

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY
109 Market Street, Room 106, Denton, Maryland

Minutes
October 5, 2021

Present: President Larry C. Porter; Vice President Daniel J. Franklin; Commissioner Wilbur Levensgood, Jr.; Stewart Barroll, County Attorney (virtually).

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 AM.

Convocation and prayer by Pastor Paul Merritt.

There was no public comment.

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Update - Robin Cahall, Health Officer, Caroline County Health Department: Ms. Cahall provided an update on the status of Caroline County regarding COVID-19 and its variants (Delta & Alpha). Ms. Cahall stated that there were 109 new reported cases in Caroline County in the past week. There was 1 pediatric hospitalization. The 7-day positivity rate in Caroline County is 8.55%, an increase of 6.9%. In Maryland it is 4.08%, a decrease of 2.9%. Currently, the case rate for Caroline County is 46.19, and increase of 3.9%. In Maryland it is 20.23, an increase of .4%. Ms. Cahall stated that 27.6% of new cases in Maryland were children (under 18). 71% of all cases in Maryland were those who are unvaccinated. Currently, Caroline County is still in a high transmission rate. In Caroline County, 31.17% of people ages 12-17 are vaccinated, 62.8% over the age of 18, and 59.7% of all eligible (12+) are vaccinated. Ms. Cahall mentioned that Pfizer submitted date for the FDA's review for ages 5-11 but has not yet been approved.

Commissioner Levensgood stated that he is looking forward to having a vaccine available for ages 5-11. He also mentioned it is important for folks to stay in their vehicles while being tested. Commissioner Franklin asked Ms. Cahall if the County has peaked. Ms. Cahall stated that she believes the County will see a decrease in cases within the next few weeks. Commissioner Porter asked the status of the Moderna booster. Ms. Cahall mentioned that she is not sure why Moderna has not yet received approval, but once it is approved, it will be made available to the public.

For All Seasons: Proclamation- Beth Anne Langrell & Katie Theeke: Ms. Langrell stated that For All Seasons has been a crisis center for 36 years. Caroline County continues to be the largest county served on the Eastern Shore during the last 18 months. During COVID, there was a large increase of need to many communities. Ms. Langrell mentioned that there is a new location coming to Denton hopefully by May of 2022. Ms. Langrell stressed that everyone plays a part in preventing suicide.

Discussion – Videography of Commissioners Meetings – Chris Rice, Director of IT: Mr. Rice mentioned that during the last Commissioners Meeting, the Commissioners requested to see the costs of getting a streaming setup for the HAPS building and the Commissioners Hearing Room in the Circuit Court House. Mr. Rice provided the following information: A 2-camera

system installed would cost \$30,000. The streaming service and archived footage are an additional cost. This service includes streaming and indexing 150 meetings a year, with time limit on the meetings. For every meeting over that 150 mark, it would cost \$175 per meeting. They would also allow 120 hours of specialty content per year such as a live press conference or other streaming needs. There would be an annual cost of \$24,000 for the system. This is totaling a cost of \$54,000 for year 1. If an additional room were to be added such as the HAPS building, it would be an additional \$30,000.

Commissioner Levensgood stated that the County is technically looking at about \$100,000 for both facilities. Administrator Goldman suggested that the Commissioners move their meetings to the HAPS building so two rooms will not have to be done and the HAPS building is home to more meetings that require broadcasting than the meeting room in the Courthouse. Commissioner Porter requested that this be brought back up during the October 19 Commissioners Meeting, so the Commissioners have time to digest the information.

First Reading & Introduction – Legislative Bill #2021-003, Chapter 62 – Collector of Taxes – Stewart Barroll, County Attorney: All three Commissioners voted to enter a Legislative Session. Mr. Barroll read the legislative bill that is set to abolish the position of Comptroller as the County’s collector of taxes and redirect that responsibility to the Director of Finance. Upon passed of this bill, the Director of Finance shall be the County’s collector of taxes. The public hearing for the bill will be held on October 19, 2021. All three Commissioners voted to go back to open session.

Consent Agenda: (Commissioner Porter recused himself from the vote of Dayspring I & II) Dayspring I & II were unanimously passed by Commissioners Levensgood and Franklin. The remainder of the consent agenda was unanimously passed by all three Commissioners.

- Dayspring I & II - Roof Replacement/Procurement Process Request
- Resolution #2021-0021 – Community Development Block Grant – Benedictine Foundation
- Memorandum of Understanding – Maryland Department of Natural Resources – Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays 2010 Trust Fund – Greensboro
- Purchase Order #2022-00000112 – Dell Servers FY2022 – Information Technologies
- Leadership Maryland Application Request – Economic Development Director
- Minutes – September 21, 2021 & September 28, 2021 – Open Session

County Administrators Report – Jeremy Goldman: Administrator Goldman stated that he once the COVID numbers come down, he will retract his mask mandate directive to a recommendation. Commissioner Franklin stated that he is against any mandate, mask or vaccination. He mentioned that he believes that adults have the right to make their own decisions. Commissioner Porter stated that he is against vaccination mandates but is comfortable with the current mask mandate until the County’s numbers improve. Commissioner Levensgood agreed with Commissioner Porter.

County Commissioners Open Discussion: Commissioner Levensgood mentioned that the shrimp feast went well Friday night. He is busy trying to keep his 43-year-old combine working. Commissioner Franklin mentioned that all three Commissioners attended the 404 dedication in memory of Breanna Freeman. He also mentioned that it was well attended. Commissioner Porter mentioned that he had a gentleman call him, Mr. Randy Perkins, concerned about the overgrown weeds on Chicken Bridge Road in Ridgely. Commissioner Porter invited him to attend the meeting, but Mr. Perkins does not seem to be in attendance in person or via the live stream. Commissioner Porter mentioned that if the property he is referring to is County property, it can be addressed. If it is private property, there is nothing that can be done as the County does not have a property maintenance ordinance.

Administrator Goldman mentioned there was a lady who called in to complain about the cost of the dump usage. It is right around \$100/annually. She mentioned that senior citizens should not have to pay that amount of money to dispose of their garbage. Administrator Goldman invited her to share her concerns during the public comment period of meetings, but she seems not be in attendance.

Commissioner Porter asked if there was any headway to the road name-change request from Mr. Dobson. Mr. Barroll stated that Mr. Dobson was provided the correct paperwork to submit a request to change the road name and has not seen any of that paperwork completed or returned. Commissioner Porter stated that he would reach out to Mr. Dobson.


Commissioner Levensgood stated that he was approached by a woman who wants to be on the Workforce Development Board. Administrator Goldman stated that he was not currently aware of any vacancies on that board.

Commissioner Porter mentioned there was an application from Mr. Jeffrey Jackson to become a member of the Planning and Zoning Commission as Dr. Derek Simmons term has expired. All three Commissioners voted to appoint Mr. Jackson to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

There was no public comment.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

All three Commissioners voted to go into Closed Session.



Kaleigh Leager
Executive Assistant to The County Commissioners