

April 28, 2020

The County Commissioners of Queen Anne's County met this date pursuant to its last adjournment and there were present:

James J. Moran  
Jack N. Wilson, Jr.  
Stephen Wilson  
Philip L. Dumenil (Absent)  
Christopher M. Corchiarino

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION:**

Pursuant to State Government Law Section 3-305(b) (1) to discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals; "The County Commissioners held a Closed Session on a motion of Commissioner J. Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Corchiarino, at 5:15 p.m. in the Office of the County Commissioners, The Liberty Building, 107 N. Liberty Street, Centreville, Maryland." The Board adjourned in Closed Session at 5:30 p.m. Those in attendance were Mr. Todd Mohn, County Administrator; Ms. Margie Houck, Executive Assistant

The Board discussed the appointment of an Attorney for the Ethics Commission and an EEOC Claim.

In open session it was consensus of the Board to hire Crystal Richards, Esquire, as the Attorney for the Ethics Commission.

**MINUTES:**

On a motion made by Commissioner S. Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Corchiarino, the Board unanimously agreed to approve the Agenda for the current meeting and the minutes of April 14, 2020.

**WEEKLY CORRESPONDENCE AND PRESENTATION OF DOCUMENTS FOR SIGNATURE:**

The Board reviewed various correspondence with Mr. Todd Mohn, County Administrator.

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH PROCLAMATION:**

Commissioner Corchiarino read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, today's children represent tomorrow's leaders and Queen Anne's County remains steadfast in its commitment to ensuring the safety and security of our children, families and communities; and

WHEREAS, it is of paramount concern to all, the problems of child abuse, neglect and maltreatment, which endanger vulnerable young lives; and

WHEREAS, the prevention of child abuse, neglect and maltreatment requires strong partnerships and cooperation among citizens, organizations, law enforcement and government agencies; and

WHEREAS, all citizens of Queen Anne's County share a responsibility in preventing child abuse through diligent reporting of suspected cases of child neglect and maltreatment; and

WHEREAS, National Child Abuse Prevention Month, observed each April, provides a time to raise awareness about child abuse and neglect and to encourage individuals and communities to support children and families; and

WHEREAS, Queen Anne's County does not tolerate acts of violence against children and continuously strives to protect them from abuse, neglect and maltreatment;

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY, do hereby proclaim April 2020 as: CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH IN QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY

**QAC AREA AGENCY ON AGING VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PROCLAMATION:**

Commissioner J. Wilson read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging appreciates all the volunteers that give of their time and talents to keep the Aging office functioning successfully; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging will show their appreciation by holding their Volunteer Appreciation Event on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 from 1:00 PM-3:00 PM at the Kramer Center in Centreville; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging Volunteer Appreciation Attendees will enjoy a meal and be acknowledged for their service over the past year; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging, continues to celebrate the Volunteer Appreciation Event as one large affair to recognize all the volunteers together that make this division a success; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging, last year, honored 117 volunteers; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging honors volunteers that assist in various areas of the agency, such as, Home Delivered Meals; Telephone Reassurance; Ombudsman; Commission on Aging; Senior Center Assistance: front desk, DJ, data entry, kitchen help, evening dance music/entertainment, bingo shopping & callers, class instruction, special event help, library maintenance, and so much more; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Senior Citizens, throughout the county, benefit from services the volunteers provide; and

WHEREAS, The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging staff, also, get abundant support from the volunteers and could not function without their support;

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY, recognize and appreciate all the volunteers that give of themselves, their time and talents to keep The Queen Anne's County Area Agency on Aging functioning for the senior citizens in our community.

**DRAFT 2020 ANNUAL MDOT TRANSPORTATION PRIORITY LETTER:**

Mr. Steve Cohoon, Public Facilities Planner, submitted to the Board for their review and approval, Draft 2020 Annual MDOT Transportation Priority Letter.

