

Minutes of the County Commissioners of Worcester County, Maryland

August 18, 2020

Joseph M. Mitrecic, President
Theodore J. Elder, Vice President
Anthony W. Bertino, Jr.
Madison J. Bunting, Jr.
James C. Church
Joshua C. Nordstrom
Diana Purnell

Following a motion by Commissioner Bertino, seconded by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners unanimously voted to meet in closed session at 9:00 a.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room to discuss legal and personnel matters permitted under the provisions of Section 3-305(b)(1) and (7) of the General Provisions (GP) Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and to perform administrative functions, permitted under the provisions of Section GP 3-104. Also present at the closed session were Chief Administrative Officer Harold L. Higgins, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young, County Attorney Roscoe Leslie, Public Information Officer Kim Moses, and Human Resources Director Stacey Norton. Topics discussed and actions taken included the following: hiring William West as a part-time temporary Roads Worker II for the Roads Division of Public Works and Carrie Tingle as an Accounting Clerk II for the Treasurer's Office; transferring Josh Pruitt from Animal Control Officer within the Animal Control Division to Emergency Communications Specialist I within Emergency Services; acknowledging the hiring of Kenji Hara, Paul Jordan, and Jennifer DeGiovanni as Deputy Sheriffs within the Sheriff's Office; reviewing certain personnel matters; receiving legal advice from counsel; and performing the following administrative functions: discussing potential board appointments, and receiving the FY20 monthly financial update.

Commissioner Mitrecic announced that the August 4, 2020 meeting was cancelled due to Tropical Storm Isaias and associated tornadoes.

Following a motion by Commissioner Bertino, seconded by Commissioner Elder, the Commissioners unanimously voted to adjourn their closed session at 9:52 a.m.

After the closed session, the Commissioners reconvened in open session. Commissioner Mitrecic called the meeting to order, and following a morning prayer by Pastor Dale Brown of the Community Church at Ocean Pines and pledge of allegiance, announced the topics discussed during the July 21, 2020 afternoon closed session and the August 18 morning closed session.

The Commissioners reviewed and approved the open and closed session minutes of their July 21, 2020 meeting as presented.

The Commissioners presented a proclamation to members of the Suffrage Centennial Celebration Committee (SCCC) of Worcester County to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on August 26, 1920, which prohibits

the states and federal government from denying voting rights to citizens on the basis of sex and guarantees all American women the right to vote.

The Commissioners presented a commendation to former Worcester County Commissioner Judith O. Boggs, a founding member of the Worcester County Commission for Women (CFW), for being named the 2020 Woman of the Year by the CFW.

The Commissioners met in legislative session.

The Commissioners met with Development Review and Permitting (DRP) Director Ed Tudor to review a text amendment application submitted by Joseph E. Moore, Esquire, on behalf of Ocean Downs, LLC, which seeks to add a Casino Entertainment District as an overlay district in the Zoning and Subdivision Control Article and to establish such a use as a permitted use in the A-2 Agricultural District. Mr. Tudor advised that the Planning Commission and County staff gave favorable recommendations to the application.

Following some discussion, Commissioners Bertino, Bunting, Church, Elder, Mitrecic, Nordstrom, and Purnell introduced the aforementioned text amendment as Bill 20-7 (Zoning – Casino Entertainment District) and scheduled a public hearing on the bill for September 15, 2020.

The Commissioners reviewed and discussed various board appointments.

Upon a nomination by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to appoint Whitney Palmer to the Lower Shore Workforce Development Board for the remainder of a four-year term expiring September 30, 2020.

The Commissioners unanimously approved the nomination made by Commissioner Bunting to reappoint Walter Maizel to the Lower Shore Workforce Development Board for an additional four-year term expiring September 30, 2024 and the nomination he made on behalf of Commissioner Mitrecic to reappoint Bill Paul to the Building Code Appeals Board for a four-year term expiring December 31, 2023.

Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell met with the Commissioners to request their acceptance of grant funds of \$549,000 from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for the Bainbridge Pond water quality improvement project within Ocean Pines and the Refuge at Windmill Creek. Mr. Mitchell stated that his staff originally applied for grant funds of \$1.58 million for a \$2.3 million project, so County staff will work with program partners, including the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, Windmill Creek developer, and the Ocean Pines Association (OPA), which has allotted \$600,000 for the project, to reduce the scope of the project to determine how to address water quality and drainage issues with available funds.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bunting, Mr. Mitchell stated that they may be required to purchase an easement, a cost that was not previously anticipated. Commissioner Bunting noted that some significant issues have been raised with this project, and he would prefer to receive an updated proposal from County staff prior to accepting the DNR grant. Commissioner Bertino concurred, noting that the OPA raised concerns as well that should be addressed prior to accepting the grant.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to table further discussion on the matter to provide County

staff with time to work with project partners and to provide the Commissioners with revised plans.

The Commissioners conducted a public hearing to consider adopting the 2020 Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan. Emergency Services Director Billy Birch summarized the plan review process, including four public meetings and a survey (results of which have been added to the plan), from March 2019 to date to update the existing 2014 plan, which expired January 12, 2020 and the county is currently operating under an approval-pending-adoption status to assure the County is covered in the event of an emergency. He further advised that the County must update this plan every five years to remain eligible for disaster relief funding from the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He stated that both MEMA and FEMA have given their conceptual approval, contingent upon the Commissioners' adoption of the 2020 Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan.

Commissioner Bertino thanked staff, the community, and all who were involved in this project. However, he expressed concern that mitigation efforts addressed throughout the entire plan are based on questionable climate change projections, and Smith Planning and Design, LLC, the County's consultants for the 2020 plan update, were not in attendance to address these concerns. His specific concerns included references to sea level rise, flooding, referencing a State requirement outlined in Section 3-5 of the plan that "As a result of increased rainfall and nuisance flooding, Maryland will now require each jurisdiction, including Worcester County, to submit a Nuisance Flooding Plan by October 2020." He questioned why the plan references the Paris Climate Agreement, which the United States pulled out of, and why the plan states that development in Ocean Pines is responsible for erosion elsewhere, particularly as no data is presented to prove the accuracy of these statements. Commissioner Bertino also questioned whether the County would be required to change the permitting process for Environmental Programs or Development Review and Permitting if the plan is adopted as presented. Commissioner Bertino concluded that there are a lot of unknowns and confusion related to the resilience plan that must be addressed and quantified when using data points from a 12-year-old study before the Commissioners adopt this plan.

Commissioner Bunting concurred, noting that the basis upon which the plan is built, noting that erosion and sea level rise predictions are based on models, not proven scientific data. Commissioner Church requested staff research and advise the Commissioners if erosion predictions take into account the Assateague Island shoreline. In response to concerns raised by the Commissioners, Mr. Birch advised that the County plan is based on the State Hazardous Mitigation Plan, using information from multiple studies, including a 2008 erosion study and the 2016 Maryland Commission on Climate Change report. He further advised that FEMA and MEMA requires the County plan to addresses four main points involving current and future hazards. These include sea level rise, climate change impacts, increased severe weather, and extended coastal building. County Attorney Roscoe Leslie stated that the Commissioners would not be locking themselves into a particular course of action by adopting the draft plan as presented.

In response to a question by Commissioner Purnell, Mr. Birch confirmed that the County should still be eligible for State and federal hazard funding based on MEMA and FEMA's conditional approval of the 2020 Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan.

Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young stated that the ultimate purpose of the plan is to identify and develop steps to address hazards, including coastal recurring flooding, and it will be necessary for the County to reference this plan when applying for future grants. He suggested Mr. Birch request authorization from MEMA and FEMA to amend areas of concern in the plan, specifically certain assumptions based on flood plain models, worst-case scenarios, and reference to the Paris Climate Agreement. In response to a question by Commissioner Elder, Mr. Birch stated that this plan, once adopted, would be effective for five years until the next plan update.

