



For Immediate Release

Easton, MD – August 11, 2021

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Talbot County Council Meeting Highlights, August 10, 2021

These highlights only reflect the business items covered from the Council's approved agenda. To view the complete County Council meeting, please visit: [Talbot County Meeting Videos - Talbot County, Maryland \(talbotcountymd.gov\)](https://www.talbotcountymd.gov/MeetingVideos).

The Talbot County Council held their regularly scheduled meeting on August 10 with all Council members present with the exception of Council member Laura Price.

The County Council welcomed Michael McAdams who has been appointed the new Director of Talbot County Emergency Services and began work with Talbot County on August 2. McAdams served 30 years with the Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service retiring as the Assistant Fire Chief of Special Operations. Most recently, he was Project Manager of the Planning and Organization Section of the Maryland-National Capital Region Emergency Response System (MDERS).

“We have got important things coming up as our Emergency Services are expanding. We look forward to your leadership as we go down that path together,” commented Council member Pete Leshner.

Update on the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

Council received an update from Marilyn Neal, Executive Director, Neighborhood Service Center and Antonio Thomas, ERAP Coordinator, on an important program to assist residents of Talbot County by preventing renter evictions and to help pay for other housing-related costs for those suffering the effects of job loss and other economic disruptions due to the COVID pandemic.

Talbot County was awarded \$2,439,498 to fund the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The County has

designated the Neighborhood Service Center (Community Action Agency) as the sub-recipient to manage the ERAP program for the County. The Neighborhood Service Center has paid over \$600,000 in client benefit payments since April 2021. In June there were 75 applications pending approval.

“There are a lot of people who don’t fit the state’s established criteria for ERAP. Because of the support of the Council, we have been able to fill those gaps. And because of this support, we were able to pay allotments before we got these funds to those in need,” stated Neal.

“Due to the effects of the pandemic, the Neighborhood Service Center is serving a much broader community than it ever has before. I greatly appreciate this organization stepping up. There is no stress like financial stress. We need to let the community know where they can turn in time of need,” added Council member Frank Divilio.

Update from Talbot County Department of Social Services on Talbot County Children’s Advocacy Center (TCCAC)

Linda Webb, LCSW, Director, Talbot County Department of Social Services and Katie Pedersen, Children’s Advocacy Center Supervisor, provided an update to Council on the status of the Talbot County Children’s Advocacy Center (TCCAC). The TCCAC provides a comprehensive response to incidents of child abuse on the Mid-Shore, providing services and support to child victims of sex abuse, severe physical abuse, extreme neglect, as well as non-offending caregivers. During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Center provided 828 sessions with the Family Advocate. Between 2018 and 2021, the Center served 647 children and adults.

The partners in the center include the Talbot County Department of Social Services and the University of Maryland Shore Regional Health, along with a multi-disciplinary team that includes a Family Advocate, Child Protective Services, the State’s Attorney’s Office, Law Enforcement (Talbot County Sheriff’s Office, Municipal Police Departments), and Health Professionals.

For 18 years, the University of Maryland Shore Regional Health (UMSRH) at Easton has generously provided the TCCAC with both the physical space and support for its regional medical program. Though officials at the UMSRH at Easton continue to value this partnership, changing healthcare delivery needs led to a decision to discontinue the use of the space for the TCCAC at the hospital in October 2020. Over the last six months, the TCCAC staff and members of the multidisciplinary team worked together

to identify ways to continue this very important community health mission and have transitioned into the new secure space in Easton where they continue to conduct forensic interviews and medical examinations. The Talbot County Council has provided \$25,000 in support of the Center for FY 2022. This funding, along with grant support through Talbot Community Connections and the Caroline Foundation has contributed to the Center's relocation. Easton Utilities is providing Internet service for the Center.

"The Children's Advocacy Center plays a vital part in helping these young children and their families recover after these traumatic events," Council member Corey Pack commented.

Presentation of Request by Talbot County Public Schools for Fund Balance Transfer for Easton High School Parking Lot Paving Project

Dr. Kelly Griffith, Superintendent, and Kevin Shafer, Director of Operations, Talbot County Public Schools requested Council approval for a fund balance transfer in the amount of \$81,680.30 in order to complete the paving project at Easton High School. Certain areas of the parking lot did not meet the compaction levels needed because of unforeseen issues with soil quality. Council unanimously approved the request for a fund balance transfer as outlined.

Public Hearings: Council conducted public hearings on the following amendments to Talbot County's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan:

Resolution No. 304, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO REVISE CHAPTER THREE – AMENDMENT PROCEDURES – the public hearing on Resolution No. 304 which addresses amendment procedures to the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan will be continued to Tuesday, September 14th at 6:30 p.m. in order to allow the Planning Commission to review the proposed changes and make a recommendation to the County Council.

Resolution No. 305, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO RECLASSIFY AND REMAP CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 25154 ST. MICHAELS ROAD (MARYLAND ROUTE 33), ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND 21663 AND SHOWN ON TAX MAP 32 AS PARCEL 164, LOT 1 FROM UNPROGRAMMED TO "S-1" IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS – a public hearing

was held on Resolution No. 305 to amend the Talbot County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan to reclassify and remap property located at 24154 St. Michaels Road from unprogrammed to “S-1” immediate priority status. Resolution No. 305 is eligible for vote by the County Council at their next legislative meeting on Tuesday, August 24th.

