

October 1, 2024

A meeting of the County Commissioners of Kent County was called to order at 6:00 p.m., with the following present: Ronald H. Fithian, President; Albert H. Nickerson; and John F. Price. The meeting was convened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Commissioner Fithian asked everyone to remain silent for everyone affected by the world's unrest and those affected by Hurricane Helene.

CONSENT ITEMS

On a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved all six items as presented:

1. Regular Session Minutes, September 24, 2024
2. Liquor Minutes, September 24, 2024
3. Closed Session Minutes, September 24, 2024
4. Dogwood Festival of Galena, Inc., Raffle Only, October 12, 2024
5. Dan Mattson, Director, Public Works – Roads Division – Winter Operations for the Purchase of Road Salt, Piggybacking on MDOT/SHA BPO No. 001B4600050 for Purchase and Delivery with Morton Salt, Inc., not to exceed \$35,600.00.
6. Mr. Mattson - Roads Division – Guardrail Roadway Projects, Piggybacking on MDOT/SHA Contract No. 477D21426 with Guardrails Etc. Inc., not to exceed \$80,000.00

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously agreed to go into legislative session at 6:07 p.m.

Introduction of Code Home Rule Bill No. 8-2024 Emergency Services and Fire Companies Vehicles

Pete Landon, Director, Office of Emergency Services (OES) provided an overview of Code Home Rule Bill No. 8-2024 Emergency Services and Fire Companies Vehicles. AN ACT concerning Chapter 33 Emergency Services and Fire Companies, Section 33-1 Emergency Services Board Appropriations and 33-2 Vehicles. For the purpose of decreasing time constraints for volunteer fire and EMS companies to achieve compliance with standards and revisions to be consistent with the Maryland Annotated Code Transportation Article. By repealing Chapter 33 Emergency Services and Fire Companies, Section 33-1 Emergency Services Board Appropriations, and 33-2 Vehicles and reenacting with amendments to Chapter 33 Emergency Services and Fire Companies. Lynn Sutton, Chairperson of the Kent County Emergency Services Board, was also present to answer any questions the Board may have had.

Mr. Landon stated that a letter dated August 5, 2024, was received from Christopher A. Powell, Chief Emeritus, Kent County Chiefs' Association, requesting changes to the Kent County Code, Chapter 33, Emergency Services and Fire Companies. Ms. Sutton also submitted a letter on behalf of the Kent County Emergency Services Board, dated August 22, 2024, to the Commissioners

requesting to revise the Public Local Laws of Kent County regarding Chapter 33, Emergency Services and Fire Companies. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the introduction of Code Home Rule Bill 8-2024 Emergency Services and Fire Companies Vehicles and for the Bill to proceed with the legislative process.

The legislative session ended, and the Board continued with its regular session, as there were no other legislative matters to consider.

PROCLAMATIONS

Kent County Homeless Day, October 10, 2024: Carol L. Niemand, President, and Linda Kuiper, Treasurer of The Shelter Alliance, requested a proclamation to help bring awareness to homelessness locally by declaring October 10, 2024, Kent County Homeless Day. Discussion ensued regarding homelessness in Kent County. Commissioner Fithian read the proclamation into the record and presented it to Ms. Niemand and Ms. Kuiper.

Economic Development Week in Maryland – October 21 – 25, 2024: Jamie Williams, Director, and Katie Abbott, Economic Development Manager of Economic and Tourism Development, provided an overview of Economic Development Week in Maryland. Economic Development Week in Maryland emphasizes the importance of economic development for all communities. The week is designed to increase the understanding of economic development's contribution to the business climate, job retention and growth, tax base, and overall quality of life in Maryland and Kent County. Ms. Williams stated that the Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA) is a nonprofit establishment whose mission is to enhance the knowledge and skills of its members and encourage partnerships and networking among people committed to bringing jobs and capital to Maryland. Ms. Williams and her staff have gained immeasurable knowledge through their membership with MEDA, which has helped them continuously improve Economic Development in Kent County. The MEDA year in review, July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024, was included for the Board's information. Commissioner Price read the proclamation into the record and presented the proclamation to Ms. Williams and Ms. Abbott.

