

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Tuesday March 17, 2026 (Legislative day)

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format, in person and virtually, at 10:00 a.m. with the following people 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
Deborah Hall, Acting County Administrator
Wes Adams, County Attorney
Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

** Amanda M. Stewart, Ed.D., County Commissioner, was absent and joined session later this day as noted.*

Call to Order/Pledge

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

Roll Call

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

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Patterson wished good luck to the Lackey High School Boys Basketball team who were playing in the championship game.

Commissioner Coates recognized the volunteer fire and emergency services response to two (2) fires in her district near her home.

Approval of the Minutes of March 10, 2026

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve the minutes of March 10, 2026. **Commissioner Stewart was not present for the vote.*

Announcement

Next Scheduled Session(s): April 14-15, 2026

Approval Items

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

FY2026 Budget Transfer Request # 372 Update the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan

A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to approve Budget Transfer Request #372 Update the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan for sixty-five thousand seven hundred dollars (\$65,700.00). **Commissioner Stewart was not present for the vote.*

Action on Boards and Commissions

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with

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Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to appoint LaVon Proctor as an At-Large member and Kerry-Ann Williams as a District Two (2) member to the Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board). **Commissioner Stewart was not present for the vote.*

Letter of Support: Stadium - Banana Ball World Tour

(Ms. Ashley Chenault, Chief of Tourism, Mr. Sam Drury, Deputy Director, Ms. Alicia Steger, Tourism Event Coordinator, Department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism; and Mr. Christian Heimall, General Manager, Southern Maryland Blue Crabs)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Patterson, and Collins, present, voting in favor to approve the letter of support for Stadium - Banana Ball World Tour. **Commissioner Stewart was not present for the vote.*

Letter of Support: FY2027 Congressional Earmark for Melwood's Nanjemoy Campus

(Ms. Katie Missimer, Director Government Relations, and Ms. LuLu Moeller, Director, Melwood; Ms. Dina Barclay, Director, Department of Community Services; and Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services)

A motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Patterson and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Patterson, and Collins, present, voting in to approve the submitting the letter for FY2027 Congressional Earmark for Melwood's Nanjemoy Campus. **Commissioner Stewart was not present for the vote.*

Briefing: Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board

Mr. Vincent DeMarco, Maryland Health Care for All Coalition, and Mr. Andrew York, Executive Director, Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB), briefed the Commissioners about Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board's ongoing efforts to reduce the cost of prescription medications for residents. The presentation explained how rising drug prices affect families, employers, and government budgets, and outlined the state's approach to addressing these costs through the PDAB, created in 2019 and later expanded to set upper payment limits on certain high-cost drugs.

**At about 10:29 a.m. Commissioner Stewart joined session virtually.*

Charles County Departmental Highlights: Department of Community Services Department of Emergency Services Department of Planning and Growth Management

The Commissioners were joined by staff from the Department of Community Services, Department of Emergency Services and the Department of Planning and Growth Management to provide a presentation outlining some of their department highlights and activities. The Department of Emergency services reviewed Feline Felons Café partnership which had over one thousand (1000) cats adopted; the Emergency Telecommunicator Certification class for high school students; the County wide Automated External Defibrillator (AED) program which had ninety (90) AEDs installed in October 2023, and the review of the Winter Storm Fern. The Department of Community Services reviewed their online Charles County Resource Connection website directory for Charles County residents and agencies to obtain information on local support for Community & Family, Disability Resources, Education, Development, Emergency (food, clothing, financial assistance), Recreational & Extracurriculars, Health (physical, mental, behavioral), Legal Services, and Victim Services. The Department of Planning and Growth Management provided an update on the 2026 Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) process, timeline, potential topics for consideration and the community engagement process.

Briefing: Update on the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Station Location

Ms. Michelle Lilly, Director, Department of Emergency Services; Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services; Ms. Britta Hertling, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works-Capital Services; and Ms. Sarah Guy, Chief of Property Acquisition, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, presented an overview highlighting how the County's Emergency Medical Services & Special Operations Division (EMS and SOD) is planning for Capital Improvement Projects to add EMS Station Locations to meet community needs. The presentation outlined a detailed statistical analysis of proposed locations for new career EMS & SOD stations in growing areas of the County to improve coverage, reduce response times, and better serve increasing call volumes.

**Break 12:04 p.m. – 12:12 p.m.*

Roll Call

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

FY2027 Budget Work Session: Fees and Charges, Tax Differential, and Enterprise Funds Operating and Capital- Water and Sewer, Recreation, Landfill, Stormwater, Environmental Services, and Inspections and Review Cable and Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) and Associated Fees

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Ms. Samantha Chiriaco, Chief of Budget, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, and other staff members, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, reviewed during this first work session the proposed budgets for FY2027 Enterprise Funds both operating and capital improvement projects. The Water and Sewer Fund has a proposed budget of sixty seven million two hundred and sixty four thousand one hundred dollars (\$67,264,100.00); the Recreation Fund has a proposed budget of three million seventeen thousand eight hundred dollars (\$3,017,800.00); the Cable Franchise Operations has a proposed budget of two million four hundred and ninety one thousand nine hundred dollars (\$2,491,900.00); the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) has a proposed budget of seven hundred and seventy six thousand seven hundred dollars (\$776,700.00); the Environmental Service Fund has a proposed budget of twelve million three hundred and fifty eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$12,358,500.00); the Landfill Operations has a proposed budget of fourteen million three hundred and nine thousand six hundred dollars (\$14,309,600.00); the Watershed Protection and Restoration Fund has a proposed budget of nine million three hundred and thirty two thousand six hundred dollars (\$9,332,600.00); and the Inspections and Review Fund has a proposed budget of twelve million seven hundred and fifty thousand one hundred dollars (\$12,750,100.00).

