upper Shore Aging Senior Food Program. She stated that in early 2025, Talbot County received an additional \$116,500 to support the food programs at the Neighborhood Service Center (Easton) (\$68,000) and

the St. Michaels Community Center (\$48,500); each received an additional \$75,000 in late 2025; all funding is required to be spent by end of June 2026. She stated that the initial \$68,000 allocation provided to the Neighborhood Service Center was utilized for the food pantry, food pantry shelving, a liftgate for their delivery truck and food pantry staffing; the additional allocation of \$75,000 is being used for food program food, food pantry bags, an HVAC unit to cool the food pantry storage area, a replacement refrigerator and new refrigerator and food pantry software. Ms. Verdery stated that the Neighborhood Service Center food pantry hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with extended hours on Wednesdays until 7:00 p.m.; mobile food pantry delivery is every other Wednesday by appointment. Ms. Verdery then provided an update on the initial allocation of grant funding (\$48,000) expended by the St. Michaels Community Center which provided hot meals, food for pantry bags, food containers, pantry shelves and staffing (a part-time chef, volunteer coordinator, and pantry staffing to expand pantry hours). She stated that the second allocation of \$75,000 provides hot meals, pantry food, after-school snacks, supplies, equipment, deliveries and staffing. Ms. Verdery stated that the St. Michaels Community Center also provides programming which support youth, family and senior citizen activities, trips, etc. and provided examples of same; the St. Michaels Community Center is open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with food distributions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and Monday and Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Ms. Verdery again expressed her appreciation to the Council and the Department of Housing and Community Development for their support and for the partnership with the St. Michaels Community Center and Neighborhood Service Center.

X. County Manager's Report:

- A. Request for Letter of Support – Requested Council approval for a letter in support of the Town of Easton's application for Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Highway Safety Improvement Program grant funding; if approved, the grant funding will be used for rapid flashing beacon activation signals at high volume pedestrian crossing areas within the town; no County funds are required. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved forwarding a letter in support of the Town's application for funding by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- B. Request from Department of Technical Services – Requested Council approval to award the contract for redesign of the County website to GHD Digital in the sum of \$77,659.65 by piggybacking on a federal GSA contract. Council discussion ensued with Tommy Haddaway, Director, Department of Technical Services, and Sarah Kilmon, Communications Manager, who stated that the redesign services are being requested in order to upgrade and expand website services to comply with recently passed ADA legislation governing website accessibility and so that citizens can more easily navigate the County website. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved awarding the contract as outlined by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

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

XII. Council Comments:

Mr. Stepp - No comments.

Mr. Leshner - No comments.

Ms. Mielke - Ms. Mielke stated that one week from tomorrow, on May 20<sup>th</sup>, a Senior Resource Fair will be held at the Easton Fire Department. She stated that it is open to older adults, caregivers, family members and anyone interested in learning about services and resources available to senior citizens in Talbot County; there will be approximately 35 vendors and delicious food. The Senior Resource Fair will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Callahan – No comments.

Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. with the Board of Education in the Bradley Meeting Room, and to reconvene on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, in Open Session at 3:30 p.m., then adjourning 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 4– 0 as follows:

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

The meeting ended at 6:10 p.m.

The transcript of the Tuesday, May 12, 2026, County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

XIII. Summary of Closed Session Held on May 12, 2026:

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

Time of closed session: 3:40 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, Mielke, Stepp  
Members opposed: None  
Abstaining: None  
Absent: Haythe

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, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
For legal briefing on potential large-scale solar energy system application	GP § 3-305(b)(7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action



**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND  
WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT  
5/12/2026**

<b>OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK</b>			
<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>5/5/2026</b>		<b>\$ 18,650,104.24</b>
Total ADP Payroll PPE 4/24/2026			(1,033,446.60)
Returned Paymentus Payments			(499.89)
Deposits			2,119,161.33
Checks			(104,078.09)
ACH Disbursements			(1,210,404.96)
EFT's			(571,038.37)
Wire Transfers			(1,625,563.57)
Voided Checks			16,680.00
<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>5/12/2026</b>		<b>\$ 16,240,914.09</b>
<b>PETTY CASH FUNDS</b>			<b>\$ 17,855.00</b>
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS</b>			
		<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	3.69%		\$ 24,126,563.18
Bayvanguard Bank	3.89%		\$ 11,594,536.68
Shore United Money Market Account	3.64%		\$ 64,892,182.61
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 100,631,137.47</b>
<b><u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u></b>			<b>\$ 116,872,051.56</b>