Resolution No. 306, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO RECLASSIFY AND REMAP CERTAIN REAL PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 1004 S. TALBOT STREET (MARYLAND ROUTE 33), ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND 21663 AND SHOWN ON TAX MAP 32 AS PARCEL 148 AND LOCATED AT 1006 S. TALBOT STREET (MARYLAND ROUTE 33), ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND 21663 AND SHOWN ON TAX MAP 32 AS PARCEL 75 FROM “S-3” FUTURE PLANNED AREA FOR SEWER SERVICE A PERIOD OF 6-10 YEARS TO "S-1" IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS - the public hearing on Resolution No. 306 to amend the Talbot County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan to reclassify and remap property located at 1004 S. Talbot Street and 1006 S. Talbot Street in St. Michaels from “S-3” future planned area for sewer service to “S-1” immediate priority service. The public hearing will be continued to Tuesday, September 14th at 6:30 p.m. in order to allow the Planning Commission to review and make a recommendation to the County Council.

Resolution No. 307, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO RECLASSIFY AND REMAP CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 5570 LEEWARD LANE, TILGHMAN, MARYLAND 21671 AND SHOWN ON TAX MAP 44 AS PARCEL 35, LOT 9 FROM UNPROGRAMMED TO "S-1" IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS – a public hearing was held on Resolution No. 307 to amend the Talbot County Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan to reclassify and remap property located at 5570 Leeward Lane in Tilghman from “S-3” future planned area for sewer service to “S-1” immediate priority service. Resolution No. 307 is eligible for vote by the County Council at their next legislative meeting on Tuesday, August 24th.

Presentation of Talbot County Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement Audit – David Edwards, Director of Human Resources

Director of Human Resources, David Edwards, provided an audit of the County’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Statement which was adopted by the Talbot County Council in September 2020.

An audit of signed DEI Statements was conducted in July of 2021 by Administrative Services resulting in the following:

Talbot County Full-Time Employee Compliance - 99% (283/288)

Talbot County Part-Time Employee Compliance - 71% (71/101)

Talbot County Council/Committee/Board Compliance - 73% (24/33)

Administrative Services is responsible for executing the education and compliance components related to the DEI process. The department's goal is to achieve 100% compliance for full-time employees, part-time employees, and council/committee/board members by August 31, 2021. Going forward, an annual compliance audit will be conducted in July of each fiscal year and will be reported to the County Council accordingly.

Tilghman Street Lights

In October 2020, the County Council enacted Bill No. 1464 which authorized the creation of a special taxing district for the purpose of installing, maintain, and operating street lighting along County roads. Bill No. 1464 notes in part, *upon receipt of a petition signed by 60% of property owners in the proposed district, Council shall hold a public hearing and may enact legislation to create the special taxing district to pay for the street lights.* Since FY20 as a public safety measure, Talbot County has paid for the electricity for streetlights in Tilghman when requested by the Tilghman Volunteer Fire Department after they were unable to maintain financial support for the street lights. Council directed staff to engage with the Tilghman community to determine if there is support for the street lights through a special taxing district.

County Manager's Report

Emergency Services

The Council unanimously approved the purchase of two Horton ambulances for Talbot County Emergency Services in the amount of \$586,656 utilizing the Houston Galveston Area Contract (HGAC). These additional vehicles will enable the County to increase coverage in the northern part of Talbot County. Funds were made possible through the passage of modifications to the property revenue tax cap during the November 2020 ballot initiative, which will also enable the County to address some of its most critical issues like law enforcement, emergency services, roads

infrastructure, as well as several capital projects for the schools, Sheriff's Office, Emergency Medical Services, the Talbot County Health Department, and the Talbot County Free Library.

Hog Neck Irrigation System

In the FY22 budget, Council approved \$1,625,000 for the replacement of the 44-year old irrigation system at Hog Neck Golf Course. Despite advertising a request for proposal, only one bid was submitted, from Irrigation Services, Inc. in the amount of \$1,880,000. Council members discussed whether to use \$255,000 of contingency funds for this project or to remove the Executive Course from the project which would result in a cost savings of \$255,000. Alternatively, Council could also use \$200,000 in FY22 budget funds for the pavilion upgrade project at Hog Neck Golf Course. Council unanimously approved the use of \$255,000 in contingency funds to complete the irrigation system project leaving a balance of \$1,197,579 in contingency funds.

Letter of Support for Building African American Minds (BAAM)

The County Council unanimously approved submitting a letter of support for BAAM's grant application to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Legacy program in the amount of \$500,000. If approved, the funding will be used toward the construction of an Academic Center for the BAAM program in Easton.

Talbot County Manager Clay Stamp introduced Ken Davis, Talbot County's Assistant Finance Director, who brings his consulting experience with the government sector to his new position with the County.

"We welcome you to Talbot County. The Finance department is the backbone of our County government. After Joye Nagle's appointment as Finance Director, you now make the team complete," stated Council member Corey Pack.

The next legislative meeting of the County Council will be held on Tuesday, August 24 at 6 p.m. There will be a work session regarding the County's Repurposing Center at 3:30 p.m. that day in the Bradley Meeting Room. The work session is open to the public.

Photo Captions:



#1: Pictured left to right are Katie Pedersen, Talbot County Children’s Advocacy Center Supervisor and Linda Webb, Director, Talbot County Department of Social Services who briefed the Council on the status of the Talbot County Children’s Advocacy Center.



#2: Pictured left to right are Joye Nagle, Talbot County Finance Director and Ken Davis, Assistant Finance Director.