Following further discussion, Commissioner Mitrecic opened the floor to receive public comment.

There being no public comment, Commissioner Mitrecic closed the public hearing.

Following additional discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to table adoption of the 2020 Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan until the September 1, 2020 meeting when the County's consultant is able to address the concerns raised by the Commissioners.

The Commissioners conducted a public hearing to consider petitions to sell agricultural easements to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) in FY21 on six properties in Worcester County at no cost to the County. Also present at the meeting were Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell and Katherine Munson, Environmental Programs Planner V. These properties are listed in their entirety in the Commissioners' meeting minutes of July 7, 2020. Mr. Mitchell stated that the applications have been reviewed by both the Worcester County Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board, which recommended submitting all six applications to MALPF for appraisal, and the Worcester County Planning Commission, which found all six applications to be consistent with the 2006 County Comprehensive Plan.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bunting, Mr. Mitchell stated that staff identified six subdivision rights available on a property identified on Tax Map 92 as Parcel 8 based on cluster housing.

Commissioner Mitrecic opened the floor to receive public comment.

There being no public comment, Commissioner Mitrecic closed the public hearing.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners voted 4-3, with Commissioners Bertino, Bunting, and Elder voting in opposition, to submit all six applications to MALPF for appraisal and further consideration for purchase of agricultural easements.

The Commissioners met with Mr. Mitchell to schedule a public hearing on a Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan amendment application submitted by Hugh Cropper, attorney for Mark Odachowski, to expand the sewer planning area for the Mystic Harbour Sanitary Service Area (SSA) to include an entire 10-acre property located at 12424 Old Bridge Road in West Ocean City and more specifically identified on Tax Map 26 as Parcel 193, which is designated S-1 (immediate to two years) to serve a proposed 41-unit residential development. Mr. Mitchell advised that the Planning Commission found the proposed amendment to be consistent with the County's Comprehensive Development Plan and granted the application a favorable recommendation. Mr. Mitchell stated that the applicant is also seeking an expansion of

the Mystic Harbour SSA and will seek an allocation of equivalent dwelling units (EDUs) of sewer allocation from the Mystic Harbour SSA.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to schedule a joint public hearing on September 15, 2020 to receive public comment on the proposed amendment to the Worcester County Water and Sewerage Plan and expansion of the Mystic Harbour SSA.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Mitchell and upon a motion by Commissioner Church, with Commissioner Bertino temporarily absent, the Commissioners unanimously approved a six-month extension to the Community Resilience grant from the Department of Natural Resources for the Selsey Road project, a demonstration project to assist with building coastal storm resiliency within Cape Isle of Wight and other communities.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Mr. Mitchell and upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Commission President Mitrecic to sign the FY21 Critical Area Grant Agreement awarding the County \$9,000 to cover a very small portion of the County's actual cost to administer the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area programs.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners voted unanimously to take no action on the written request from Pocomoke City Manager Jeremy Mason for plan review and inspection services. Commissioner Nordstrom advised that town officials have entered into a contract with First State to provide these services, so there is no need for assistance from the County at this time.

Pursuant to the request of Development Review and Permitting Director Ed Tudor, made on behalf of Housing Program Administrator Jo Ellen Bynum, and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously approved re-bid specifications to replace a single-family home septic system in the Stockton area, which is to be funded through the County's current Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Mr. Tudor stated that the County received only one bid by the deadline and must rebid the project to satisfy the conditions of the CDBG, which requires projects receiving less than three bids to be rebid a minimum of one additional time.

Pursuant to the request of Assistant Finance Officer Jessica Wilson and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously adopted Resolution No. 20-23 providing for the issuance of up to \$2,093,542 General Obligation Water Quality Bonds for the Newark Spray Irrigation Project. These consist of \$1,046,771 General Obligation Water Quality Bond Series 2020A and \$1,046,771 General Obligation Water Quality Bond Series 2020B (Taxable).