The Board reviewed the FY 2021-2026 Consolidated Transportation Plan for consideration. The draft 2020 MDOT priority letter from the Queen Anne's County Commissioners to Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary, Mr. Gregory Slater. The letter outlines transportation priorities for inclusion in the 2021-2026 Consolidated Transportation Plan. The letter is very similar to past years letters and continues to identify the priorities for Queen Anne's County as:

- 1) Continue, and to the extent possible, expedite the process to add capacity crossing the Chesapeake Bay to reduce congestion in the Bay Bridge corridor.
- 2) Construct improvements on the Rt 18 corridor from Castle Marina Road to the Kent Narrows
- 3) Construct the US 50 & 213 interchange
- 4) Construct at grade intersection improvements on the US 301 corridor
- 5) Provide repair and repaving on US 301 Southbound
- 6) Continued support of our local transit efforts
- 7) Continued support for our bicycle and pedestrian improvements and specifically provide assistance for a pedestrian overpass crossing US 50/301 in an effort to connect the Cross Island Trail to the South Island Trail.

On a motion made by Commissioner J. Wilson, seconded by Commissioner S. Wilson, the Board unanimously agreed to approve and sign the 2020 Priority Letter to the Maryland Department of Transportation. As part of the motion, Commissioners Moran, J. Wilson, S. Wilson and Corchiarino made comments on this topic.

Commissioners	Yes	No
Moran	x	
J Wilson	x	
S Wilson	x	
Dumenil	absent	
Corchiarino	x	

**PROPERTY LIEN:**

Ms. Vivian Swinson, Zoning Administrator, submitted to the Board for their review and approval, Property Liens.

Map 76, Grid 13, Parcel 32, 200 Chews Manor Road, Stevensville (\$590.00)

An independent contractor hired by the Zoning Office to cut grass at the above referenced addresses after the property owner ignored repeated attempts by the Zoning Inspector to get the site to comply with Queen Anne’s County Code Chapter 19 Article II § 19-2 L. (2) which states:

A person may not allow any vegetation to grow higher than 12 inches on any lot or parcel that is: (a) Less than three acres in size; and (b) located in an approved or recorded residential subdivision or any part of which is within 200 feet of a neighboring residence.

On a motion made by Commissioner Corchiarino, seconded by Commissioner S. Wilson, the Board unanimously agreed to approve Resolution 20-09 to place a lien on the property listed in the County Zoning Administrator’s memorandum dated April 28, 2020 for a nuisance

violation. As part of the motion, Commissioners Dumenil, Corchiarino and J. Wilson made comments on this topic.

Commissioners	Yes	No
Moran	x	
J Wilson	x	
S Wilson	x	
Dumenil	absent	
Corchiarino	x	

**OPERATING REQUEST FOR HOUSING STUDY:**

Mr. Michael Clark, Chief of Housing & Family Services, submitted to the Board for their review and approval, Operating Request for Housing Study.

The Department of Community Services, Division of Housing and Community Services (DHCS), requested to execute an affordable housing study for all of Queen Anne’s County. Grant funding was applied for and awarded in FY20 from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Special Projects through Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

The housing study will evaluate the needs of low-to-moderate income level households and find viable solutions that can be implemented to increase much needed housing opportunities in the County. A community housing needs assessment will guide the creation of best practices and strategies to increase affordable housing. The housing study will also predict future housing needs of the County over the next 10-15 years, and strategies that can be included in the County’s Comprehensive Plan.

We have completed the required county procurement process through an open bid process and a methodical review; including a review from Department of Planning and Zoning.

Following the bid opening on March 10, 2020, the Department would like to proceed to award Partners for Economic Solutions (PES) in the amount of \$56,080. This company has extensive experience completing housing studies throughout the United States.

Additionally, they have provided an example of a recent completed housing study that is very similar to DHCS’s expectations and desired goals. PES has no plans to subcontract and they can complete the project within the specified grant guidelines. For these reasons and others, their application scored the highest by the review team. The team included DHCS staff and a member from the Queen Anne’s County Affordable Housing Committee. The PES application was slightly above budget and DHCS is able to make up the difference of money through its current budget.

