



## Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland

### *Open Session Minutes*

November 26, 2024

#### **MOMENT OF SILENCE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by the full assemblage.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

President John F. Barr called the regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners of Washington County, Maryland, to order at 9:01 a.m. with the following members present: Vice-President Jeffrey A. Cline, Commissioner Derek Harvey, Commissioner Randall E. Wagner and Commissioner Wayne K. Keefer.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the minutes of November 5, 2024. The motion passed (4-0-1). Commissioner Harvey abstained.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

Commissioner Wagner attended the Hancock Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transition. He attended the Maryland Municipal League (MML) pre legislative meeting. Commissioner Wagner congratulated the new Mayor and City Council of the City of Hagerstown on their swearing in. He commented on EMS and Fire services. Commissioner Wagner wished everyone a safe and restful Thanksgiving Holiday. He wished Harbin Harvey a happy birthday.

Commissioner Harvey thanked the EMS and Public Safety members for their service. He attended the pre legislative forum. Commissioner Harvey wished everyone a safe and bountiful Thanksgiving weekend. He wished his daughter Harbin a happy 4<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Commissioner Keefer wished Harbin Harvey a Happy Birthday. He attended the Hancock EMS transition. Commissioner Keefer commented on emergency situations and the hurdles of emergency services. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. Commissioner Keefer congratulated the new Mayor and City Council of the City of Hagerstown.

Commissioner Cline wished Harbin Harvey a Happy Birthday. He wished the citizens and employees a Happy Thanksgiving. Commissioner Cline congratulated the new Mayor and City Council of the City of Hagerstown. He attended the MML pre legislative meeting. Commissioner Cline attended the tree lighting ceremony in the City of Hagerstown. He commented on small business Saturday. Commissioner Cline shared information on the Turkey Trot. He wished Delegate Terry Baker a Happy Birthday. Commissioner Cline attended the Toy Show at the Agricultural Center and the Kris Kringle Craft Show at Hagerstown Community College. He attended the Hancock EMS Transition and commented on the Commissioners support of EMS services. Commissioner Cline visited the Hagerstown Regional Airport to see the new Allegiant 737 Plane. He commented on the exceptional customer service skills at the airport. Commissioner Cline attended the grand opening of Baile's Cask and Kettle. He attended the pre legislative forum. Commissioner Cline thanked the employees of Washington County.

Commissioner Barr wished Harbin Harvey a Happy Birthday. He wished the Commissioners, staff and citizens of Washington County a Happy Thanksgiving. Commissioner Barr attended the Capital Tree ceremony at the Maryland Theater. Commissioner Barr and County Administrator Michelle Gordon shared a plaque which the National Park Service presented to the County. He attended the Interfaith Unified Thanksgiving service and shared the many participating churches. Commissioner Barr shared a reading by Rick Warren. He shared upcoming events. Commissioner Barr commented on the Commissioners upcoming second half of their term.

### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Chip Rose, Director of Human Resources, presented the request to hire to Carsten Ahrens for the position of Senior Grant Manager. The offer is for a Grade 13, Step 1, \$30.17/hourly rate.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the hire of Carstens Ahrens as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Chip Rose, Director of Human Resources, presented the request to hire to Anthony Jacques for the Accountant position. The offer is for a Grade 14, Step 1, \$31.98/hourly rate.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the hire of Anthony Jacques as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request for approval to forward a letter to Governor Wes Moore, recommending the reappointments of members Alfred Martin and Donna Long to serve third, five-year terms and to consider the recommendations of Steven Stitely to serve as a regular member and John Turner to serve as an alternate member on the Property Tax Assessments Appeals Board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the letter to Governor Moore as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the reappointment of Beth Harvey to serve a second, three-year term from November 1, 2024, through October 31, 2027 on the Washington County Commission for Women. This is not a paid board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve the reappointment of Beth Harvey as presented. The motion passed (4-0-1). Commissioner Harvey abstained.

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the appointment of Elizabeth Smith to serve a first, full, five-year term from December 1, 2024, through November 30, 2029 on the Housing Authority of Washington County. This is not a paid board.

Commissioner Cline, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the appointment of Elizabeth Smith as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Dawn Marcus, County Clerk presented the request to approve the reappointment of Tasha Walls to serve a second, five-year term from December 1, 2023, through November 30, 2028 on the Housing Authority of Washington County. This is not a paid board.

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to approve the reappointment of Tasha Walls as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator attended the 2025 MML pre legislative meeting and the pre legislative forum before the Delegation. She attended the 2024 Capital Christmas Tree ceremony and thanked staff for attending. Ms. Gordon welcomed the new Mayor and City Council of the City of Hagerstown. She wished Harbin Harvey a Happy Birthday. Ms. Gordon wished the citizens and the employees a safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

Michelle Gordon, County Administrator, requested a consensus to sign and send a letter to the Delegation opposing the new proposed practices of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Maryland.

The Commissioners reached a consensus (5-0) in support of the letter.

### **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

Billy Woods – Emergency Services of Washington County  
Stephanie Phillips - Hagerstown

### **REPORT ON WASHINGTON COUNTY DISABILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Dave Barnhart, Chair, Disabilities Advisory Committee, provided an update on the activities of the Washington County Disabilities Advisory Committee. He shared information on the Disabilities Resource Guide.

### **34<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD MEMORIAL ILLUMINATION**

Andrew Banasik, Superintendent, Antietam National Battlefield; Georgene Charles, Founder & General Chairman, 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination; and Tom Riford, Antietam National Battlefield Committee shared an update on the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Antietam National Battlefield Memorial Illumination scheduled for December 7, 2024. They shared a video presentation.

