



# TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

October 24, 2023

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, October 24, 2023, was brought forward for approval. Ms. Haythe requested that the Agenda be amended to add *Reconsideration of Proposed Amendment to the Education Article for the 2024 Legislative Session*; 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. Council Reconsideration of Proposed Amendment to the Education Article for the 2024 Legislative Session – Ms. Haythe stated that the Council, at its meeting on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, had voted to forward an amendment to the Education Article to the local delegation for pre-filing with the General Assembly for the 2024 Legislative Session regarding filling vacancies on the Talbot County Board of Education. She stated that she is now requesting Council’s consideration to not send the amendment to the local delegation until the Council meets with the Board of Education, the process for selection has been defined, and the cost of holding a special election has been provided by the Talbot County Board of Elections. She stated that, in her opinion, the Council should have all the information prior to forwarding it to the local delegation. Council discussion ensued. Ms. Haythe made a motion to rescind the vote of Tuesday, October 10, 2023 to forward Mr. Stepp’s option (Option #1) to amend the Education Article to the local delegation, to obtain all information needed, and to meet with the Board of Education, in order to make a concise recommendation to the State Legislature on the process to fill a vacancy for the Talbot County Board of Education; the motion was seconded by Ms. Mielke. The Council approved the motion by voting 4 – 1 as follows:

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

- III. Minutes – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, September 26, 2023.

- IV. Disbursements – Mr. Callahan requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, October 17, 2023 and Tuesday, October 24, 2023.

- V. Proclamation: Operation Green Light for Veterans – November 6, 2023 – November 12, 2023 - The Clerk read a proclamation into the record regarding the *Operation Green Light* initiative which encourages businesses and residents to display a green light at their home or business from November 6, 2023 through November 12, 2023 as a way to honor, recognize, and bring visibility to, the service and sacrifice of veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. The proclamation spoke of the

various local, State, and national organizations which assist and support veterans as they return to civilian life. Nina Ovian, Marketing and Events Coordinator, Mid Shore Behavioral Health; Alisha Saulsbury, Forensic Mental Health Program, Mid Shore Behavioral Health; Lisa Short, Behavioral Health Coordinator/Adult Population Supervisor, Mid Shore Behavioral Health; and Dina Karpf, Eastern Regional Resource Coordinator and Strategic Partnership Coordinator, Maryland's Commitment to Veterans, briefed the Council on the wide variety of services provided to veterans and their families by their respective organizations; from housing and housing related matters, to healthcare, to behavioral health and substance abuse, to assistance with navigating the resources and services available. Ms. Karpf of Maryland's Commitment to Veterans, may be reached at 1-877-770-4801. Information on Operation Green Light for Veterans may be found at <https://veterans.maryland.gov/operaton-green-light>.

Mr. Stepp presented Proclamations to representatives of American Legion Post 70 (Easton), American Legion Blake Blackston Post 77 (Easton), VFW Post 5118 (Easton), Mid-Shore Behavioral Health, Maryland's Commitment to Veterans and Veteran and Military Support Alliance in attendance.

- VI. Presentation: Economic Development Week in Maryland – October 23, 2023 – October 27, 2023 - Prior to presentation of the proclamation, Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism, expressed her appreciation to the Council for their support of the Talbot County business community. She stated that, in her opinion, a strong, prosperous business community is the foundation for a strong community. She provided statistical information on the number of businesses in Talbot County with at least one employee (1,457) and the number of non-employer establishments, which include independent contractors, real estate agents, and consultants (4,364) and stated that Talbot County is a hub for healthcare, retail, financial services, and tourism. Council members expressed their appreciation to Ms. Vanhooser for her dedication to Talbot County. The Clerk then read a proclamation into the record which spoke of the importance of economic stability to communities and of those who partner with various entities and work to create, retain, and expand job opportunities in communities throughout Talbot County and the state of Maryland to facilitate growth, enhance wealth, and to provide a stable tax base. Ms. Vanhooser introduced her colleague, Rich Loeffler, Counselor, Maryland Small Business Development Center, as an individual whose expertise is vital to the work of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Mr. Stepp, 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

Ms. Haythe presented the Proclamation to Cassandra Vanhooser and Rich Loeffler.