Pursuant to the request of Public Works Director John Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Elder, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Engineering, Science, and Technology contract adjustment of \$85,946.73 to cover changes required to the original preliminary engineering report and redesign/bidding of the Newark spray irrigation project.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, the Commissioners unanimously accepted the low bid from Allan Myers of Fallston, Maryland for County-wide blacktop surfacing of roughly 12.16 miles of roads at a fixed price of \$63.50 per ton of bituminous concrete for a total estimated cost of \$836,930, with funds of \$1 million designated in the FY21 budget for this purpose. The Commissioners further approved the expenditure of \$163,070 in remaining funds to purchase an additional 2,568 tons of bituminous concrete to add Circle Road and Five Mile Branch Road to the current blacktop schedule. Mr. Tustin noted that bids came in substantially lower than estimated, making it affordable to include the additional roads in the paving program.

In response to a question by Commissioner Elder, Mr. Tustin confirmed that slurry seal costs much less than tar and chip and is used as part of a five-year preservation program. He stated that typically tar and chip is part of the fall paving program, and any remaining funds are then allocated for use in the slurry seal program the following spring.

Pursuant to the recommendation of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously awarded the bid to Vertex Roofing Contractors of Manassas, Virginia to replace the roof systems at the Commission on Aging in Snow Hill at a cost of \$164,597 and Animal Control at a cost of \$41,795 for a total cost of \$206,392.

In response to concerns raised by Commissioner Nordstrom, Mr. Tustin stated that neither of the contractors who attended the pre-bid meeting submitted proposals to complete the work. He concluded that the lack of interest in this project is likely due to an overabundance of work or workforce shortfalls due to COVID-19.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously approved Change Order No. 2 with Baldwin Industries for the Ocean Pines north water tower rehabilitation project in the amount of \$380,035 to replace electric and antenna wires, rehabilitate the tank catwalks (including bird deterrents), replace five exterior tension rods, add steps to access the lower portion of the tank interior, upgrade the interior ladder, add safety rails around the new hatch, and replace the access hatch gasket. Mr. Tustin stated that, with all associated costs, project expenditures total roughly \$410,000, with \$500,000 available for this project in the 2019 Bond Issue.

The Commissioners met with Mr. Tustin to discuss the written request from Cathrin Banks, president of the Maryland Delaware Railroad (MDRR) to declare Central Site Lane a public road, so that MDRR will be eligible to use federal funds to cover the cost of grade crossing improvements at that site. Mr. Tustin stated that the County Commissioners proclaimed Central Site Lane to be a private road due to the 600-foot easement across private property and to discourage land development on the private road adjacent to the active landfill.

In response to a question by Commissioner Elder, Mr. Tustin stated that there is no turnaround on this road between U.S. Rt. 113 and the railroad track, and proclaiming Central Site Lane as a public road would leave it open for public use 24 hours per day.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Bunting, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to maintain Central Site Lane as a private lane.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Tustin and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously accepted the proposal from George, Miles, and Buhr of \$16,500 to prepare a preliminary engineering report to aid the County in determining how to plan for and proceed with adding a second solids dewatering area to the Ocean Pines Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Funding of \$800,000 was included in the 2019 Bond Issue to replace the belt fitter press at the WWTP; however, staff determined that adding the second solids dewatering area will better serve the WWTP by allowing for continuous operations during construction, providing redundancy to the operation, and allowing them to take advantage of the recently completed repairs.

The Commissioners met with Mr. Tustin to review the results of a speed study on Old Furnace Road, which was conducted from July 14-21, 2020 at the request of area resident Dale Abbott to address speeding vehicles and to post a speed limit sign. Mr. Tustin reviewed the results and noted that 1,247 vehicles or 60.1% of drivers traveled 51 miles per hour (mph) or greater, and 824 or 39.9% of drivers traveled 50 mph or less, while the average speed on this currently unposted road was 50 mph during the speed study. Therefore, Mr. Tustin recommended that Old Furnace Road be posted at 50 mph.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to establish the 50 mph speed limit on Old Furnace Road and to post speed limit signs. They further agreed to request that the Sheriff's Office enforce the new speed limit of 50 miles per hour.

