



TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

County Council

MINUTES

September 22, 2026

Present – Keasha N. Haythe, Lynn L. Mielke, Dave Stepp, County Manager Clay Stamp and County Attorney Patrick Thomas. Vice President, Pete Leshar was absent but joined the meeting by telephone. President Chuck Callahan was absent but joined the meeting by telephone for Agenda Item X. *Council Consideration of Release of Reserved Land Agreement for Dulin Farm, 12551 Church Lane, Cordova, Maryland 21625.*

- I. Agenda – Ms. Haythe requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Agenda for Tuesday, September 22, 2026.
- II. Minutes – Ms. Haythe requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Minutes of Tuesday, September 8, 2026.
- III. Disbursements – Ms. Haythe requested and received unanimous consent for approval of the Disbursements of Tuesday, September 15, 2026, and Tuesday, September 22, 2026.
- IV. Proclamation: Economic Development Week – September 28 – October 2, 2026 – The Clerk read a proclamation into the record in recognition of September 28 through October 2, 2026, as Economic Development Week in Talbot County. The proclamation also spoke of the Department of Economic Development and Tourism's partnerships with employers, institutions of higher education and State agencies to attract and retain high-quality talent which lays the groundwork for attracting and retaining the workforce of tomorrow, while also facilitating growth, enhancing wealth, and providing a stable tax base for the county, which contributes to the prosperity and quality of life for the citizens of Talbot County. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the proclamation by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshar – Aye (via telephone)

Ms. Haythe presented the Proclamation to Stephanie Mervine, Director, Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

- V. Presentation on 2026 Community Resource Day Expo, Saturday, October 24, 2026 – Catherine Poe, Chair, Talbot County Hunger Coalition; Yvette Robinson, Deputy Director, Neighborhood Services of Talbot – Ms. Robinson briefed the Council on the upcoming Community Resource Day Expo which will be held on Saturday, October 24, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Easton Elementary School, 307 Glenwood Avenue, Easton. She stated that members of the community will be able to connect with approximately 50 vendors which provide services including energy assistance, health and dental services, mental health services, housing and food assistance, transportation, legal assistance, education and employment services, disability services, and childcare support services. Ms. Robinson stated that Executive Chef Derek Daly will provide a demonstration on how to make economical meals from food pantry staples at home; three meal kits will also be provided to 200 families to take home. She stated that the goal of the Expo is to have

attendees leave with useful information, direct connections, practical resources and greater confidence about their next steps. Ms. Robinson concluded her presentation by inviting Council members to attend the Expo to meet the participating organizations and to see how the partnerships work. Ms. Poe stated that the Talbot County Hunger Coalition is comprised of nine food pantries and three meal providers which serve approximately 3,000 people per week. She provided statistical information on the low unemployment rate in Talbot County (3.8%) and stated that the majority of the individuals seeking assistance in the county are working – sometimes two jobs, but it is often not enough income to support the cost for one person to live in Talbot County, estimated at \$49,000 for an individual, or \$101,000 for a family of four. Ms. Poe stated that this year will be her last year as Chair of the Talbot County Hunger Coalition, a position she has held for 13 years and stated that Katie Fox, Community Coordinator at Easton Elementary School, will become the Chair on January 1, 2027. Council members expressed their appreciation to Ms. Poe for her years of service to the Coalition on behalf of the citizens of Talbot County. Council members also expressed their appreciation to Ms. Robinson and the work of Neighborhood Services of Talbot.

