

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners

Tuesday March 4, 2025 (Legislative Day)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened hybrid format, in person and virtually, at 11:01 a.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
John Adelodun, Assistant Clerk to the Commissioners

** Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, County Commissioner and Ralph Patterson, II, M.A., Vice President, County Commissioner joined virtually.*

Call to Order/Pledge

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

Roll Call

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

Charles County Proclamations for March 2025

2025-10 National Women's History Month
2025-11 Social Work Month
2025-12 National Deaf History Month
2025-13 National Nutrition Month
2025-14 Good Sportsmanship Month
2025-15 Irish American Heritage Month
2025-16 National Vietnam War Veterans Day
2025-17 National Agriculture Day

The Commissioners were joined by members of Charles County Commission for women to receive proclamation 2025-10 National Women's History Month; Member of the Department of Social Services were present to receive proclamation 2025-11 Social Work Month; Ms. Brittney Bolin, Nutritionist was present to receive proclamation 2025-13 National Nutrition Month; Members of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism were present to receive proclamation 2025-14 Good Sportsmanship Month; members of the Department of Planning and Growth management to receive proclamation 2025-17 National Agriculture Day;

Recognition: Employee Length of Service and Top Performer, Fourth Quarter (October-December 2024)

The Commissioners recognized years of service for October through December 2024. The Top Performers award for the fourth quarter of 2024 went to the Litter Control Crew: Donald Brown, T.J. Rollins, Bill Wood, Jerome Hairston, Chris Cheeks, Jerry Guy, Anthony Rogers, Richard Chialastri, Kevin Gilman and Carmen Wernke, and Landfill Staff/Operators: Travis Savoy, Andrew Milstead,

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Steve Kissinger, Ben Flick and William Knott who went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that County roads remain clean and litter free while exhibiting the core values of teamwork, initiative, and innovation.

*Break 11:35 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Commissioner Comments

There were no commissioner comments

Approval of the Minutes of February 25, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of February 25, 2025.

Announcement

Next Scheduled Session(s): March 11-12, 2025

Legislative Update: 2025 Maryland General Assembly Session

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Assistant Deputy County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County; Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; Mr. Joseph Green and Ms. Jeanette Tejeda de Gomez, G.S. Proctor & Associates, Inc joined the Commissioners to provide the first update on the 2025 Maryland General Assembly

Ms. Mitchell reviewed the Charles County Proposals:

- HB1283/SB0912 *Charles County - Off-Highway Recreational Vehicles - Regulation and Enforcement Hearings initially scheduled for March 5 and March 7, 2025, now scheduled for March 5 and March 11, 2025*
- HB0841/SB0730 *Gaming - Charles County Gaming Permit Review Board – Repeal Hearings held, awaiting Senate vote*
- HB772- *Education - Career Counseling Program for Middle and High School Students – Alterations-* Tri-Council support discussed, no delegation position yet.
- HB1036/SB931- *Public Utilities - Generating Stations - Generation and Siting (Renewable Energy Certainty Act)-* Amendments under negotiation to address the eminent domain item, predictability and local authority body to allow public input, as well as address local revenue and public safety concerns
- HB1370/SB0881- *Transportation - Regional Transportation Authorities-* MACo shared a letter of information

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The Commissioners present reached a consensus to send a No Response Letter

- HB352/SB321- *Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2025*- Awaiting amendments; review paused until the next meeting. MACo and Maryland Comptroller meeting scheduled to discuss the Governor's income tax plan.

Briefing: Charles County Boards and Commissions Annual Update

Briefing: Annual Update from Board of Appeals

Briefing: Annual Update from Planning Commission

*Break 1:08 p.m. -1:11 p.m

Roll Call

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

Commissioners Bowling, Collins and Patterson were virtual.

Briefing: Annual Update from Charles County Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board)

Briefing: Annual Update from the Property Tax Assessment Appeal Board

Staff and members of the Board of Appeals, Planning Commission, Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board) and Property Tax Assessment Appeal Board provided an overview of their 2024 Annual reports.

****TO BE RESCHEDULED** Closed Session**

*Break 1:37 p.m. -3:01 p.m

Roll Call

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

Commissioners Stewart and Patterson were virtual.

*Commissioner Bowling was absent.

Approval Items

Budget Amendment(s) and Budget Transfer(s):

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

There was no Budget Amendment or Budget Transfer

Action on Boards and Commissions

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to appoint Christopher Alberts, Jessica Jennings, Rebekah Carmichael, as members to the Library Board of Trustees.

*Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.