- VII. Presentation on Chapel District Elementary School Renovation and Addition Project Design Development Submission – Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations, Talbot County Public Schools; Peter Winebrenner, AIA, Principal, Hord Coplan Macht – Mr. Shafer and Mr. Winebrenner utilized a PowerPoint presentation to brief the Council on the proposed design for the Chapel District Elementary School Renovation and Addition Project which included the site and floor plans, a 3D perspective, and design development cost estimates. Mr. Winebrenner provided a brief history of the current structure and stated that the existing facility will be renovated, and 16,000 square feet of space added to provide for 471 students in Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade on the 19.5-acre site. He stated

that the design phase is the second of three phases and is a major milestone for the State’s approval and funding. Mr. Winebrenner outlined phase 3 (construction document phase) through March 2024, during which time construction bids will be developed and a guaranteed maximum price will be provided; construction is anticipated to begin in late Summer 2024 and continue for two (2) years. Mr. Winebrenner then outlined changes to be made to the current site, including the revamping and expansion of drop-off areas and relocation of several areas, including the media center. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Winebrenner and Mr. Shafer; Mr. Shafer indicated that a very detailed design will be submitted to the State. Mr. Shafter stated that the estimated cost of construction and site work is \$28.97 million, approximately \$1 million less than as presented in the Talbot County Public Schools Capital Improvement Plan. Council discussion again ensued with Mr. Winebrenner and Mr. Shafer. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved forwarding a letter to the State Interagency Commission for Public School Construction in support of the Design Development Submission as presented by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

Ms. Haythe left the meeting.

VIII. Presentation by Hog Neck Golf Course on Practice Range Entertainment Enhancement – Rich Setter, General Manager/Head Golf Professional, Hog Neck Golf Course; Rich Loeffler, Counselor, Maryland Small Business Development Center – Mr. Setter utilized a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council on proposed plans for a practice range entertainment enhancement project which is not weather dependent on the ability of Hog Neck Golf Course to generate revenue. He stated that the range enhancement facility would provide Hog Neck the ability to offer practice under covered shelter as well as evening practice under lights. He provided a rendering of the proposed facility which would include 15 practice bays on the lower level and 15 on the upper level and outlined various features utilizing TrackMan Golf Driving Range technology to provide entertainment for users of all ages, including games for youth and the opportunity for golfers to play virtual tournaments at 130 golf courses. He also noted food and beverage enhancements the facility would offer. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Setter and Mr. Loeffler who had assisted Mr. Setter in the preparation of a business plan for the proposed project. County Manager, Clay Stamp, stated that the purpose of Mr. Setter’s presentation was to present the feasibility of the proposed practice range enhancement facility and a business plan for same as previously requested by Council; the capital enabling legislation for the proposed project was approved earlier in FY24. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved moving forward with the project by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

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

- Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center located at 331 E. Dover Street, Easton, MD for building renovations to provide additional space for organizing and providing services to low-to-moderate income persons;
- Shore Legal Access, Inc. (formerly Mid-Shore Pro Bono) located at 499 Idlewild Avenue, Easton, MD for legal services to low-to-moderate income persons for a variety of needs including, but not limited to, housing foreclosures, rental evictions, property title issues, and bankruptcy

were brought forward for public hearing. Prior to the public hearing, Mary Kay Verdery, Grants Administrator, provided an update on the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center (ChesMRC) project which was the recipient of \$119,000 in Maryland Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for construction of a community center space and the equipping of a commercial kitchen in the Multicultural Resource Center and outlined the various improvements being made to the property. Ms. Verdery stated that one of the conditions of the grant, which began in November 2021 and will conclude on November 30, 2023, is to track the number of individuals who benefit from the site. She stated that ChesMRC is hoping to track 1,500 beneficiaries, 1,350 of whom are required to meet low-to-moderate-income requirements. She then provided an update on Shore Legal Access, formerly known as Mid-Shore Pro Bono, which was the recipient of \$50,000 in CDBG funding to be used for salaries, legal costs, and outreach; the term of the grant began in November 2021 and will conclude November 30, 2023. Ms. Verdery stated that services provided by Shore Legal Access include monthly life-planning clinics, debt assistance, tenant representation in District Court and assistance with expungement of criminal records; tracking of beneficiaries was a condition of the grant until 500 low-to-moderate-income individuals had been served; to date over 770 individuals have been served by Shore Legal Access in the eight (8) Maryland Eastern Shore counties it serves. Ms. Verdery utilized a PowerPoint presentation to provide photographs of the ChesMRC project and to provide information on the Shore Legal Access project. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Verdery as each project was brought forward; members of the public were afforded an opportunity to comment on the projects. No further action was required by the Council.