- VI. Update to Board of Health – Dr. Fahmi Fahmi, Talbot County Health Officer – Dr. Fahmi utilized a PowerPoint presentation to update the Council, sitting as the Talbot County Board of Health, on the following topics: **(1) Emergency Preparedness** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the Health Department has been participating in Points of Dispensing (PODs), TEEX, a National Public Safety Training organization, and Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) readiness exercises, so that if an emergency takes place, the planning and coordination have been completed for implementation of an Emergency Plan; he stated that a flu vaccine clinic will be offered for adults and children at the Health Department (510 Cadmus Lane, Easton) on Saturday, October 17, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; **(2) Environmental Health** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the new Director of Environmental Health for Talbot County, Rachel Leahy, previously worked at the Maryland Department of the Environment; the next rabies vaccination clinic will be conducted on Saturday, November 7, 2026; and the Office of Environmental Health is in the process of digitizing its records so that they are more accessible to the public and will improve workflow, efficiency, and tracking; **(3) Public Information (PIO)** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the Health Department provides updates to the media on a regular basis on items of interest to the community, including most recently, the number of measles cases in Maryland (40), the number of cases of cyclospora (204), a recent foodborne illness determined to be from iceberg lettuce, the percentage of students enrolled in Talbot County Public Schools who have received immunizations against several communicable diseases, and the increase in the number of individuals exposed to rabies; **(4) Community Garden** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the community garden at Talbot Early Head Start Center (Glenwood Avenue, Easton) has been a tremendous success and yielded over 50 pounds of produce grown by the children at the Head Start Center; some of the produce was cooked onsite and tasted by the children and their parents, while a portion of the produce was distributed to the families of the children. He stated that the community garden affords an opportunity for parents and children to interact while teaching healthy eating habits; **(5) Addictions Division** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the Health Department now has an additional vehicle in its fleet, purchased through a grant, to assist with outreach programs of the Health Department; he stated that the Department has four new vending machines which dispense educational brochures and various personal hygiene items – the goal is to expand access to resources and to reduce barriers; **(6) Information Technology (IT)** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the Health Department is updating its system infrastructure in order to strengthen security and to increase internet bandwidth, improving accessibility to the Internet and medical records, thereby increasing staff efficiency, delivery of services and cybersecurity; **(7) School Services** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the following initiatives were being provided to students and staff in Talbot County Public Schools: education on the dangers of vaping; Stop the Bleed training; and CPR/AED training; **(8) Senior Services** – Dr. Fahmi stated that the Health Department is awaiting funding from the Rural Health Transformation Fund and partnering with the

Talbot County Department of Emergency Services to assist the Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program; **(9) Seasonal Back-to-School Health** – Dr. Fahmi concluded his presentation by reminding everyone that the season for flu and flu-like illnesses will be approaching soon and encouraged citizens to get vaccinated against the flu/COVID, and/or RSV, to practice good hygiene basics, particularly handwashing, and to stay at home if ill. Council members expressed their appreciation to Dr. Fahmi for the services the Health Department provides for the citizens of Talbot County.

- VII. Presentation of Talbot County Public Schools FY28 Capital Improvement Plan – Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations, Talbot County Public Schools – Mr. Shafer utilized a PowerPoint presentation to outline the FY28 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Talbot County Public Schools and requested Council approval to submit the CIP to the State Interagency Commission (IAC) for School Construction for approval of State funding. Mr. Shafer stated that the two items on the CIP for FY28 are: Priority No. 1 - replacement of six (6) rooftop HVAC units at Easton High School at a cost of \$1,092,000; if approved, the maximum State allocation would be \$522,500 with the local share \$570,000. Mr. Shafer stated that the current units were installed in 1997 during the last renovation of the school; Priority No. 2 – replacement of the current bleachers in the gymnasium at Easton High School which was also part of the 1997 renovation; the cost of the replacement bleachers is \$308,000; if approved, \$154,000 would be allocated by the State with the local share \$154,000. Mr. Shafer also briefed the Council on upcoming projects for the next five years, and the timeframe for beginning the process for the replacement or renovation of Easton High School in 2033; Council discussion ensued with Mr. Shafer. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved forwarding a letter to the State in support of the FY28 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as presented, contingent upon availability of funding at the time the project is brought forward, by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

- VIII. Presentation on Community Repair and Reinvestment Fund (CRRF) and Council Consideration of Adoption of CRRF Distribution Plan – Nancy Andrew, MSW, Director, Talbot County Office of Community Partnerships – Ms. Andrew provided an update on the annual report from the Talbot County Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) as submitted by Talbot Family Network. Ms. Andrew stated that the Council established Talbot County's CRRF through Bill No. 1620 in late 2025 which designated Talbot Family Network Board of Directors to serve in an administrative role for distribution of funding received from the CRRF. The CRRF was created by the Maryland General Assembly in 2023 for the purpose of reinvesting cannabis revenue in communities disproportionately impacted by past cannabis enforcement and related disparities. She stated that the first annual report reflects nine (9) months of work to build the local structure, review of applications for funding and establishment of performance measures for the programs which receive funding. She stated that through June 2026, Talbot County had received \$854,000 in CRRF funding from the State of Maryland; 19 applications had been received requesting \$867,000 in funding, of which 10 projects were awarded \$200,000 in the initial round; administrative costs were \$3,315. Ms. Andrew then outlined the various categories to which the first round of CRRF funding was provided, ranging from home repair and accessibility for seniors, to early childhood and after-school programming, to workforce and career development, literacy, and efforts to improve outcomes for children and families involved in the child welfare system. She stated that lessons learned from that process, stakeholder and public input, and data specific to Talbot County were used to formulate the draft Distribution Plan before Council for consideration of approval.

Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the Distribution Plan as presented by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

Local jurisdictions are required by the State to have a Distribution Plan in place by October 1, 2026.

IX. Introduction of Numbered Resolutions:

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CONVEYANCE OF A PORTION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY TO THE STATE OF MARYLAND, TO THE USE OF THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION OF THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, CONTAINING 4.195± ACRES OF LAND, TOGETHER WITH THE RIGHT TO CREATE, USE, AND MAINTAIN 0.369± OF AN ACRE OF LAND AND 0.909± OF AN ACRE OF LAND FOR REVERTIBLE SLOPE EASEMENTS, FOR NO MONETARY CONSIDERATION BUT SUBJECT TO CERTAIN CONDITIONS, BEING PART OF THOSE PARCELS OF REAL PROPERTY SHOWN ON TALBOT COUNTY TAX MAP 17, PARCEL 38, TALBOT COUNTY TAX MAP 17, PARCEL 129, AND TALBOT COUNTY TAX MAP 17, PARCEL 129, LOT 4 was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the resolution authorizes the conveyance of a portion of the Talbot County Community Center property to the Maryland State Highway Administration for access to Medical Center Drive from eastbound U.S. Rt. 50. He stated that the proposed conveyance had been reviewed by the Department of Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff and will not impact the operations of the Talbot County Community Center; the conveyance is provided for in the amended DRRA (Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement) between the County, the Town of Easton and Shore Health Systems, Inc. solely for the new regional medical center. The resolution was introduced by Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 399. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CONVEYANCE, FOR NO MONETARY CONSIDERATION, OF: 1) ALL THAT LOT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE, LYING, AND BEING IN THE FIRST ELECTION DISTRICT OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND, DESCRIBED AS “LOT 6, 1.000 AC. +/-,” AND SHOWN ON A PLAT ENTITLED “PLAT OF SUBDIVISION LOTS 1 THROUGH 7, PARCEL A, AND REVISED TAX PARCEL 38 TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 17, GRID 23, PARCELS 129 & 75 & 38 IN THE FIRST ELECTION DISTRICT TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND,” DATED OCTOBER 8, 2014, AND RECORDED AMONG THE PLAT RECORDS OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND IN PLAT BOOK M.A.S. NO. 83, PAGES 458-464, INCLUSIVE, TO THE TOWN OF EASTON; AND 2) ALL THAT LOT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE, LYING, AND BEING IN THE FIRST ELECTION DISTRICT OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND, DESCRIBED AS “LOT 7, 1.253 AC. +/-,” AND SHOWN ON A PLAT ENTITLED “PLAT OF SUBDIVISION LOTS 1 THROUGH 7, PARCEL A, AND REVISED TAX PARCEL 38 TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND, TAX MAP 17, GRID 23, PARCELS 129 & 75 & 38 IN THE FIRST ELECTION DISTRICT TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND,” DATED OCTOBER 8, 2014, AND RECORDED AMONG THE PLAT RECORDS OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND IN PLAT BOOK M.A.S. NO. 83, PAGES 458-464, INCLUSIVE, TO SHORE HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.

