

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday November 4, 2025 (Legislative Day)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in person at 2:02 p.m. with the following people in attendance:

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, 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.*

** Gilbert O. Bowling, III, 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 Coates, Stewart, and Collins were present in person.

**Commissioners Bowling and Patterson were absent.*

Charles County Proclamations for November 2025

2025-74 National Native American Heritage Month
2025-75 Family Court Awareness Month
2025-76 National Hospice, Palliative, and Home Care Month
2025-77 National Family Caregivers Month
2025-78 National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week
2025-79 Military Family Appreciation Month
2025-80 Veterans Day
2025-81 lossif Mario Gressis Day
2025-82 Adoption Awareness Month
2025-83 Shop Small Business Saturday
2025-84 National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

The Commissioners were joined by representative of the Piscataway Conoy Indian Tribe to receive proclamation 2025-74 National Native American Heritage Month; Staff from Hospice of the Chesapeake to receive proclamation 2025-76 National Hospice, Palliative, and Home Care Month; Staff from Charles County Animal Control and Care to receive 2025-78 National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week; Members of the Charles County Commission for Veterans Affairs to receive 2025-79 Military Family Appreciation Month and proclamation 2025-80 Veterans Day; Staff from the Charles County Department of Social Services to receive 2025-82 Adoption Awareness Month; staff from the Department of Economic Development and the business community to receive proclamation 2025-83 Shop Small Business Saturday; and Staff from the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) to receive proclamation 2025-84 National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

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Recognition: Dr. Siamack Bahrami for Donation of Property for Department of Emergency Services

Recognition: Employee Length of Service and Top Performer, Third Quarter (July-September 2025) and Top Performer Second Quarter (April-June 2025)

The Commissioners recognized employees' years of service for July-September 2025. The Commissioners recognized the Top Performer Group for the second quarter, April-June 2025, Mr. Ed Gorham, Chief of Utility Projects, Mr. Tom Kidwell, SCADA Team Leader, Mr. Fred Fox, SCADA Network Specialist, Mr. Jazz Holley, SCADA Network Specialist, Mr. William Thompson, SCADA Systems Specialist, Department of Public Works- Utilities; and Mr. Samuel Walter, Program Manager, and Ms. Jennifer Sims, Project Manager II, Department of Public Works-Capital Projects, for their work to support the St. Francis Well automation upgrade project.

The Commissioners recognized the Top Performer for the third quarter, July-September 2025, Ms. Kimberly Wagner, Rural Center Coordinator, Department of Community Services, who facilitated the installation of a new water distribution station for low-income residents, and organized the "Nanjemoy Law Day," collaborating with various partners to ensure its success.

**Break 2:49 p.m.-3:02 p.m.*

The Commissioners continued the session in a hybrid format.

Roll Call

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

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Collins spoke on the Federal Government shut down and loss of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits and how the State of Maryland will fund these benefits through the month of November.

Approval of the Minutes of October 28, 2025

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of October 28, 2025. **Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

Announcement

Next Scheduled Session(s): November 18-19, 2025.

Approval Items

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

There were no budget items for approval.

Request for Approval: Charles County Board of Education FY2026 Inter-Category Budget Transfer and FY2026 Inter-Category Budget Transfer Phoenix International School of the Arts (PISOTA).

(Ms. Karen Acton, Chief Financial Officer, and Ms. Sherri Fisher-Davis, Budget Manager, Charles County Public Schools)

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A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve The FY2026 Inter-Category budget transfer for one point five (\$1.5) million dollars. **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 in favor to approve The FY2026 Inter-Category budget transfer for one point two (\$1.2) million dollars for Phoenix International School of the Arts (PISOTA). **Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

Change Order No. 7: St. Charles Well No.16 ITB 18-41

(Ms. Jennifer Sims, Project Manager II, Mr. William Thompson, SCADA Systems Specialist, Mr. Samuel Walter, Program Manager, Department of Public Works- Utilities)

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins present, voting in favor to approve Change Order No. Seven (7) for a credit of four hundred and eighty thousand five hundred and seventy-six dollars and fifty cents (\$480,576.50). **Commissioner Bowling was not present for the vote.*

Briefing: Sheriff's Office Retirement Plan (SORP) Annual Investment and Actuarial Review

Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Department of Human Resources; Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Mr. Alton Fryer, Director of Client Services, Ms. Ann Sturner, Senior Consulting Actuary; and Ms. Michelle Boyles, Consulting Actuary, Bolton USA, provided an Investment Performance Review as of June 30, 2025 of the Charles County Sheriff's Office Retirement Plan (SORP). This report included an economic review, plan highlights, executive summary, and the actuarial review. As of the end of the quarter, the value of the SORP was four hundred and sixty-six million eighty-four thousand eight hundred and eighty-four dollars (\$466,084,884.00) which was up from the four hundred and forty-two million six hundred and fifty-three thousand nine hundred and sixty dollars (\$442,653,960.00) at the end of the previous quarter.