X. Public Hearing:

Resolution No. 350, A RESOLUTION TO PLACE QUESTIONS ON THE BALLOT AT THE 2024 GENERAL ELECTION TO AMEND SECTION 102 OF THE CHARTER OF TALBOT COUNTY TO PROVIDE THAT THE CITIZENS OF TALBOT COUNTY SHALL BE ACCORDED EQUAL TREATMENT IN ALL MATTERS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT REGARDLESS OF AGE, DISABILITY, HEALTH, OR GENETIC INFORMATION IN ADDITION TO RACE, CREED, SEX, OR NATIONAL ORIGIN, 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 Resolution No. 350 is a proposed amendment to the Talbot County Charter, and as such, a four-fifths vote of the Council is required for approval. If approved by the Council, the amendment would then be placed on the ballot for the November 2024 General Election for consideration by the voters of Talbot County. Members of the public were then afforded an opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation. No action was taken as all members of the Council were not in attendance. The deadline for submittal of ballot questions to the Talbot County Board of Elections is mid-Summer 2024.

XI. Eligible for Vote:

Bill No. 1548, A BILL TO AUTHORIZE TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND (THE “COUNTY”) TO BORROW NOT MORE THAN EIGHT HUNDRED EIGHTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$880,000) IN ORDER TO FINANCE AND REFINANCE IMPROVEMENTS TO CERTAIN WASTEWATER FACILITIES IN THE COUNTY AND TO EFFECT SUCH BORROWING BY THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF ONE OR MORE SERIES OF ITS GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS PAYABLE FROM AD VALOREM TAXES TO BE LEVIED BY THE COUNTY; EXEMPTING THE BONDS FROM THE PROVISIONS OF SECTIONS 19-205 AND 19-207 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND; AUTHORIZING THE CONSOLIDATION OF SEPARATE SERIES OF BONDS INTO ONE OR MORE BONDS; AUTHORIZING THE REFUNDING OF SUCH BONDS AND RELATING GENERALLY TO THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF SUCH BONDS FOR SUCH PURPOSES, was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for vote. Prior to the vote, County Engineer, Ray Clarke stated that the legislation is the last step in securing loans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development for upgrades to the sewer collection system in the town of St. Michaels, the work for which has already been completed. Council discussion ensued with Martha Sparks, Finance Director, who stated that the loan will be paid for by the users of the system. The Council approved Bill No. 1548 by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

Mr. Callahan – Aye  
Mr. Stepp – Aye  
Mr. Leshner – Aye  
Ms. Mielke – Aye  
Ms. Haythe – Aye (via absentee ballot)

Bill No. 1548 will become effective as provided for in the legislation.

XII. County Manager’s Report:

- A. Mid-Shore Behavioral Health’s Regional Mental Health Advisory Committee – Requested Council approval for the reappointment of Tim Haynes and Sharon Dundon to three-year terms on Mid-Shore Behavioral Health’s Regional Mental Health Advisory Committee; said terms to expire on June 30, 2026 and June 30, 2024, respectively. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the reappointments by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- B. Talbot County Department of Social Services Board of Directors – Requested Council approval for the appointment of Dorrie Gowe-Lambert to a three-year term on the Talbot County Department of Social Services Board of Directors; said term will expire on June 30, 2026. Upon motion by Mr. Leshner, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the appointment by voting 4 - 0 as follows:

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

- C. Upper Shore Aging, Inc. Board of Directors - Requested Council approval for the appointment of Pamela Limberry to a three-year term on the Upper Shore Aging, Inc. Board of Directors; said term will expire in September 2026. Upon motion by Mr. Lesher, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the appointment by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- D. Talbot County Planning Commission – Mr. Stamp stated that there will be an upcoming vacancy on the Talbot County Planning Commission; individuals interested in being considered are asked to complete the *Request for Appointment* form on the County website and submit same, along with a brief resume and letter of interest, to the County Manager’s Office by Noon on Wednesday, November 8, 2023.