was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the resolution authorizes the conveyance of two parcels of property from the County, one to the Town of Easton and one to Shore Health Systems, Inc. for the purpose of a water storage tank, substation and pump station for the regional medical center facility; the conveyance is set forth in the amended DRRA (Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement) and the Public Works Agreement between the parties. The resolution was introduced by Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 400. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE CONVEYANCE, FOR NO MONETARY CONSIDERATION, OF A 1.785± PORTION OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED ON OXFORD ROAD, CONSISTING OF 120.476± ACRES, SITUATE, LYING, AND BEING IN THE FIRST ELECTION DISTRICT OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND, AND SHOWN ON TALBOT COUNTY TAX MAP 42, GRID 4 AS PARCEL 57, LOCATED ON OXFORD ROAD, TO THE TOWN OF EASTON was read into the record by the Clerk and brought forward for introduction. Prior to introduction, County Attorney, Patrick Thomas, stated that the resolution authorizes conveyance of a 1.785± acre portion of the County owned property known as “Poplar Hill Farm” to the Town of Easton for the purpose of providing the Town access to its Woodland Park property and Tristan Drive as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the Town of Easton approved in August 2025. Mr. Thomas stated that an Agreement of Sale for the property outlined in the resolution is listed on the County Manager’s Report for Council’s consideration; the Agreement of Sale is subject to adoption of the resolution. The resolution was introduced by Ms. Haythe, Mr. Leshner, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp as Resolution No. 401. A public hearing was scheduled for Tuesday, October 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room, South Wing, Talbot County Courthouse, 11 North Washington Street, Easton, Maryland 21601.

- X. Council Consideration of Release of Reserved Lands Agreement for Dulin Farm, 12551 Church Lane, Cordova, Maryland 21625 – Brennan Tarleton, Planning Officer, and Elisa Deflaux, Senior Planner, briefed the Council on next steps of the request from Robert and Althea Dulin, owners of property at 12551 Church Lane, Cordova, Maryland, for release of a Reserved Lands Agreement for the subject property in order to establish an agricultural preservation easement on their farm through the State of Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF). Mr. Tarleton stated that Bill No. 1627, approved by the Council in July 2026, added language to the zoning and subdivision code to allow for the specific release of the property, subject to a MALPF contract purchase option. He stated that the Dulin family is officially requesting release of the land in order to move forward with the execution of a contract with MALPF. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Tarleton. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council approved release of the Reserved Lands Agreement, as presented, by voting 5 – 0 as follows:

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

XI. County Manager's Report:

- A. Request from Waterfowl Festival, Inc. – Requested Council approval to forward a letter in support of Waterfowl Festival, Inc.'s application for Maryland State Arts Council grant funding in the sum of \$491,768.00. Deena Kilmon, Executive Director, Waterfowl Festival, Inc., stated that the request is revised from the \$200,000 previously requested and approved by Council after updated estimates for the project were received in the Request for Proposals. If approved, the funding will be used to continue restoration of the Waterfowl building (the Historic Easton Armory) to include improvements to ventilation and HVAC on the main floor and creation of ADA accessible front steps and lobby in order to make the facility more available to a wider audience; no County funding is required. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Kilmon. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the revised letter of support by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

- B. Bid No. 23-12, Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) System Equipment – Purchase Only – Josh Elliott, County Engineer, requested Council approval to conditionally award Bid No. 23-12 to Orenco Systems for the Resolution No. 250 sewer extension project in a sum of up to \$4,164,000, pending approval by the Maryland Department of the Environment. Mr. Elliott stated that Orenco Systems was the sole bidder for Bid No. 23-12, awarded by the Council in November 2023 for provision of up to 900 STEP systems for the sewer extension outlined in Resolution Nos. 235 and 250 at a cost of \$6,940 per unit. Mr. Elliott also requested that the Department of Public Works be allowed the flexibility to order the units in batches of 100, yielding a savings of \$400.00 per unit. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the requests as presented by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

- C. Request from County Manager – Requested Council approval to have the County enter into an *Agreement of Sale By and Between the Town of Easton and Talbot County for 1.785± Acres of Adjacent to Tristan Drive Described Among the Land Records of Talbot County, Maryland, in Liber K.M.D. No. 3102, Folio 64, on Tax Map 42, Parcel 57 ("Poplar Hill Farm")* which would allow the Town of Easton access to their Woodland Park property as previously outlined by Mr. Thomas for Resolution No. 401. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved entering into the Agreement of Sale as presented by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

- D. Request from Sheriff's Office – Requested Council approval of the request by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office to utilize FY27 Capital Outlay Funding for the purchase of equipment and the upfitting of four 2026 Chevrolet Tahoe police vehicles in the sum of \$128,228.55; the purchase and upfitting will be made through Global Public Safety. Council discussion ensued with Maj. Steve Elliott, Talbot County Sheriff's Office. Upon motion by Mr. Stepp, seconded by Ms. Mielke, the Council approved the request as presented by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

- E. Request from County Manager – Requested Council approval to declare Monday, October 5, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. a Special Legislative Day. Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Mr. Stepp, the Council approved the request by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

Ms. Haythe – Aye
Mr. Stepp – Aye
Ms. Mielke – Aye
Mr. Leshner – Aye (via telephone)

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

- XII. Council Comments:

Mr. Leshner – No comments.

