

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday April 30, 2025 (Legislative Day)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened hybrid format, in person and virtually, at 9:01 a.m. with the following persons in attendance:

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

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 and Collins were present in person. Commissioners Coates, Stewart and Patterson were virtual.

**At 9:02 a.m. Commissioner Patterson left Session.*

Approval Items

Resolution 2025-(05) Authorization of Submittal of Application for Maryland Affordable Housing Trust Plumbing Poverty Program

(Ms. Barbara Farmer, Community Development Supervisor, Ms. Jill Hodges, Community Development Coordinator, and Ms. Dina Barclay, Director, Department of Community Services)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve Resolution 2025-05. **Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

Action of Boards and Commissions

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins present, voting in favor to appoint Caren Williams as an At Large member to the Animal Matters Hearing Board. **Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins present, voting in favor to appoint Paralee Massie-Armstrong as an At Large member to the Charles County Sheriff's Office Retirement Plan Committee. **Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins present, voting in favor to appoint Lutisse Hinnant-Cooper, Lynn Harley-Tolson, and Maria Wells as Citizen members to the Board of Social Services **Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

Legislative Wrap-Up: 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, Ms. Sherri Simms, and Ms. Jeanette Tejeda de Gomez, G.S. Proctor & Associates, Inc. joined the Commissioners to provide a wrap up update on the 2025 Maryland General Assembly Session.

Mr. Green led the overview of the actions taken by state legislators during the session. The General Assembly passed a balanced sixty-seven (\$67) billion-dollar budget, advanced major clean-energy legislation, preserved Blueprint for Maryland's Future funding, supported key transportation projects, and enacted reforms in justice and parole. Legislative developments are expected to influence county operations and resource allocations in the coming year.

Ms. Tejeda de Gomez reviewed the State's Budget Highlights which Preserves a two point four (\$2.4) billion dollars in cash reserves (Rainy Day and General Fund); Reduces General Fund spending by four hundred (\$400) million dollars; Introduces a one point two (\$1.2) billion dollars in new revenues from tax and fee reforms; Fully funds the Blueprint for Maryland's Future; Adds five hundred (\$500) million dollars through vehicle-related tax and fee increases; Provides fifteen point six (\$15.6) billion dollars for Medicaid, one hundred and twenty one point eight (\$121.8) million dollars for police aid, and one hundred (\$100) million dollars for climate efforts; Includes a one percent (1%) COLA and a two point five percent (2.5%) salary increases for eligible state employees; and Direct fiscal and programmatic impacts expected across education, public safety, and infrastructure.

Ms. Simms reviewed The Charles County legislative delegation bond initiates totaling five hundred and forty-seven thousand dollars (\$547,000.00) in bonds for five projects in Charles County, for the Charles County Charitable Trust; WAC Hughes Elks Lodge #1053; United States Bomb Technician Association (USBTA); Providence Maryland; and Waldorf MD Elks Lodge #2421.

Mr. Green concluded the wrap up on the status of Bills the Commissioners were tracking during this legislative session.

Commissioner Collins requested another meeting with the lobbyist in late July 2025 prior to the fall meeting with the state delegation for the 2026 state legislative session.

FY2026 Budget Work Session: Final Review of Proposed FY2026 General Fund and Highlights of County Government Operations

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Ms. Samantha Chiriaco, Chief of Budget, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, reviewed the proposed FY2026 General Fund Budget is five hundred and ninety-four million two hundred and ninety-three thousand three hundred dollars (\$594,293,300.00). This is an increase of about six percent (6%) over last year's budget. The proposed budget includes no property or income tax rate increases. The proposed budget does include increasing the Recordation Tax Rate from five dollars (\$5.00) per five hundred dollars (\$500.00) to seven dollars (\$7.00) per five hundred dollars (\$500.00). The review focused on the proposed budgets for the County Administered Departments, Debt Services, Fringe Benefits, Central Services, Contingency, Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Contributions,

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Financing Uses, Conservation of National Resources, Liquor Board, Orphan's Court, and Other Criminal Justice budget.

Mr. Dyer explained that the staff's recommendation of not using the proposed five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) which was added as reserve for unforeseen expenses and additional expenses from the State.

**Break 10:33 a.m.-10:47 a.m.*

Roll Call

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

FY2026 Budget Work Session: Governmental Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Overview

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Acting Director, Ms. Samantha Chiriaco, Chief of Budget, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, provided an overview of the proposed FY2026-FY2030 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget of five hundred and twenty-three million eight hundred and sixty-one million dollars (\$523,861,000.00).

Mr. Dyer reviewed the upcoming budget schedule and reminders that the Public Hearing is scheduled on May 7, 2025 and that Commissioners Add/Delete forms will be sent.

Commissioners' New Business

There was no new business discussed.

At 11:21 a.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, and Collins present, voting in favor to adjourn. **Commissioner Patterson was not present for the vote.*

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President