- E. Bid No. 23-06, TALBOT COUNTY VISITORS CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY – Cassandra Vanhooser, Director, Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism, stated that the Department had received funding from the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund for a feasibility study for the above-referenced project. She stated following interviews with each of the four (4) candidates who submitted a bid, the selection committee is recommending Council award Bid No. 23-06 to Becker Morgan Group of Salisbury in the sum of \$48,500. Ms. Vanhooser stated that although Becker Morgan Group is not the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, the selection committee is of the opinion that they are the best candidate for this project. Mr. Stamp stated that the Council previously approved \$37,500 in a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to be grant funded; the remaining \$11,000 will come from budgeted Tourism Department funds. Upon motion by Mr. Lesher, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the award as recommended by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

- F. Request from Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center for Letter of Support for Economic Development Administration (EDA) Public Works Grant – Requested Council approval to forward a letter in support of the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center’s application for a U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Public Works Grant in the sum of \$500,000 to match funding received through the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund; no County funding is required. Upon motion by Mr. Lesher, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved forwarding a letter in support of the grant application by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

G. Bid No. 23-07, TALBOT COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX – PHASE I – BUILDING RENOVATIONS – EASTON – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Requested Council approval to award Bid No. 23-07 to Willow Construction, LLC, the lowest, responsive and responsible bidder, in the sum of \$3,170,000. Mr. Stamp stated that a total of five (5) bids were received. He stated that the County then engaged lowest bidder, Willow Construction, in value engineering for the project which resulted in savings of \$730,000 through utilization of the existing HVAC system; funding is available in the budget for the project located at 28640 Marys Court in Easton.

H. Bid No. 22-15, TALBOT COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER GYMNASIUM ADDITION – 10028 OCEAN GATEWAY, EASTON – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Change Order – Requested Council approval of the recommendation of the Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation to award a Change Order for Bid No. 22-15 in the sum of \$99,501.69 to Willow Construction, LLC for parking lot lighting at the Talbot County Community Center; said funding to come from the Contingency Fund which the County Manager certified funding is available. Preston Peper, Director, Department Parks and Recreation, stated that the parking lot lighting was inadvertently omitted from the RFP for Bid No. 22-15; Willow Construction already has an electrician on site to expedite the process. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the Change Order and use of contingency funds for same by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

I. Bid No. 22-15, TALBOT COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER GYMNASIUM ADDITION – 10028 OCEAN GATEWAY, EASTON – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Requested Council approval to have the Department of Parks and Recreation proceed with two projects related to Bid No. 22-15 by contracting out removal of some of the sidewalk area adjacent to the gymnasium addition, moving several light poles and fixtures, and adding some parking at the front of the addition in the sum of \$45,345.66; said work will be completed by piggybacking on an existing Program Open Space project which is reimbursable. Mr. Stamp stated that Mr. Peper’s diligence resulted in a savings of approximately \$62,000 over the price submitted by contractor, Willow Construction, in the amount of \$129,855.63. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved moving forward with the projects as outlined by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

Mr. Peper stated that the Department of Parks and Recreation will host its Halloween event (BOOnanza) for both children and adults tomorrow evening, Wednesday, October 25, 2023 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Talbot County Community Center.

- J. Mid-Shore Household Hazardous Waste Dropoff Day – Mr. Stamp stated that the Mid-Shore Household Hazardous Waste Dropoff event will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 28, 2023 at 26375 Hobbs Road in Denton.

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

XIV. Council Comments:

- Mr. Stepp - Mr. Stepp noted several forthcoming events before the next Council meeting, including meeting with the Board of Education on Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. to discuss how we are going to move forward with a proposed amendment to the Education Article; the location of the meeting has not yet been determined. Mr. Stepp stated that he hopes everyone has a happy and safe Halloween. He stated that as Veterans Day approaches, it is important to have our veterans here to recognize them and he wants to make sure we recognize all our men and women in uniform, both past and present. Mr. Stepp concluded his comments by hoping everyone has a successful and safe Waterfowl Festival weekend.
- Mr. Leshner - Mr. Leshner stated that he was impressed by the turnout for Talbot County Resource Day on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at Easton Elementary School and expressed his appreciation to Catherine Poe and all the volunteers and organizations who organized the event to reach potential clients.
- Ms. Mielke - Ms. Mielke stated that with all the international turmoil going on, she encouraged everyone to pray in their own way for peace in the world.
- Mr. Callahan - Mr. Callahan concurred with Ms. Mielke's statements and expressed his appreciation to Ms. Vanhooser for all her hard work on behalf of Talbot County.

Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. for a meeting with representatives of the Maryland Department of Transportation for the annual Consolidated Transportation Plan meeting; after which the Council will be meeting with members of the Local Delegation, Senator Mautz, Delegate Adams and Delegate Hutchinson; both meetings are open to the public and will take place in the Meeting Room at the Talbot County Free Library located at 100 W. Dover Street in Easton; and to reconvene on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in Open Session and immediately adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of matters as listed on the statement for closing that meeting; and for the regularly scheduled meeting at 6:00 p.m. by voting 4 - 0 as follows:

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



The meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

The transcript of the October 24, 2023 County Council meeting is available for review in the Office of the Talbot County Manager during regular office hours.

- XV. Work Session with Talbot County Board of Education Regarding Proposed State Legislation to Fill Vacancies on Talbot County Board of Education – The Council held a work session with members of the Talbot County Board of Education on Monday, October 30, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Talbot County Free Library in Easton. The purpose of the work session was to discuss forwarding a proposed amendment to the Education Article for pre-filing with the local delegation for the 2024 Legislative Session. If approved, State law would then allow the Talbot County Council to fill vacancies on the Board of Education. Members of the County Council in attendance were Chuck Callahan, President; Keasha Haythe, Member; Lynn Mielke, Member; and Dave Stepp, Member. Members of the Board of Education in attendance were Emily Jackson, President; Candace Henry, Vice President; Amy Dodson, Member; Jymil Thompson, Member; Mary Wheeler, Member; Anna Howie, Member; and Deborah Bridges, Member. Dr. Sharon Pepukayi, Superintendent, Talbot County Public Schools; Charlene Gould, Executive Assistant, Talbot County Public Schools; Andy Burke, President, Talbot County Education Association; Tammy Stafford, Director, Talbot County Board of Elections; Patrick Thomas, Talbot County Attorney; Clay Stamp, Talbot County Manager and Jessica Morris, Assistant County Manager. Mr. Thomas outlined Mr. Stepp’s proposal whereby the County Council would fill vacancies on the Board of Education and would adopt rules governing the procedure for filling the vacancy. Ms. Mielke stated that her proposal sets forth a more specific process whereby the County Council would still fill the vacancy; however, that individual would only serve until the next biennial election. Council discussion ensued with Board of Education representatives who expressed unanimous consensus that the current system is not broken and questioned why any amendments were even being considered. Ms. Mielke stated that her proposal provides for a special election so that the citizens of Talbot County can choose the individual they wish to represent them. Mr. Stepp stated that his intention in proposing an amendment to the Education Article is to restore local decision-making to the process. At Ms. Haythe’s request, Ms. Stafford outlined the costs to hold a special election would range from \$100,000 to \$500,000, depending upon the district in which the vacancy occurs, the number of precincts and polling places needed as well as specific needs related to the special election. Ms. Jackson emphasized that the members of the Board of Education, who are elected, work alongside the Council, and are not under the oversight of the Council. Council discussion again ensued. The work session concluded at 6:00 p.m. The County Council and Board of Education are next scheduled to meet on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. to discuss the FY25 Budget and implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future; the location of the meeting will be announced at a later date.
- XVI. Work Session on Proposed Weight Limits on Black Dog Alley – The Council held a work session with representatives from the Talbot County Sheriff’s Office, Roads Department, Department of Public Works, and Emergency Services on Tuesday, October 24, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room. The purpose of the work session was to discuss proposed legislation to restrict the weight limit of vehicles on Black Dog Alley to a maximum of 17,000 lbs. to prevent excess wear and unnecessary repairs of the road surface. Ray Clarke, County Engineer, stated that several driving apps list Black Dog Alley as an alternate route to avoid traffic congestion through and approaching Easton and consequently, commercial vehicles such as car carriers, tractor trailers, dump trucks and trash haulers utilize the road to avoid the congestion Council discussion ensued with Mr. Clarke and the representatives of the various other departments in attendance. Mike Mertaugh, Assistant County Engineer/Roads Engineer, stated that the weight restriction enacted by the County for Dover Neck Road several years ago, has worked out well. The representatives

emphasized that should weight restrictions on the road be implemented, certain vehicles would be exempt, including local, State or federal government vehicles, vehicles engaged in agricultural production or operations, emergency vehicles, propane and oil trucks making deliveries and vehicles belonging to owners of land or businesses on Black Dog Alley. Council discussion again ensued. The County will notify the State of its intent to restrict the vehicle weight limit on the roadway, signage will be posted, and a grace period permitted. At Council’s direction, Mr. Thomas will finalize legislation to be scheduled for introduction at an upcoming Council meeting.