Commissioner Bertino extended his thanks to Mr. Tustin and his staff for their successful cleanup efforts following Tropical Storm Isaias.

Pursuant to the request of County Engineer Bill Bradshaw and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners voted 6-1, with Commissioner Bunting voting in opposition to proceed with phase 2 of the Worcester County Jail improvement project. Mr. Bradshaw reviewed the scope of the project, noting that this does not include installing air conditioning in the inmate housing units. Commissioner Church expressed concerns regarding clustering inmates in air conditioned spaces during periods of high temperatures in their cells, and stated that air conditioning needs to be addressed in the inmate housing units. In response to questions by Commissioner Church, Warden Donna Bounds advised that the only areas of the County Jail with air conditioning that can be accessed by inmates include N and Q blocks for new arrivals and medical housing. She noted that the heat inside the prison does not dissipate as the temperature on the outside of the prison fluctuates, and there is nothing staff can do to bring these temperatures down. For example, on July 28 the temperature in K block was 83 degrees Fahrenheit, while the temperature today on the same block is 85.5 degrees Fahrenheit. However, she noted that installing air conditioning in the inmate housing units would require additional design studies, increase construction costs, and delay the improvement project.

In response to a question by Commissioner Bunting, Mr. Bradshaw advised that the project before them today is for design services for 12 or more units and corridors and to replace the rooftop. He confirmed that the project completed last year at a cost of \$3.5 million included installing air conditioning in the kitchen, corridors, office spaces, chapel, and barber shop.

In response to a question by Commissioner Mitrecic, Warden Bounds confirmed that air conditioning is not available in the inmate housing units at Sussex Correctional Institute, Eastern

Correctional Institute, and Somerset County Detention Center. Furthermore, Chief Administrative Officer Harold Higgins confirmed that the County would shoulder the full cost of air conditioning inmate housing units, as federal and state funds cannot be used for this purpose.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously approved as a consent agenda the housekeeping agenda item numbers 20-25 as follows: approving a six-month extension through April 30, 2021 to the Maryland Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) agreement for Diakonia, Inc. shelter renovations; approving the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention FY21 grant application for funds of \$50,615 for the grant-funded position of Heroin Coordinator within the Sheriff's Office; approving the Certification for Cooperative Local-State Library Aid Programs for FY21, with State aid of \$170,290 and County funding of \$2,760,765 for the County Library; approving two letters of County support for a Heritage Fund grant and a Beach to Bay Heritage Area grant to restore the historic All Hallows Episcopal Church in Snow Hill; approving the FY21 Core Public Health Services Funding Agreement between the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and Worcester County, with a County contribution of \$5,683,797 or 73.2713% and a State contribution of \$1,143,712 or 26.7287% of the FY21 Worcester County Health Department budget of \$6,827,509, for core public health services in Worcester County; and adopting Resolution No. 20-24 authorizing a 100% tax credit in the amount of \$12,878.66 for real property owned by the Greater Ocean City, Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Inc. for the July 1, 2020 tax year.

Pursuant to the request of Tom Perlozzo, Director of Recreation, Parks, Tourism, and Economic Development, and upon a motion by Commissioner Bertino, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Commission President Mitrecic to sign the renewal agreement between the Mayor and City Council of Ocean City, Maryland, Wicomico County, Maryland, and Worcester County, Maryland for the Mid-Atlantic Amateur Sports Alliance (MAASA). This agreement allows the three jurisdictions to leverage their combined assets to attract, retain, and build sports marketing events, with a focus on amateur athletics, and to grow the region's economy and reputation as a premiere destination.

