

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday October 7, 2025 (Legislative Day)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format (in person and virtual) at 2:31 p.m. with the following people in attendance:

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

Gilbert O. Bowling, III, County Commissioner and Amanda M. Stewart, Ed.D., County Commissioner were absent

At about 9:00 a.m., before the official start of the Commissioners' Meeting, Commissioners Coates and Collins recognized the Light the Way Foundation Summer Youth Film Camp Participants and presented October 2025 proclamations to staff and organizations present.

Recognition: Light the Way Foundation Summer Youth Film Camp Participants

Charles County Proclamations for October 2025

2025-61 Global Diversity Awareness Month.
2025-62 Domestic Violence Awareness Month
2025-63 National Cybersecurity Awareness Month
2025-64 National Breast Cancer Awareness Month
2025-65 National Disability Employment Awareness Month
2025-66 Child Health Month
2025-67 National Bullying Prevention Month
2025-68 Fire Prevention Week
2025-69 White Cane Awareness Day
2025-70 First Responders Appreciation Day
2025-71 Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness and Remembrance Month
2025-72 PANS PANDA Awareness Day
2025-73 Economic Development Week

***TO BE RESCHEDULED*Annual Update: Maryland Association of Counties (MACo)**

***TO BE RESCHEDULED*Bi-Annual Health Department Report**

***TO BE RESCHEDULED*Annual Update: Docket 90**

*** RESCHEDULED TO THE AFTERNOON*Briefing and Request to Initiate Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) Process with Planning Commission on Data Centers**

Call to Order/Pledge

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

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Roll Call

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

Closed Session

At 2:32 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson, and passed with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to move into Close Session where all or a portion of this session may be closed pursuant to Section 3-305 (b)(1)(3)(7) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to receive one (1) update on a potential land acquisition and to discuss appointments to Commissioner appointed Boards and Commissions. The reason for moving into closed session is to keep legal advice, strategies, negotiations, and personnel information confidential. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Summary Closed Session Items

At about 2:36 p.m., the Commissioners went into closed session.

3-305(b)(3)(7)Update on a Potential Land Acquisition

Present: Commissioners Coates, Patterson and Collins, Wes Adams, Deborah Hall, Carol DeSoto, Mark Thompson, Jim Chandler, Sarah Guy, and Victoria Rickett

Staff provided an update on a potential land acquisition.

3-305(b)(1) Personnel- Boards and Commissions Appointments

Present: Commissioners Coates, Patterson and Collins, Wes Adams, Deborah Hall, Carol DeSoto and John Adelodun

Mr. John Adelodun, Assistant Clerk, reviewed vacancies on the Disability Review Boards, Charles County Commission for Women, and the Board of Appeals.

The Commissioners present reached a consensus. Official action took place later this day under Approval Items-Action on Boards and Commissions.

At 2:50 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to end this close session. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

The Commissioners returned to open session at 3:35 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Commissioner Comments

There were no comments.

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Approval of the Minutes of September 23, 2025 and September 30, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of September 23, 2025. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of September 30, 2025. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Announcement

Next Scheduled Session(s): October 21-22, 2025.

Approval Items

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

(Mr. Samantha Chiriaco, Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative)

FY2026 Budget Amendment Increase #991 Opioid Settlement Funds for Correctional Officers to take an Operational Readiness Course for First Responders.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve FY2026 Budget Amendment Increase #991 for fifty-four thousand four hundred and fifty dollars (\$54,450.00).

**Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Action on Boards and Commissions

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to reappoint Susan Rice and appoint Brandi Beam as a Citizen members and Hawa Osime as the Doctor to the Disability Review Board. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to reappoint Betsy Adeboyejo, Rosalyn Dickerson, Krystal Hall, Katrina Logan, Cecelia Maryland-Twyman, Judith Ramsey and appoint Ashira Vantrees, Rachel Christy, Theresa Clark, Candice Keys, Chavonne Quarles-Stevenson, Michelle Simonds, LaJuan Holeman as Citizen Members to the Commission for Women.

**Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to appoint George Grindle as an Alternate Member to the Board of Appeals. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Work Session #2: 2026 Preliminary State Legislative Proposal

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator, joined the Commissioners to provide the follow up information related to a few proposals the Commissioners discussed at the last work session on the 2026 preliminary State Legislative Proposals on September 23, 2025.

- A proposal for special elections to fill vacancies for certain elected offices.
Proposed by: Carlos Childs

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include this proposal for only Board of County Commissioners.

- A proposal to implement attendance requirements for the Board of Commissioners.
Proposed by: Joseph Mank

The Commissioners present reached a consensus not to include this proposal.

