

**Regular Meeting of County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday October 29, 2024 (Legislative Day)**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in person at 3:01 p.m. with the following persons in attendance:

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, County Commissioner  
Ralph Patterson, II, M.A., Vice President, County Commissioner  
Gilbert O. Bowling, III, County Commissioner  
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner  
Amanda M. Stewart, Ed.D., County Commissioner  
Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator  
Wes Adams, County Attorney  
Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

*\*Ralph Patterson, II, M.A., Vice President, County Commissioner was absent and joined session later this day as noted.*

**Call to Order/Pledge**

Commissioner Collins called the meeting to order and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call**

A roll call was taken. Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins were present in person.

*\*Commissioner Patterson was absent.*

**Charles County Proclamations for October 2024**

2024-84 First Responders Appreciation Day

**Charles County Proclamations for November 2024**

2024-86 National Native American Heritage Month

2024-87 Family Court Awareness Month

2024-88 National Hospice, Palliative, and Home Care Month

2024-89 National Family Caregivers Month

2024-90 National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week

2024-91 Military Family Appreciation Month

2024-92 Veterans Day

2024-93 Iossif Joe Mario Gressis Day

2024-94 Adoption Awareness Month

2024-95 Shop Small Business Saturday

2024-96 National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

The Commissioners were joined by members of the Charles County Sheriff's Office and Corrections Division, La Plata Police Department, Volunteer Fire Department members, and staff from the Department of Emergency Services to receive proclamation 2024-84 First Responders Appreciation Day; Staff from the Department of Emergency Services to receive 2024-90 National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week; Members of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe to receive proclamation 2024-86 National Native American Heritage Month; Staff from Hospice of Chesapeake to receive proclamation 2024-88 National Hospice, Palliative, and Home Care Month; Staff from the Department of Community Services to receive 2024-89 National Family Caregivers Month; Staff from the Charles

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County Department of Social Services to receive proclamation 2024-94 Adoption Awareness Month; Staff from the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) to receive proclamation 2024-96 National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week; Members of the Charles County Commission for Veterans Affairs and **COMREL** to receive proclamations 2024-91 Military Family Appreciation Month 2024-92 Veterans Day; and Staff from the Department of Economic Development, Mr. Ismael, General Manager, St. Charles Town Center, Ms. Emily Burke: CEO, Sublime Soul, Ms. Taylor Latham: CEO, Centerpiece Boutique, Ms. Kathy Guzman: President & CEO, Charles County Chamber of Commerce to receive proclamation 2024-95 Shop Small Business Saturday.

*\*Break 3:35 p.m. – 3:48 p.m.*

Session resumed in hybrid format, virtually and in person.

**Roll Call**

A roll call was taken. Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart and Collins were present in person. Commissioner Patterson was virtual.

**Commissioners' Comments**

Commissioner Patterson thanked those who helped and attended his Town Hall Meetings. Commissioner Coates shared that Bryans Road had a Farmers Market on Sunday and will have another one on November 24, 2024.

Commissioner Stewart thanked those who helped and attended her Town Hall Meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to make today, October 29, 2024 and tomorrow October 30, 2024 Legislative Days.

**Approval of the Minutes of October 22, 2024**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of October 22, 2024.

**Announcement**

Next Scheduled Session(s): November 19-20, 2024.

**Approval Items**

**Budget Amendments and Budget Transfers**

(Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative)

**FY2025 Budget Transfer Request #429 Technology Build Out for Centennial Street Conference Room**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve FY2025 Budget Transfer Request #429 for one hundred and ten thousand dollars (\$110,000.00).

*\*At about 3:58 p.m. Commissioner Coates left Session*

**FY2025 Budget Amendment Increase #747 Change Existing Long Driveway Grant Program-Remove Match Requirement**

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A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve FY2025 Budget Amendment Increase #747 for three thousand dollars (\$3,000.00). *\*Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

*\*At about 4:04 p.m. Commissioner Coates rejoined session.*

**Change Order 11 Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWTP) Electrical and Automation Improvements, Engineering Services Contract No.17-10**

(Mr. Ahmed Alqazzaz, Project Manager, Mr. Samuel Walter, Program Manager, and Mr. Bernard Cochran, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works-Utilities)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Change Order 11 for two hundred and ninety nine thousand nine hundred and fifty one dollars (\$299,951.00).

**Change Order 14 Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment Plant (MWWTP) Secondary and Final Clarifier Improvements- Additional Grout Removal and Replacement (ITB 20-23)**

(Waqar Cheema, Senior Project Manager, Mr. Samuel Walter, Program Manager, and Mr. Bernard Cochran, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works-Utilities)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Change Order 14 for three hundred and thirty-eight thousand seven hundred and four dollars and thirty-eight cents (\$338,704.38)

*\*At about 4:16 p.m., Commissioner Patterson joined session in person.*

**Bi-Annual Charles County Health Department Report**

Dr. Dianna Abney, Health Officer, and Ms. Amber Starn, Director of Community Health and Evaluation, Charles County Department of Health, provided the bi-annual Charles County Health department report. They reviewed COVID-19, Respiratory Virus (RSV), and the Flu risks and vaccinations available. Dr. Abney reviewed Health Department programs related to Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; Nursing Program Updates; Administrative Care Coordination Unit (ACCU); Maryland's Children's Health Program and Family Medicaid Program; Developmental Disabilities Programs; Behavioral Health Services; Narcan Training; Harm Reduction Program; and Environmental Health Programs. The Charles County Health Department was recognized by the State for outstanding customer service. Dr. Abney reviewed outline of the program related to the Healthy Kids Meal Legislation; Community Health and Evaluation Grants; addressing food insecurity and healthy eating; and free community programs.