On a motion made by Commissioner J. Wilson, seconded by Commissioner S. Wilson, the Board unanimously agreed to have Partners for Economic Solutions provide the Housing Study for the Department of Community Services, Division of Housing and Community Services, in the amount of \$56,080.

Commissioners	Yes	No
Moran	x	
J Wilson	x	
S Wilson	x	
Dumenil	absent	
Corchiarino	x	

**OVERVIEW CURRENT ECONOMIC/FISCAL SITUATION:**

Mr. Jonathan Seeman, Director and Mrs. Brittany Moran Budget Analysis, Budget and Finance, and IT, met with the Board and highlighted the following:

- Budget transmitted during global pandemic as well as market and economic volatility and uncertainty
- A slowdown in economic activity will impact our revenue sources, primarily income taxes, almost 40% of our budget-income taxes affected by number of jobs, wages, investment activity
- Going into this period, our local economy was strong, income tax growing, wage growth higher than State average and most counties
- It is early to be able to forecast the impact of the current slowdown
- There is generally a lag in income tax distributions, so we could expect the largest impact in second half of FY21 and in FY22
- Our revenue estimates are conservative and scaled back slightly, but does not take into account a slowdown or recession
- The County is in a strong fiscal state, as evidenced by two AAA bond ratings
- We have a sizeable Rainy-Day Fund (\$11 million) and a Revenue Stabilization Fund (\$6 million)
- We must be prepared to act quickly and decisively to take the difficult but necessary actions to bring our operating budget into balance if that need arises
- Comptroller forecast for Maryland a loss of \$2.8 billion in FY2020 General Fund revenue or 15% of total budget over 3 months
- Loss of 22% of income tax withholding, the major portion of income tax collections
- Unemployment claims in Maryland have reached the same level in 3 weeks (about 235,000 claims) as reached in 36-38 weeks during last 2 recessions

- Per census data, Queen Anne’s County employment has significant government and construction industry component, but also a large number of jobs in accommodations and food services as well as retail trade
- For Queen Anne’s County, project FY2020 revenue loss resulting in \$1.5 - 2.0 million below budget in income taxes and other local taxes
- Potential loss of \$5-6 million below FY2020 level in FY2021
- Continual update of revenue estimates pending additional data

On a motion made by Commissioner J. Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Corchiarino, the Board unanimously agreed to implement a hiring freeze and hold departmental expenditures. After a discussion, the board amended their motion to critical positions could be hired once they are vetted through the Commissioners, if approved they could move forward though the hiring process.

Commissioners	Yes	No
Moran	x	
J Wilson	x	
S Wilson	x	
Dumenil	absent	
Corchiarino	x	

**BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET WORK SESSION:**

Dr. Andrea Kane, Superintendent; Mr. John Pfister, Chief Financial Officer; Ms. Carla Viar Pullen, Facilities Planner; and Mr. Dick Smith, School Board Member; of the Queen Anne’s County Board of Education met with the Board. They reviewed their proposed FY 2021 Budget request and what would happen if they didn’t receive full funding.

**COMMISSIONER’S ROUNDTABLE:**

Commissioner J. Wilson discussed the following:

- Encouraged everyone to hang in there and continue to social distance
- Signed 2 letters to the Governor to open up recreational boating and golfing

Commissioner S. Wilson discussed the following:

- Noted the current numbers of COVID-19
- Noted the Anne Arundel Hospital is reporting half of the numbers of other cases.
- Citizens need to get back to taking care of themselves and getting the medical attention for all other health issues and routine check ups.

Commissioner Corchiarino discussed the following:

- Noted that citizens and call or email them at any time and not waiting for a Ask A Commissioner forum

A regional approach will be considered to reopen QAC

Commissioner Moran discussed the following:

Noted that COVID-19 will not just go away and those that are the most vulnerable should continue to protect themselves. We need and will, slowly start opening our businesses but to continue to keep protecting ourselves by social distancing and staying home.

There being no further business, they adjourned at 7:40 p.m. to meet again on Tuesday, May 12, 2020.

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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

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PRESIDENT