



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

May 26, 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 26, 2026.
- II. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, May 19, 2026, and Tuesday, May 26, 2026.
- III. Introduction of Legislation:

A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 190 (ZONING, SUBDIVISION, AND LAND DEVELOPMENT) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FOR THE PARTIAL OR COMPLETE RELEASE OF A RESERVED LAND AGREEMENT OR A RESERVATION OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS AGREEMENT IF THE PARCEL IS SUBJECT TO AN OPTION CONTRACT WITH THE STATE OF MARYLAND AGRICULTURAL LAND PRESERVATION FOUNDATION (MALPF), SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that Planning & Zoning staff had briefed the Council on the proposed text amendment, as requested by Althea Dulin through her attorney, Zach Smith, at its meeting on Tuesday, April 14, 2026. He stated that the Council had also reviewed the Planning Commission's recommendations regarding the proposed text amendment. Mr. Thomas stated that if the legislation is approved, it would permit the Council to release a Reserved Land Agreement or a Reservation of Development Rights Agreement if the property is subject to an option contract with the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) which would establish a perpetual easement on the property and is binding upon the owner; at present, the agreements can only be released if the zoning classification changes. Zach Smith, speaking on behalf of his clients, Robert and Althea Dulin, briefed the Council on the reason for the request and stated that the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board and Planning Commission are in unanimous support of the legislation, and the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy spoke in favor of it before the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board and the Planning Commission. The legislation was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Bill No. 1627. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

- IV. Eligible for Vote:

Bill No. 1625, AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE 2026-2027 ANNUAL BUDGET AND APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for vote. Prior to the vote, Finance Director, Martha Sparks, outlined the various items included in a proposed amendment to Bill No. 1625 which included, among other items, 4th quarter Budget transfers which are Capital Outlay requests from departments proposed for the FY27 Budget for which funding was available in the FY26 Budget as approved by Council at their meeting on Tuesday, April 28th; changes approved by consensus of Council following budget deliberations on Tuesday, May 12th and with the Board of Education on Monday, May 18th, an adjustment in funding for private Pre-K following receipt of final calculations from the Maryland State Department of Education, assistance for the Town of Easton with staffing School Resource Officers in private schools located within Easton’s incorporated boundaries, and non-recurring funding of a weapons detection system for Talbot County public schools. Ms. Sparks stated that the net change to the proposed FY27 Budget is \$0; the total proposed budget remains at \$159,100,000.00. The amendment, known as Amendment No. 1, was introduced by Mr. Callahan, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp. The Council approved Amendment No. 1 by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

Bill No. 1625, as amended, was then brought forward for vote. The Council approved Bill No. 1625, as amended, by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

Bill No. 1625, as amended, will become effective as outlined in the legislation.

X. County Manager’s Report:

A. Airport Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Hugh Grunden to a four-year term on the Airport Board; said term will expire on June 1, 2030. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

B. Commission on the Aging – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Marion Donahue to the Commission on the Aging; Ms. Donahue will complete the unexpired term of Megan Pinder which will expire on April 1, 2028. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the appointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye

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

- C. Golf Board – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Benny Mangor to a three-year term on the Golf Board; said term will expire on June 1, 2029. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the reappointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- D. Bid No. 26-06, REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR AVIATION CONSULTING SERVICES – EASTON/NEWNAM FIELD AIRPORT (ESN) – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Micah Risher, Manager, Easton Airport, stated that every five (5) years, Easton Airport is required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to rebid its contract for airport consulting services; responses were received from AECOM and Delta Aviation Consultants. He stated that he and the Airport Board reviewed both Statements of Qualifications and the Airport Board unanimously recommended that Easton Airport continue with AECOM; Mr. Risher concurred with the Board’s recommendation. Mr. Risher stated that the process for selection of a company to provide consulting services is based on qualifications, not price. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Risher. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved awarding Bid No. 26-06 to AECOM for a term not to exceed five (5) years by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- E. Request from Department of Technical Services – Requested Council approval to have the Department of Technical Services utilize a National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance (NCPA) Contract to purchase replacement computers and upgrades for servers which have reached the end of their life cycle; said purchase will be made from Dell Computers in the sum of \$358,119.68, the funding for the purchase is available in the FY26 Budget. Council discussion ensued with Tommy Haddaway, Director, Department of Technical Services. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the request by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- F. Request from Department of Technical Services – Requested Council approval to have the Department of Technical Services purchase replacement network infrastructure equipment from ePlus Technology in the sum of \$132,520.59; said purchase will be

made by piggybacking on a Maryland State IT contract; funding for the purchase is available in the FY26 Budget. Council discussion ensued with Tommy Haddaway, Director, Department of Technical Services. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the purchase as outlined by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

Mr. Stamp expressed his appreciation to Mr. Haddaway and the Department of Technology Services team for their hard work to ensure that the County maintains a safe operating environment and leverages technology so that processes are more efficient.