- A proposal to create an Office of Community Relations to assist with issues related to common ownership communities.
Proposed by: Christopher Bullock

The Commissioners present reached a consensus on including and amendment to the Homeowners Association Dispute Review Board.

- A proposal to expand agritourism to include breweries.
Proposed by: Commissioner Coates

The Commissioners present reached a consensus not to include this proposal since procedures already exist and just need to educate the public.

**At about 4:06 p.m. Commissioner Patterson joined session in person.*

Ms. Mitchell explained that during the Commissioners' Local Legislative process held in the spring of this year the topic of raising the income cap from one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000.00) to an income cap of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00). It was also proposed to increase the tax credit amount. The income cap request would be a State legislative proposal while the tax credit amount would be a local proposal.

- TOPIC: Volunteer Emergency Responders Tax Credit
Submitted by Bill Smith on behalf of Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to include raising the income cap amount proposal.

Briefing and Request to Initiate Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) Process with Planning Commission on Data Centers

Mr. Jim Chandler, Director, and Mr. Mark Thompson, Chief of Commercial Development, Department of Economic Development; Mr. Jason Groth, Director, and Mr. Charles Rice, Planning Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management, provided an overview of this request to initiate the Zoning Text Amendment Process for Data Centers. Mr. Chandler provided information on data centers and the economic benefits related to job creation and income. Mr. Rice reviewed key points of data centers that can be mitigated with thoughtful zoning provisions such as increased digital demand, impacts on power systems, noise, water and aesthetics like any other industrial use, and the requirement of electrical load studies by utilities. The County's approach would be to locate in a compatible land use area, use noise mitigation tools (Building orientation, Setbacks, Buffers, Plantings, Forest Areas, and Screening, Fencing, Berming), and water usage by prioritize use of reclaimed/non-potable water. He furthered explained that draft zoning text amendment would add definition for data centers, permit data centers with conditions in the: Business Park (BP); General Industrial (IG); Heavy Industrial (IH); Planned Unit Development (PUD) Industrial Zones; Low Density Residential (RL) with greater restrictions. All zones would require minimum of thirty percent (30%) Open Space Requirement; Setback of two hundred (200) feet from property lines; Setback of four hundred (400) feet from residential buildings; Architectural Requirements; Noise and Vibration Study to demonstrate compliance; Perimeter Landscaping and Hardscaping Requirements; Lighting standards; Non-potable water use is prioritized. Minimum area for RL zoned land is fifty (50 acres); Must include or be adjacent to a regulated public utility consisting of two hundred and thirty (230) kV or higher power generation, transmission, or distribution facility; and must hold a public meeting with the Planning Commission and present a conceptual site development plan to get community input.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to authorize staff to initiate the zoning text amendment public process with the Planning Commission. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Charles County Departmental Highlights Departmental Highlights: Department of Emergency Services Office of the County Administrator

The Commissioners were joined by staff from the Internal Audit Office, the Citizens' Response Office, and the Department of Emergency Services to provide a presentation outlining some of their department highlights and activities. The Internal Audit Office explained the county-wide fraud awareness training module they held for two hundred (200) staff members and reviewed the feedback shared from the participants. The Citizens Response Office shared the launching of SeeClickFix 311 program, which is a centralized hub for communication in the County with residents on a variety of issues and concerns. This program allows residents to report concerns via the mobile app or website, and track the status of their report. The Department of Emergency Services shared information on the Free Rabies clinics co-sponsored with the Charles County Health Department. They also partnered with the Charles County Board of Education for training in the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch for a forty (40) hour Career and Technical Education program to prepare high school students for work in a 9-1-1 communications center. They also shared a video on the Haz-Mutt program.

Commissioners' New Business

There was no new business discussed.

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***CANCELED *Commissioners' Public Comment Session**

**Break 4:53 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.*

Roll Call

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

**Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were absent.*

Update: Impact of Federal Executive Orders and Federal Budget

Mr. Joseph Green and Ms. Jeanette Tejeda de Gomez, G.S. Proctor & Associates, Inc.; Mr. Jim Chandler, Director, and Ms. Michelle Frye, Deputy Director, Department of Economic Development; Ms. Laura Gustafson, Deputy Director, Department of Community Services; Ms. Ruthy Davis, Director of Regional Workforce & Business Development, Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland; Ms. Shelby Watson-Hampton, Director, Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission; and Ms. Kathy Guzman, Charles County Chamber of Commerce, joined the Commissioners to discuss the impact of the Federal Government shut down on Charles County and local resources available to residents.

At about 6:09 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to adjourn. **Commissioners Bowling and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President