APPOINTMENT

Circuit Court for Kent County: Harris P. Murphy, Judge, Circuit Court for Kent County, and Dan Wagner, General Manager of Atlantic Security, discussed the access control system at the courthouse. The current access control system at the Kent County Courthouse is outdated and needs to be replaced. The manufacturer discontinued the system, and replacement parts are no longer available. The system could become inoperable, potentially causing doors in the courthouse to become locked with no way to open them. Atlantic Security, the County's local vendor for building security, has recommended replacing the current system with a system like that installed at 400 High Street and Public Safety. Atlantic Security's estimate includes \$14,985.00 for the material and labor of installation; this is a one-time cost. Additionally, the product costs \$3,960.00 for annual cloud service. Regarding costs, the Administrative Office of the Court Security Division has been consulted about this situation, and they have indicated that this project would qualify for

reimbursement as a Tier I security needs under their annual grant program. However, official approval cannot be given until all grants are submitted and reviewed, a process that should begin shortly. Judge Murphy requested approval to proceed with the replacement of the access control system at the courthouse. Further discussion occurred. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved to accept Atlantic Security's proposal to upgrade the existing access control system in the Courthouse and to allocate \$14,986.00 from Contingency funds to pay for the materials and labor and to allocate \$3,960.00 from Fund Balance to pay for the first year of the required annual cloud service.

ECONOMIC AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Abbott requested approval of the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (“MDPACE”) Agreement with the Maryland Clean Energy Center (MCEC). In September 2016, Code Home Rule (CHR) 3-2016 was adopted, adding Chapter 152 Taxation Article VII Clean Energy Loan Programs, effective October 20, 2016. PACE legislation was passed in 2021, and the program was updated to include new measures that PACE can cover, including resiliency, stormwater management, electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, etc. These measures will be helpful since Kent County is coastal. CHR 6-2024 reflecting these updates was passed on August 20, 2024, effective October 4, 2024. A new agreement with the MCEC is required, along with updates to the legislation. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved and signed the Agreement with Maryland Clean Energy Center.

KENT COUNTY LOCAL MANAGEMENT BOARD

Rosemary Ramsey Granillo, Director of the Kent County Local Management Board (KCLMB), requested approval of the FY2025 Community Partnership Agreement (CPA) with the Governor’s Office for Children (GOC). Ms. Ramsey gave an overview of how the funds would be allocated and the need for matching funds. The KCLMB has been awarded a total CPA award of \$559,284.00. The funds are allocated to various programs and initiatives, including board administration, local care team, community support, Healthy Families Home Visiting, Minary's Dream Academy, and Beyond Your Mental Peer Mentoring. Most of these funds have matching dollars from County funding and other grants, totaling \$149,349.00 or 21% of all KCLMB funds. Additionally, KCLMB will receive an ENOUGH Capacity Building award in January for \$104,000.00 to develop a governance structure for a priority neighborhood and increase resident participation and leadership. The funds will expire by September 30, 2025, and the proposal is due by November 1, 2024. Discussion took place. On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the FY2025 Community Partnership Agreement.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Sondra Blackiston, Clerk on behalf of Shelley Heller, County Administrator, stated that Melba J. Taylor of Encore Associates, LLC, representing the National Federation of the Blind-Maryland, expressed a desire to raise awareness for the White Cane Awareness Day campaign. Ms.

Blackiston read the proclamation into the record. Unfortunately, Ms. Taylor was not available to receive the proclamation in person.

Cancellation Announcement: The Notice of Public Hearing was published in the Kent County News on September 9, 2024. The deadline to submit proposals to the County Commissioners for review regarding Legislative Bond Initiative (LBI) requests has passed. As of October 1, 2024, no proposals were received. Therefore, the Public Hearing scheduled for October 8, 2024, and the Work Session scheduled for October 29, 2024, have been canceled.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Before opening the floor to public comment, Commissioner Fithian thanked Dr. McComas, Superintendent of Kent County Public Schools (KCPS), for attending tonight's meeting and invited her to say a few words. Dr. McComas gave an update on the following:

- September attendance in all schools was at or above the state's expectations of 94%.
- Back-to-School Night was a success at all schools.
- Middle School Project—Staff is in the process of finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Middle School Stadium Authority, the project manager. Fourteen architectural firms expressed interest in designing the new middle school.
- Staff will organize a meeting with Delegate Jeff Ghrist to prepare for the legislative sessions regarding the Middle School project.
- The school system has scheduled community conversations throughout October and November to help guide the preparation of Kent County Public Schools' next five-year strategic plan, facilities plan, and annual budget. Conversation sessions are scheduled to be held at each of the schools - with childcare provided at the elementary and middle schools. The meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. in each school's media center. The dates are as follows:
 - Wednesday, Oct. 16, at Galena Elementary School
 - Thursday, Oct. 24, at H.H. Garnet Elementary School, Chestertown
 - Tuesday, Oct. 29, at Kent County High School, Worton
 - Wednesday, Nov. 13, at Rock Hall Elementary School
 - Wednesday, Nov. 20, at Kent County Middle School, Chestertown.

The procedures for public comment were in effect. No comments were received.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS

The Commissioners were provided with a copy of the ARPA Spend Plan outlining the approved expenditures to date for informational purposes.

CONTINGENCY FUND

Regular Session Minutes

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The FY2025 Contingency balance as of September 24, 2024, is \$323,850.00. The FY2025 use of Fund Balance is \$101,347.00.

At 7:01 p.m., on a motion made by Commissioner Nickerson and seconded by Commissioner Price, the Commissioners unanimously approved adjourning the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk

Approved:

Ronald H. Fithian, President
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland

October 1, 2024

The Board of License Commissioners met today with the following present: Ronald H. Fithian, presiding, Albert H. Nickerson, and John F. Price.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Commissioner Fithian read a public notice into the record. Notice an application has been made by Rikin Patel, President, and Robert T. Connell, Shareholder, representing Hari Corp., for a Class A, Beer, Wine, and Liquor License with BWLT (tasting) and DEL (delivery) on the premises known as Pip's Discount Liquors, 861 Washington Avenue, Chestertown, MD 21620, which shall authorize the holder thereof to sell Beer, Wine, and Liquor at retail, at the place therein described, for off-premises consumption. A hearing on the application will be held in the County Commissioners' Hearing Room, R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr. Government Center, 400 High Street, Chestertown, MD, on October 22, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. At that time, any exceptions to the application will be heard.

CONSENT ITEM

On a motion made by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved Consent Item #2 - Liquor Minutes, September 24, 2024.

SPECIAL CLASS C

The Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer, wine, and liquor during a Republican Presidential Election Rally at the Fire House. The event is scheduled from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on October 10, 2024. With no objections, on a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for the Rock Hall Volunteer Fire Company.

The Dogwood Festival of Galena, Inc. submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer and wine during its annual Appreciation Day on October 12, 2024. The event will be held at the town park from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. With no objections, on a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for the Dogwood Festival of Galena, Inc.

The Dogwood Festival of Galena, Inc. also submitted a Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application to sell beer and wine for a Movie Night after the annual Appreciation Day celebration on October 12, 2024. Movie Night is scheduled from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and will also be held at the town park. With no objections, on a motion by Commissioner Price and seconded by Commissioner Nickerson, the Commissioners unanimously approved the Special Class C (Per Diem) liquor license application for the Dogwood Festival of Galena, Inc.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FY2025 First Quarter Report: Bonnie S. Pearsall, Inspector, Kent Alcohol and Tobacco Enforcement (KATE), conducted routine inspections of fifty-seven (57) out of fifty-nine (59) alcohol establishments for the first quarter of FY2025 (July, August, and September). Inspector Pearsall could not conduct inspections for two (2) establishments because she could not reach the members of the establishments. No violations were observed at any of the establishments during these inspections.

The KATE team continues to look for responsible 18 to 20 ½-year-olds for compliance checks on tobacco retailers, as well as responsible 21 to 27-year-olds to be “Mystery Shoppers” who will use the yellow and green cards to check alcohol establishments for compliance, making sure they are asking for Identification from their patrons.

At 7:01 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Nickerson, seconded by Commissioner Price; the Commissioners unanimously approved adjourning the meeting. The Board is scheduled to meet again on Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

THE BOARD OF LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
OF KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Sondra M. Blackiston
Clerk/KATE Manager

Approved:

Ronald H. Fithian, President
The County Commissioners
of Kent County, Maryland