**\*TO BE RESCHEDULED\* Briefing: Health Department Update on Proposed Blue Zone Initiative**

**Commissioners' New Business**

There was no new business discussed.

*\*Break 4:40 p.m. -5:01 p.m.*

**Roll Call**

A roll call was taken. All Commissioners were present in person.

**Commissioners' Public Comment Session**

Commissioners held an open session to receive public comments on any issue. This agenda item was added for the Commissioners to listen to feedback only, twice each month during their regular meetings.

There were four (4) people who provided comments in person and two (2) people who provided virtual comments. Any written comments received were added to the website for the public to view.

**Summary of Public Comments**

**In Person:**

- Speaker expressed concerns about dysfunction and division encouraged by the three pro charter Commissioners; highlighted video with Commissioner Collins that suggested that some of his colleagues and residents don't like fact that Charles County is wealthiest majority-minority population; Speaker is against Charter.
- Speaker expressed frustration with local government officials, especially Commissioner Bowling and his concerns about his perceived bias and political affiliation.
- Speaker expressed enthusiasm after the Economic Development meeting about potential commercial growth in Indian Head.
- Speaker questioned if the push to change government structure was the "will of the people" as Commissioner Patterson indicated.

**Virtual:**

- Speaker appreciates the Commissioners hosting Town Hall Meetings and importance of open communication.
- Speaker expressed views against the Charter.

*\*Break 5:22 p.m. – 6:01 p.m.*

**Public Hearing: Charles County Government 2024 Bond Issue**

The Commissioners held a hybrid, virtual/in-person, public hearing on the 2024 Bond Issuance. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Ms. Anna Horevay, Partner, and Camille Pappy, McGuire Woods, LLP, reviewed the proposed Bond size for 2024 which is seventy-three million dollars (\$73,000,000.00). Mr. Dyer reviewed the breakdown of the bond terms:

- Fifteen (15) Year Bonds: Forty million dollars (\$40,000,000.00) for eligible General Government, Board of Education, Parks, Roads, Water & Sewer, Environmental Resources, and Watershed Projects
- Ten (10) Year Bonds: Twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000.00) for School Excise Tax Bonds for eligible Board of Education Projects and for eligible Water Projects.

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- Thirty (30) Year Bonds: Thirteen million dollars (\$13,000,000.00) for eligible Water, Sewer & Watershed Projects.

There were no comments provided by the public.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to close the public record.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve Resolution 2024-12 Charles County Bond Issuance 2024.

**Public Hearing: Bill 2024-(13) Zoning Text Amendment 24-184 Additional Transitional Provisions for the Waldorf Activity Center Zones**

The Commissioners held a hybrid, virtual/in-person, public hearing on proposed Bill 2024-13 Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 24-184. Ms. Amy Blessinger, Planner III, Mr. Charles Rice, Planning Director, and Mr. Jason Groth, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management, provided background on the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) and the transitional provisions staff is proposing to target changes to the Waldorf Central (WC) and Acton Urban Center (AUC) in the WURC. The proposed amendments are:

- New Transitional Provisions proposed to modify certain zoning requirements for an interim period.
- Allow residential use on the ground floor of multifamily buildings that do not face major streets.
  - Still requires non-residential on ground floor facing the street
  - Maintains commercial architectural of first floor of street facing buildings
- Removes requirement to purchase Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)
- Changes would be in effect for five (5) years from effective date of adoption and would be re-evaluated towards the end of the five (5) year period
- Proposed legislation also includes revisions to improve clarity of the zoning requirements.

There was one (1) person who provided comments in person. No virtual comments were provided.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to close the public record.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this public hearing.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2024-13 Zoning Text Amendment 24-184 Additional Transitional Provisions for the Waldorf Activity Center.

*\*At about 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Coates recused herself from the next public hearing related to the Aviation Business Park.*

**Public Hearing: Bill 2024-(07) Zoning Text Amendment #23-176 Aviation Business Park and Bill 2024-(08) Zoning Map Amendment #23-02 Aviation Business Park**

The Commissioners held a hybrid, virtual/in-person, public hearing on proposed Bills 2024-07 Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 23-176 and 2024-08 Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) 23-02 Aviation Business Park. Ms. Amy Blessinger, Planner III, Mr. Charles Rice, Planning Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management provided a presentation which reviewed Maryland Airport Facts, Economic Development Objectives, the purpose of the Aviation Business Park Zone, the public process and the County Commissioner proposed zoning map dated July 9, 2024 which:

Approximately 198 acres around Airport proposed to be rezoned to Aviation Business Park (ABP)  
Approximately 38 acres along Ray Drive proposed to be rezoned to General Industrial (IG).

There were fifteen people who provided in person comments and three (3) people who provided comments virtually.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to close the public record. Commissioner Stewart was opposed. *\*Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.* A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Patterson-yes; Commissioner Bowling-yes; Commissioner Stewart-no; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed three (3) to one (1).

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to close this public hearing. Commissioner Stewart was opposed. *\*Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.* A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Patterson-yes; Commissioner Bowling-yes; Commissioner Stewart-no; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed three (3) to one (1).

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to adopt Bill 2024-07 Zoning Text Amendment 23-176 Aviation Business Park and Bill 2024-08 Zoning Map Amendment 23-02 Aviation Business Park as presented. Commissioner Stewart was opposed. *\*Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.* A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Patterson-yes; Commissioner Bowling-yes; Commissioner Stewart-no; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed three (3) to one (1).

Commissioner Stewart indicated she was against because she felt that the fifty (50) acres owned by the County should not be included.

At about 7:39 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to adjourn. *\*Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

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Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

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Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President