Staff then reviewed the FY2027 Tax Differential for the towns of La Plata and Indian Head:

The Town of La Plata: FY2027 calculation is zero point one one eight (\$0.118) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value; Last year's calculation was zero point one two six (\$0.126) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value (approved by the Commissioners).

The Town of Indian Head: FY2027 calculation is zero point zero two nine (\$0.029) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value; Last year's calculation was zero point zero two four (\$0.024) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value (approved by Commissioners).

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Legislative Update: 2026 Maryland General Assembly Session

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator; Mr. Joseph Green, Ms. Jeanette Tejada de Gomez, and Ms. Michelle Goodwin, G.S. Proctor & Associates, Inc., provided an update of the 2026 Maryland General Assembly Session. Ms. Mitchell reviewed:

- SB573/HB0913 *Charles County – Governing Bodies of Common Ownership Communities – Member Training*
Had favorable report by Judicial proceedings.
- SB0575 *Economic Development – Maryland Stadium Authority – Charles County Sports and Wellness Center*
All hearings were held.
- HB484/SB987 *Corporate Income Tax - Addition Modification - Direct-to-Consumer Pharmaceutical Advertising*
Opposition on broader impact on marketing.

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to send a letter of support.

- HB1497/SB0953 *Charles County-Rent Stabilization-Seniors*
Commissioner Collins provided oral testimony.
- SB921 *Traffic Control Signal Monitoring and Speed Monitoring Systems - Exemptions from Liability - Vehicle Rental Companies*
- SB325 *Land Use - Permitting - Development Rights (Maryland Housing Certainty Act)*
Favorable out of Committee

Ms. Mitchell explained that crossover day is March 23, 2026.

Closed Session

At 1:46 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates, and passed, with all Commissioners 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)(3)(7)(9) of the General Provisions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland to receive an update on collective bargaining agreements; to discuss a potential land acquisition; and discuss potential use of a County owned property. The reason for moving into closed session is to keep legal advice, strategies, and negotiations confidential.

Summary Closed Session Items

At about 2:29 p.m., the Commissioners went into closed session

3-305(b)(9) Collective Bargaining Update

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins, Deborah Hall, Wes Adams, Danielle Mitchell, Alexis Blackwell, Megan Donnick, Jacob Dyer, Eric Paltell

Mr. Eric Paltell, Outside Counsel, reviewed the collective bargaining discussions and recommendations.

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The Commissioners present reached a consensus related to the recommendations

3-305(b)(3)(7) Discussion: Potential Land Acquisition

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, Patterson, and Collins, Deborah Hall, Wes Adams, John Adelodun, Danielle Mitchell, Sarah Guy, David Steger, Ed Gorham, Bobbi Baker

Staff reviewed the issues related to this property and recommendations.

The Commissioners present reached a consensus to proceed with the next steps.

3-305(b)(7) Discussion: Potential Use of a County Property

Present: Commissioners Bowling, Coates, Stewart, Patterson and Collins, Deborah Hall, Wes Adams, Danielle Mitchell.

Staff discussed proposed options for the use of a County owned property.

The Commissioners did not agree to staff recommendations.

At 3:35 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this closed session.

At 4:02 p.m. the commissioners returned to open session.

Roll Call

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

Briefing: 2025 Annual Update Charitable Trust

Ms. Christie Burnett, Executive Director, Charles County Charitable Trust, provided a presentation with an overview of the Charitable Trust's annual report and its impact on the local nonprofit community. Ms. Burnett shared that the Trust awarded twenty-five (25) grants totaling just over one (1) million dollars in Fiscal Year 2025. The presentation highlighted how the Trust administers grant funding to support nonprofit organizations that deliver critical services to residents, including housing, food assistance, health care, education, and community development programs.

Briefing: Update on the Current Water Supply Program

Mr. Jason Groth, Director, Ms. Alicia Afroilan, Engineering Supervisor, Ms. Cathy Thompson, Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Growth Management; and Mr. Wes Adams, County Attorney, Office of the County Attorney for Charles County, provided an update on the County's Water Supply Program. They discussed ongoing efforts to ensure a reliable and sustainable water system for current and future residents. The presentation outlined both short and long term strategies to meet growing demand, including a planned interconnection with the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) water system to bring additional treated surface water into Waldorf and reduce reliance on groundwater sources. Staff also discussed plans for a future water treatment plant to expand capacity and support long-term growth, as well as improvements in water quality through blending and treatment processes. The update highlighted project timelines, funding through the County's Capital Improvement Program, and the importance of planning for population growth and environmental sustainability.

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Commissioners' New Business

Commissioner Patterson acknowledged the card the Commissioners received from the Spring Dell Center.

**Break 5:12 p.m. -6:02 p.m.*

Roll Call

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

Board of County Commissioners' Quarterly Town Hall Meeting-District 1

The Commissioners held a hybrid in-person and virtual town hall meeting in the government building for District One (1). They were joined by staff from each department.

There were fourteen (14) people who asked questions or provided comments in-person. There was one (1) person who provided comments virtually.

Each Commissioner was given the opportunity to respond or ask staff to provide more information on the comments/questions shared by the public.

At 7:38 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with Commissioners Bowling, Patterson, and Collins present, voting in favor to end this closed session and adjourn. **Commissioners Coates and Stewart were not present for the vote.*

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President