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A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to reappoint Kevin Wedding as the Chairman of the Planning Commission for 2025.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to reappoint Cathy Thompson as Employee of Charles County Government and appoint Brentnoll Bovell as an At-Large Member, to the Charles County Pension Plan Committee.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to appoint Richard Wallace and Sonya D. Harris as Citizen Members to the Commission for Veterans Affairs.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to appoint Michael Biggs as an HOA Resident member and Veronica Browne-Barnes as Real estate/Development/Community association member to the Homeowner's Association Dispute Review Board.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to reappoint Sherry Burks as a Faith-based community member, appoint Gregory Barrett and Lisa Connors to the Interfaith Commission.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to appoint Charles W. Quade Sr., Hal Orbitz and Natalie Cotton as Citizen Members to the Nuisance Abatement Hearing Board.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to appoint Kimberly M. Bredell as a Minority Business Owner, Beatrice K. Johnson as a Small Business Owner to the Business Development Loan Fund for Women, Minorities and Veterans Committee.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

Support of Charles County Federal Earmarks Requests

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting to approve the Letter of Support for the Charles County Federal Earmarks Requests.

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*Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.

Discussion: Declare September African Heritage Month in Charles County
(Commissioner Patterson)

No action was taken at this time

Approval: Next Steps for Winkler House Related to the La Plata Library Project

(Ms. Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator, and Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator)

Ms. Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator, Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, presented an update to the Commissioners on the Winkler House which is a home built in 1923 and currently sits on land designated as the future site of the new La Plata library.

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson, Collins voting in favor to approve the recommendations presented.

*Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.

Update: Charles County University of Maryland Scholarship Awardees in the C.D. Mote, Jr. Incentive Awards Program

Ms. Jacqueline Wheeler Lee, Director, and Nancy Murray, Chief Development Officer, C.D. Mote Jr. Incentive Awards Program, University of Maryland provided an update on the C.D. Mote Jr. Incentive Awards Program which was funded by the County Commissioners. Also present were Adiel Santos Molina, Gabrielle Wimbush, Manmeet Kaur, awardees of the program who thanked the commissioners for the life-changing opportunity.

Briefing: Charles County Mediation Center

Ms. Julie Walton, Director, Charles County Community Mediation Center/Division of Financial Services presented a briefing on the Charles County Mediation Center. There were three hundred and thirteen (313) intakes, one hundred and nineteen (119) mediation session in the 2024. There has been two hundred twenty-five (225) intakes, seventy-nine (79) mediation session in 2025 and could be on course to complete four hundred and fifty (450) intakes in 2025.

Briefing/Request for Approval: Update Potential Rental Licensing Program

Ms. Cathy Reisinger, Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management, Mr. Ray Shumaker, Chief of Codes, Permits, and Inspection Services, Mr. Don Litten, Building Code Official, Department of Planning and Growth Management, Ms. Doria Fleisher, Assistant Chief of Media and Public Outreach, Office of the County Administrator, Ms. Dina Barclay, Director of Community Services and Ms. Rita Wood, Chief of Housing, Department of Community Services, Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney and Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Assistant Deputy County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County presented a briefing and requisition for approval for the Potential Rental Licensing Program, thirty-three (33) counties, cities seven (7) and town twenty six (26) in Maryland with Rental Licensing program. A breakdown of the financial impact and the requested action was shared.

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A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates passed, three (3) to one (1) with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, Collins voting in favor to approve the Potential Rental Licensing program and Commissioner Stewart opposing.

**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.* A roll call of the vote was taken: Commissioner Bowling-absent; Commissioner Coates-yes; Commissioner Stewart-no; Commissioner Patterson-yes; Commissioner Collins-yes. The motion passed three (3) to one (1).

Update: Commissioners' Goals and Objectives- Goal 2: Institutional Governance and Policy

Ms. Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator, and Ms. Jenifer Ellin, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Department of Human Resources; Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; and Ms. Jennifer Harris, Chief of Media Services, Office of the County Administrator provided an update on goal 2 Institutional Governance and Policy of the County Commissioners' Goals and Objectives. Highlights include Recruitment & Retention Initiatives, HR Training Initiatives & Summer Internship Program, Career and Technical Education (CTE), Office of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (ODEI) Training Initiatives, Apprenticeship Maryland, Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Training Program, Space Needs Update, Cybersecurity – SCADA, creation of a new IT security position created with the primary focus on the SCADA network Implementation of Multi-Factor Authentication, Annual vulnerability assessment The IAP2 Model for Public Participation, Stay Engaged, Charles County, Stay Connected, Charles County, Citizens Academy, Collaborative Community Improvement Project Pilot: Bryans Road.

Commissioners' New Business

Commissioner Collins informed the Commissioners of his intent to submit two agenda items 1) Discussion on the ideal potential term limit legislation 2) Establish a Fire and EMS/ Fire Suppression task force.

Commissioner Coates also made a request to add an item to the upcoming session agenda for March 11, 2025, titled Public Hearing Date for Bill 2025-02 ZTA 23-179 Multifamily and In-field development and residential office zone

At 5:16 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to adjourn.
**Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

John Adelodun, Assistant Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President