Briefing: Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) Annual Investment and Actuarial Review

Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Department of Human Resources; Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Mr. Alton Fryer, Director of Client Services, Ms. Ann Sturner, Senior Consulting Actuary; and Ms. Michelle Boyles, Consulting Actuary, Bolton USA, on the Charles County Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB). This report included an economic review, plan highlights and summary. As of the end of the quarter, the value of the Charles County OPEB Trust was fifty-six million seven hundred and eleven thousand nine hundred and sixty-seven dollars (\$56,711,967.00) up from fifty-two million nineteen thousand seven hundred and nineteen dollars (\$52,019,719), as of the end of the previous quarter.

**At about 3:45 p.m. Commissioner Patterson joined session in person.*

Briefing: Charles County Pension Plan (CCPP) Annual Investment and Actuarial Review

Ms. Alexis Blackwell, Director, Department of Human Resources; Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Mr. Lazaro Guzman, Vice President, Full Services Investments, Mr. David Pappalardo, Vice President and Consulting Actuary, and Mr. Morris Jackson, Director of Relationship Management, Empower, provided a summary of the July 1, 2024 funding

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valuation of the Charles County Pension Plan. This report included baseline results of the 2024 Actuarially Determined Contribution (ADC) for FYE 2026, Actuarial loss components, Contribution summary, Funded status, and Employer contribution, funded status, and investment return history.

Commissioners' New Business

Commissioner Patterson requested the County use Green Lights at the County Building from November 4-11, 2025 in recognition for the Operation Green Light for Veterans. The Commissioners agreed to make this an annual event.

**Break 4:07 p.m. - 5:02 p.m.*

Roll Call

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

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 and provide feedback, twice each month during their regular meetings.

There were two (2) people who provided comments in person and one (1) person 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 spoke about concerns over water project delays, cost increase and oversight.
- Speaker commends AAA Bond Rating; Raises Issues on Term Limits, Data Centers, and Commissioner Compensation.

Virtual:

- Speaker calls for transparency on Legal Fees, Flooding Issues, and Zoning Violations; Supports Accountability on Water Projects.

Commissioner's Responses

Commissioner Stewart: Expressed appreciation for the insights shared regarding the water reports and committed to reviewing related documentation more closely. Regarding the lawsuit referenced virtual speaker, she stated her desire to move forward and suggested the creation of a postmortem report documenting the process and lessons learned for closure and transparency.

Commissioner Bowling: Reaffirmed his ongoing advocacy for addressing the County's water supply challenges, noting concerns in both northern and southern regions. He supported greater public transparency concerning investigations funded by taxpayer dollars and emphasized the Commissioners' duty to protect county employees. As a longtime union

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member, he underscored the importance of openness and accountability in personnel-related matters.

Commissioner Patterson: Acknowledged comments about flooding in Bryans Road, noting he had personally toured the area and would work collaboratively with colleagues to address residents' concerns. He also agreed with the appreciation for the County's AAA bond rating and confirmed he was the Commissioner who toured data centers in Loudoun County. He pledged to share findings in upcoming town hall meetings. He stressed that while growth is necessary, it must be responsible and sustainable, balancing water capacity with development needs. He rejected extreme measures that would halt growth entirely but emphasized fair treatment and shared responsibility among all county residents.

Commissioner Collins: Announced that a presentation on legal fees would be held on November 18, offering the public detailed financial information. He thanked the speaker for his continued engagement on the water issue and invited him to submit written questions that could help inform staff inquiries. On data centers, he clarified that the Board has not made final decisions and continues to prioritize thorough evaluation and community input. He acknowledged the environmental concerns tied to flooding and climate impacts, especially in western Charles County, and committed to ensuring affected communities are included in County's mitigation planning.

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

At about 5:25 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to end this close session and adjourn. **Commissioner Coates was not present for the vote.*

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President