### **COMMUNITY GRANT**

Mark Bradshaw, Director, Environmental Management, presented the request to approve the acceptance of the FY24 Community Grant in the amount of \$200,000.00 and a budget amendment in the amount of \$50,000.00. The Department of Water Quality was awarded a \$200,000.00 grant to replace the existing SCADA system. The grant will pay 80% of the cost to replace the system. The estimated project cost is \$250,000.00, the County will be responsible for \$50,000.00. The funds are available in the Capital Improvement Plan budget.

Commissioner Wagner left the meeting at 9:53 a.m. and returned at 9:54 a.m.

Commissioner Cline left the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the acceptance of the FY24 Community Grant as presented. The motion passed (4-0). Commissioner Cline was absent for the vote.

Commissioner Cline returned to the meeting at 9:56 a.m.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND'S MEDAFF CONDITIONAL LOAN - LIFETIME BRANDS, INC.**

Linda Spence, Financial Programs Administrator, Business and Economic Development; and Jonathan Horowitz, Director, Business and Economic Development, presented the request to approve the resolution for acceptance of the State of Maryland's \$1,400,000.00 Maryland Economic Assistance Authority Fund (MEDAAF), also referred to as the Advantage Maryland loan. No County funding will be expended.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the resolution for acceptance of the State of Maryland's Economic Assistance Authority Fund for Lifetime Brands Inc. as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**SOLE SOURCE AWARD (PUR-1718) – SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS (SCBA)**

Brandi Naugle, Director, Purchasing; and Eric Jacobs, Assistant Director, Field Operations, Emergency Services, presented the request to authorize a sole source procurement for firefighter SCBA from Witmer Public Safety, Inc., of Coatesville, PA for the total sum in the amount of \$90,801.00 based on its quotes dated July 22, 2024, and July 23, 2024.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to approve the sole source procurement of firefighter SCBA from Witmer Public Safety, Inc. as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**BID AWARD (PUR-1713) SHARPSBURG WATER SERVICE UPGRADES**

Brandi Naugle, Director, Purchasing; and Joseph Moss, Deputy Director, Engineering Services, Environmental Management, presented the request to award the procurement of furnishing and delivering of the water system upgraded parts listed on the bids form of proposal to Main and Core of Martinsburg, WV, for a total sum bid price of \$257,103.96.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to award the procurement of furnishing and delivering of the water system upgraded parts listed to Main and Core as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATIVE PURCHASE (INTG-24-0173) PURCHASE FOR THREE (3) PORTABLE BLEACHER SYSTEMS FOR THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION CENTER**

Brandi Naugle, Director, Purchasing; and Thomas Gozora, Facility Administrator, Washington County Agricultural Education Center, presented the request to authorize by resolution, the Agricultural Education Center to purchase three (3) portable bleacher systems from Game Time, c/o Cunningham Recreation of Charlotte, NC for the total sum of \$54,089.14 and to utilize another jurisdiction's contract (#2017001134) that was awarded by US Communities/Omnia Partners to Game Time.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Wagner, moved to authorize by resolution the purchase three (3) portable bleacher systems from Game Time as presented. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**AGRICULTURE – FACES OF FARMING PRESENTATION**

Kelsey Keadle, Business Specialist, Agriculture, Business and Economic Development, shared "Faces of Farming" an agricultural-focused video marketing campaign that showcases two local Washington

County farms every month, for one year. The local farms that were showcased today were Bragunier Orchards and The Vineyards of Mapleville Manor.

**AGRICULTURE – WASHINGTON COUNTY AG EXPO & FAIR UPDATE**

Kelsey Keadle, Business Specialist, Agriculture, Business and Economic Development, presented an update on the 2024 Washington County Ag Expo & Fair. She shared a video presentation.

**RETENTION OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS CONSULTANT AND LOBBYIST**

Zachary J. Kieffer, County Attorney presented the request to approve to retain Bruce C. Bereano as the County's government relations consultant and lobbyist for the 2025 Session of the Maryland General Assembly upon the terms set forth in the proposed engagement letter dated October 18, 2024 and to approve Mr. Bereano's fee in the amount of \$10,000.00 plus \$100.00 for the lobbying registration fee. The term of his representation would be the calendar year 2025.

Commissioner Harvey, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to approve to retain Bruce C. Bereano and the fees as presented. The motion passed unanimously (4-1). Commissioner Keefer was a Nay vote.

Commissioner Keefer recommended consideration of a transportation lobbyist for I-81.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Harvey, moved to convene in closed session at 10:18 a.m. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

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 individual.

(1) These topics include the discussion of confidential personnel matters:

- Appointments to County Recreation and Parks Advisory Board; and

To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations. Open session discussion would disadvantage County bargaining position.

- Update to Commissioners on negotiations with IAFF.

In closed session, the Commissioners discussed; and reached a consensus to:

- For boards and commission appointments to the Washington County Recreation and Parks Advisory Board; and
- Received and update on IAFF negotiations.

Present during closed session at various times were Commissioners John F. Barr, Jeffrey A. Cline, Derek Harvey, Wayne K. Keefer and Randall E. Wagner; Dawn L. Marcus, County Clerk and Zachary J. Kieffer, County Attorney; Michelle Gordon, County Administrator; Aaron Weiss, Assistant County Attorney; Eric Paltell, Labor Counsel; Dave Hays, Director, Emergency Services; Dave Chisholm, Deputy Director, Emergency Services; and Chip Rose, Director, Human Resources.

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Keefer, moved to reconvene in open session at 11:19 a.m. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Wagner, seconded by Commissioner Cline, moved to adjourn at 11:19 a.m. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).



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Dawn L. Marcus, *County Clerk*