Ms. Mielke- Ms. Mielke stated that as a member of the Talbot Historical Society, she will follow up on the comment by a member of the public regarding the placement of a permanent display in the Waterfowl Building (Historic Easton Armory) which would memorialize the historical significance of the building's former use as the Easton Armory.

Following Ms. Stepp's comments, Ms. Mielke noted several upcoming events on Thursday, September 24th: the Talbot Historical Society's hosting of Irish and Scottish music from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the grounds of the Historical Society; the celebration for Londonderry's 35th anniversary from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Londonderry on the Tred Avon, and the recognition of Mr. Leshner as a Distinguished Citizen by the Boy Scouts of America at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Stepp - Mr. Stepp expressed his appreciation to Ms. Haythe for "taking the center seat today" for the meeting.

Ms. Haythe - No comments.

Upon motion by Ms. Mielke, seconded by Ms. Haythe, the Council voted to adjourn and to reconvene on Tuesday, September 29, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. for a meeting with elected officials from the Towns of Easton, Oxford, St. Michaels, Queen Anne, and Trappe; the meeting will take place in

the Meeting Room at the Talbot County Free Library, in Easton; and to reconvene on Monday, October 5, 2026, a Special Legislative Day, at 4:00 p.m. by voting 4 – 0 as follows:

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

The meeting ended at 6:11 p.m.

The transcript of the Tuesday, September 22, 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 September 22, 2026:

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

Time of closed session: 4:10 p.m. End 4:20 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: Haythe, Leshner, Mielke, Stepp
Members opposed: None
Abstaining: None
Absent: Callahan

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	Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action
For legal advice regarding legal matter involving County roadway	GP § 3-305(b) (7) (8)	Attorney-client privilege	Pete Leshner, Keasha Haythe, Lynn Mielke, Dave Stepp, Clay Stamp, Jessica Morris, Patrick Thomas	No action