Pursuant to the request of Mr. Perlozzo and upon a motion by Commissioner Purnell, with Commissioner Bunting temporarily absent, the Commissioners unanimously authorized Commission President Mitrecic to sign the renewal, three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Mayor and City Council of Ocean City, Maryland, Wicomico County, Maryland, and Worcester County, Maryland (event hosts) and We Build You Play Sports Group, LLC (event organizer) to host the Beachfest Volleyball Tournament in the three jurisdictions. Mr. Perlozzo advised that the only change in the MOU is an incentive for the event organizer to include teams from outside a 60-mile radius and with the caveat that Worcester County facilities are being utilized.

Mr. Perlozzo met with the Commissioners to seek authorization to develop a proposal to institute a year-round riverboat operation on the Pocomoke River that would serve as an economic engine for both Snow Hill and Pocomoke. Mr. Perlozzo stated that such a project would seek to capitalize on excursions, dining, entertainment, and potential gaming on what is considered to be the gem of southern Worcester County. He stated that this type of unique

operation could attract 500-1,000 people to the downtown areas of each jurisdiction and has the potential to attract local government and private sector program partners. He then requested approval to discuss the concept further with the towns, explore purchase options and type of ownership, operation, and grant opportunities.

Commissioner Nordstrom stated that this is a fantastic opportunity to revitalize these towns. Commissioner Purnell concurred and stated that such a project would accentuate the opportunities already available in these jurisdictions. In response to a question by Commissioner Bertino, Mr. Perlozzo stated that the Black Eyed Susan, a sternwheeler river boat, is for sale at \$350,000, and a second boat is for sale at \$450,000. He stated that the County would look at grant opportunities to cover the cost to purchase a riverboat and interest by the towns or the private sector to oversee operations. He noted that Ocean Downs officials have indicated they would be interested in any potential gaming opportunity associated with such a riverboat operation. Commissioner Bunting stated that the County should not be involved in the purchase and operation of a riverboat, as business opportunities like this should be privately run.

Commissioner Elder stated that, while he leans toward such an operation being privately owned and operated, he would like staff to continue exploring this opportunity and to provide the Commissioners with information on how such a concept could be established on the Pocomoke River to boost economic opportunities in the towns of Pocomoke and Snow Hill.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners voted 5-0-2, with Commissioners Bertino and Bunting abstaining from the vote, to allow County staff to pursue the concept of a riverboat operation for economic activity on the Pocomoke River.

Mr. Perlozzo and Andrea Vernot of Choptank Communications met with the Commissioners to propose “Maryland’s Coast – Worcester County,” as the new branding for Worcester County. Mr. Perlozzo noted that County staff began working with Choptank Communications, as well as 160 community partners made up of citizens, business leaders, and entrepreneurs, to identify, position, and develop a platform to sell Worcester County as a place to live, work, and play. Ms. Vernot reviewed a PowerPoint outlining the purpose and need for Worcester County to develop its own unique branding and why “Maryland’s Coast – Worcester County” is the right branding for the County. Specifically, she noted that Worcester County is the only place in Maryland where the ocean meets the land, making the coastal reference a unique way to leverage and energize residents’ sensory connection to and pride in the County.

Commissioner Bertino supported the idea of giving Worcester County an identity, but initially expressed concern that the coastal reference does not capture all of Worcester County. Commissioners Bunting and Nordstrom expressed similar concerns. In response, Mr. Perlozzo stated that all community partners, whether they lived at the ocean or 45 minutes away, said they live at the beach. He stated that Worcester County is an exciting place, and the branding proposed will allow them to go out and market the County. Commissioner Church supported the proposed branding, noting that the coast is the hub of the County, so the coastal reference serves as a great draw. Commissioner Purnell concurred, as did Commissioner Elder, who noted that there are numerous opportunities to play off the word “coast,” such as coast on down to Snow Hill and Pocomoke.

Following some discussion and upon a motion by Commissioner Nordstrom, the Commissioners voted 5-2, with Commissioners Bertino and Bunting voting in opposition, to

allow Mr. Perlozzo and his team to move forward with the conceptual branding of the County.

The Commissioners answered questions from the press, after which they adjourned to meet again on September 1, 2020.