- G. Request from Local Drug and Alcohol Coordinating Committee (LDACC) – Requested Council concurrence for the submission to the State of a five-year Local Abatement Plan for Use of Opioid Restitution Funds. Sheriff Joe Gamble stated that in 2023, the Council charged LDACC with drafting a plan for use of national opioid settlement funding which come through the State of Maryland to Talbot County. He stated that the two-year plan which was previously submitted is now expiring and a new five-year plan which will be in effect from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2031, is required to be submitted to the State. He outlined various components of the Plan and the approximate amount of funding to be designated to various segments of the Plan, including the continuation of the Department of Corrections Opioid Use Disorder Program; funding for microgrants to nonprofits in the community, including Grace Street Recovery which serves as the County’s Safe Station; the promotion of a “dual app” by the Sheriff’s Department and the Department of Emergency Services so that individuals seeking resources to recover from opioid use will be able to access those resources. Council members expressed their appreciation to Sheriff Gamble and the members of LDACC for helping to ensure that the funding assists those members of the Talbot County community who have been hurt by opioid use and abuse. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Mr. Leshner, the Council approved the five-year Local Abatement Plan for Use of Opioid Restitution Funds as presented, by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- H. Request from Department of Public Works – Requested Council approval to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement Between Talbot County, Maryland and Ferry Cove Shellfish, Inc. for an Oyster Recovery Pilot Project. Mr. Stamp stated that Talbot County will be contributing \$125,000 toward the pilot project which will help support the Talbot Watermen Association and local businesses that plant oyster spat on shell. Council discussion ensued with County Engineer, Ray Clarke, and Stephan Abel, Ferry Cove Shellfish, Inc. regarding the project and its goals, including filtering the water, generating nutrient credits which can be sold or used in future years to help the oyster recovery program, and provide oysters for harvesting by local watermen in the future. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Clarke and Mr. Abel

regarding various facets of the proposed project. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved entering into the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- I. Request from Finance Department – Requested Council approval of the Finance Director’s recommendation to extend the agreement with SB & Company for financial auditing services. Martha Sparks, Finance Director, stated that the County has utilized the auditing services of SB & Company since 2018 and during that time the County has benefitted from the firm’s institutional knowledge and continuity and is requesting an extension of the agreement for a period of three (3) years; the original term was for a period of five (5) years. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the request by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

XI. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

XII. Council Comments:

Ms. Mielke - No comments.

Mr. Stepp – Mr. Stepp stated that, in his opinion, it was great to get a budget passed and expressed his appreciation to County staff and department heads for their hard work on the budget.

Mr. Leshner - Mr. Leshner stated that he had recently attended the retirement of Shauna Beulah, the long-time librarian at the St. Michaels branch of the Talbot County Free Library where she had served for 40 years, bringing the community together and leading the branch to become an anchor of the St. Michaels community. He stated that, in his opinion, the tributes for Ms. Beulah were heartfelt and it was nice to see her honored. Mr. Leshner stated that it had just come to his attention that Mr. Bill Wolinski, a past Assistant County Engineer for Talbot County, had passed away. He stated that Mr. Wolinski’s work endures throughout the county; the cleaner waters, cleaner wastewater and stormwater runoff are a result of his years of work for the County. Mr. Leshner stated that, in his opinion, Mr. Wolinski was a model public servant, doing his work quietly, mostly behind the scenes. He stated that one of Mr. Wolinski’s projects was a model stormwater ditch retrofit design that the County continues to include in the design for its road expansion projects. Mr. Leshner concluded his comments by expressing his appreciation to Mr. Wolinski for his service to Talbot County and asked that his family be remembered.

Mr. Callahan – Mr. Callahan expressed his appreciation to County staff for their work on the FY27 Budget.

Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 2:30 p.m. for a work session with the Senior Citizens Task Force in the Bradley Meeting Room; to convene in Open Session at 3:30 p.m., 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 4– 0 as follows:

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

The meeting ended at 6:00 p.m.

The transcript of the Tuesday, May 26, 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 26, 2026:

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

Time of closed session: 3:45 p.m. End 4:30 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, Lesher, 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:

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 Lesher, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action

To discuss personnel matter in the Department of Public Works	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Discussion involves specific individual	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	Council concurred with the recommendation
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, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
For legal advice on Administrative Charging Committee and Trial Board	GP § 3-305(b)(7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, 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, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action



**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
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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
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<u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u>		\$	106,278,342.85
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