- XIV. Meeting with Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) President, Board of Directors, MC Keegan-Ayer and Executive Director, Michael Sanderson – The Council met with Ms. Keegan-Ayer and Mr. Sanderson at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 22, 2026, in the Bradley Meeting Room. Ms. Haythe, Ms. Mielke, and Mr. Stepp were in attendance and Mr. Leshner joined the meeting by telephone; Mr. Callahan was absent. Michael Mason, Providence Strategies, and lobbyist for Talbot County, was also in attendance. Ms. Keegan-Ayer stated that the purpose of MACo, a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City, is to assist local jurisdictions with finding more efficient ways to provide their citizens with the services they need and want, and to give local governments a voice in Annapolis. Mr. Sanderson provided an update on the following topics: **Solar Facilities** – Mr. Sanderson stated that is a challenge for State leaders to know where solar facilities should be sited, causing tension between State and local leaders; **Affordability** – Mr. Sanderson stated that citizens are concerned about the continuing upward rise of energy prices, the lack of affordable housing inventory to allow individuals to live in the community in which they work, and the cost of childcare. He stated that Maryland has had a higher cost of living compared to a lot of other states even though Maryland does offer some services that other states do not. He stated across the nation, as in Maryland, there is "outward migration" to the southern and western parts of the country. He stated that local elected officials and State Senators and Delegates, whether re-elected or newly elected, can do very little about the competition surrounding electricity rates, housing policies, or interest rates; **State Budget** – Mr. Sanderson spoke about the budgetary challenges facing the State which currently has a huge deficit resulting from a reduced growth in revenues from approximately 3% to 4% per year several years ago to approximately 1% - 1.5% in recent years. Mr. Sanderson stated that the State's revenue deficit of approximately \$2 billion is due in part to the loss of federal jobs, the accompanying jobs which provided goods and services to those federal employees and the "outward migration" from the state. He stated that the enactment of the 10-year Blueprint for Education initiative, funded by the Education Trust Fund in its first years, but which is now out of monies, the rising costs for implementation without the State having a clear funding plan for continuing to fund the Blueprint, also factor into the deficit, despite more of the costs being passed onto the local jurisdictions, thereby requiring utilizing monies from the General Fund. As such, the State has said "no" to several hundred million dollars per year in construction projects for renovation or replacement of schools constructed in the 60's, 70's, and 80's. **Transportation** - Mr. Sanderson stated that revenues provided by the gas tax have decreased due to a decline in the number of vehicles using conventional motor fuels, despite increases in vehicle registration fees; the transportation budget infrastructure is predicated on revenues received from the gas tax or road tolls. He emphasized that the State never gets through the budget resolution without participation from local jurisdictions, citing the examples of counties being required to primarily fund their local Tax Assessment Offices and an increased contribution to the teacher pensions in their jurisdiction – both unfunded mandates. Council discussion ensued with Mr. Sanderson regarding various scenarios for resolving the current State Budget deficit. He stated that the Governor has requested that all State agencies submit budgets reflecting a 3% decrease (97%) and a 10% decrease (90%) from last year and outlined what, in his opinion, would be the process and the most likely outcome for the State Budget in the next few years, including budget cuts, doing with less, raising fees and taxes and increasing the unfunded mandates for local jurisdictions. Mike Mason, lobbyist for Talbot County, expressed his appreciation to MACo for their work on behalf of the 23 counties and Baltimore City and concurred with Mr. Sanderson's comments that the State has huge fiscal hurdles to overcome. Mr. Mason stated that Governor Moore will be signing an Executive Order relating to land use and development of data centers. Council discussion ensued with Ms. Keegan-Ayer regarding a 2,200-acre General Industrial zoned property in Frederick County, Maryland, which was formerly owned by Alcoa and used as an aluminum smelting plant and is now the site of a data center under construction. Ms. Keegan-Ayer gave a brief history of the property and outlined various facets related to the location of a data center on the site, including restrictions on noise,

lighting, etc., site aesthetic requirements, and requirements for the size and type of equipment to be used, as well as public sentiment regarding data centers. In response to a question from Martha Sparks, Finance Director, Mr. Sanderson provided various scenarios related to possible outcomes of the State's Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Structures. County Manager, Clay Stamp, stated that, in his opinion, it was important that MACo and MML (Maryland Municipal League) work together on local issues. The meeting concluded at 3:55 p.m.

	TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND		
	WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT		
	9/15/2026		
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK			
OPERATING FUNDS AT	9/8/2026	\$	41,256,263.87
Deposits			1,697,039.45
Checks			(100,563.30)
ACH Disbursements			(648,250.62)
OPERATING FUNDS AT	9/15/2026	\$	42,204,489.40
PETTY CASH FUNDS			\$ 18,455.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS			
		Yield	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		3.77%	\$ 24,426,167.42
Bayvanguard Bank		3.89%	\$ 11,743,519.58
Shore United Money Market Account		3.63%	\$ 65,684,403.99
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL			\$ 101,872,545.99
TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS			\$ 144,077,035.39

		TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND		
		WEEKLY CASH STATEMENT		
		9/22/2026		
OPERATING FUNDS - SHORE UNITED BANK				
OPERATING FUNDS AT		9/15/2026		\$ 42,204,489.40
Total ADP Payroll PPE 9/11/2026				(1,098,745.26)
Returned Paymentus Payments				(251.15)
Deposits				3,557,402.17
Checks				(126,217.37)
ACH Disbursements				(1,281,278.40)
EFT's				(217,381.08)
Wire Transfers				(788,499.79)
OPERATING FUNDS AT		9/22/2026		\$ 42,249,518.52
PETTY CASH FUNDS				\$ 18,455.00
INVESTMENT FUNDS				
			<u>Yield</u>	
Maryland Local Government Investment Pool (MLGIP)		3.78%	\$	24,426,167.42
Bayvanguard Bank		3.89%	\$	11,781,679.93
Shore United Money Market Account		3.63%	\$	65,684,403.99
INVESTMENT FUNDS TOTAL				\$ 101,910,706.34
<u>TOTAL ALL CASH AND INVESTMENTS</u>				<u>\$ 144,160,224.86</u>