XVII. Summary of Closed Session Held on October 24, 2023:

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

Time of closed session: 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 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, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
To discuss personnel matter affecting specific individuals over whom the Council has jurisdiction	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Public discussion would be prejudicial to the individuals being discussed	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Donna Pardieu, Jessica Morris	Council concurred with recommendation
To discuss proposal for business to remain in County and	GP § 3-305 (b) (4)	To consider a matter that concerns a proposal for a	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke,	No action

attract new business		business to remain in the County and for a business to locate to the County	Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Martha Sparks, Cassandra Vanhooser, Jessica Morris	
To consult with County Attorney on Talbot County Community Center rules and regulations	GP § 3-305 (b) (7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
For update on Open Meetings Act Compliance Board finding	GP § 3-305 (b) (7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action
To consult with County Attorney on lease agreement and terms for Oxford-Bellevue ferry	GP § 3-305 (b) (7)	Attorney-client privilege regarding legal advice	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	Council concurred with recommendation
For update on legal matter regarding Souder et al v Talbot County	GP § 3-305 (b) (7) & (8)	attorney-client privilege regarding status of litigation	Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Patrick Thomas, Jessica Morris	No action



**TALBOT COUNTY,  
MARYLAND  
WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT  
OCTOBER 17, 2023**

**OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK**

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<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>10/10/2023</b>	<b>\$108,476,577.25</b>
TOTAL ADP PAYROLL PPE 9/29/2023		(855,512.53)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT 92-09 9/2023		(26,240.00)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT 92-11 9/2023		(60,886.00)
USDA/RD QTRLY BOND PYMT 92-03 9/2023		(9,478.60)
COUNTY OWNED PROPERTY 2ND QTR SANITARY PAYMENTS		(947.88)
INTEREST ON ACCOUNTS 9/2023		519,447.56
Deposits		686,367.61
Checks		(130,976.56)
ACH Disbursements		(1,335,839.62)
Wire Transfers		(13,038.78)
CIGNA & INTEGRA EFT'S		(397,462.71)
VOIDED CHECK #36875		(10.06)
<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>10/17/2023</b>	<b><u>\$106,851,999.68</u></b>
<b>PETTY CASH FUNDS</b>		<b>\$18,105.00</b>
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS</b>		

Yield

Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.42%	\$21,264,031.96
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,425,054.60
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b><u>\$31,689,086.56</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u></b>		<b><u>\$138,559,191.24</u></b>



**TALBOT COUNTY,  
MARYLAND  
WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT  
OCTOBER 24, 2023**

**OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK**

<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>10/17/2023</b>	<b>\$106,851,999.68</b>
PENSION DED PPE 9/29/2023		(50,818.75)
DEFERRED COMP DED PPE 9/29/2023 & 9/30/2023		(22,000.61)
DEFERRED COMP PPE 9/29/2023 PLAN 401(A)		(8,783.12)
USDA/RD QTRLY PYMT 92-03 6/2023		(9,478.60)
RETURNED CHECK #5302190489		(1,554.10)
BANK CHARGES 9/2023		(5,275.50)
STALE DATED CHECKS 10/01/2022 THROUGH 06/30/2023		270,181.76
Deposits		1,698,405.60
Checks		(220,455.45)
ACH Disbursements		(752,020.07)
VOIDED CHECK(S) #367530, 368455, 368474, 368819		30,433.30

<b>OPERATING FUNDS AT</b>	<b>10/24/2023</b>	<b><u>\$107,780,634.14</u></b>
<b>PETTY CASH FUNDS</b>		\$18,105.00
<b><u>INVESTMENT FUNDS</u></b>		
	<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)	5.43%	\$21,360,263.46
Bayvanguard Bank	4.68%	\$10,425,054.60
<b>INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL</b>		<b><u>\$31,785,318.06</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u></b>		<b><u>\$139,584,057.20</u></b>

XVIII. Work Session on Proposed Weight Limits on Black Dog Alley -