

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened in hybrid format, in person and virtually, at 5:01 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
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
Danielle Mitchell, Acting Deputy 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. All Commissioners were present in person.

Approval Items

Update and Request for Reintroduction: Change to Proposed Bill 2026-05 Charles County Volunteer Fire Tax Credit

Ms. Danielle Mitchell, Acting Deputy County Administrator, Office of the County Administrator, explained that in order to have this Bill take effect on July 1, 2026 if it is passed it needs to be reintroduced as emergency legislation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to reintroduce proposed Bill 2026-05 Property Tax Credit for Volunteer Emergency Responders as emergency legislation.

It was noted that the public hearing is still scheduled on the May 19, 2026 agenda at 6:00 p.m. to be held hybrid, in person and virtually.

Meet and Confer with the Town of La Plata and the Town of Indian Head: FY2027 Tax Differential

Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, and Ms. Samantha Chiriaco, Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services and the Towns of La Plata and Indian Head, joined the Commissioners for their annual meet and confer regarding a form of compensation for government services that are provided by the municipal government. To compensate municipalities for services, many counties implement a tax differential (tax credit) on the residents' tax bills or provide a tax rebate to the municipality. Charles County implements a tax differential method based on County Government services net of associated program revenue which are then prorated to an amount that would be funded by the general property tax rate. The value of the services is calculated to equate to a property tax credit rate which is then applied to the County tax bill. In the past, the municipalities of La Plata and Indian Head have chosen the tax differential method over a cash grant from the County. The Difference being:

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a Tax differential gives the County Residents a credit on their tax bill and the grant gives the funds to the Town to appropriate as part of their budget

The FY2027 Tax Differential Calculation:

The Town of La Plata:

- This year's calculation for FY2027 is zero point one, one eight dollars (\$0.118) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value.
- Last year's calculation was zero point one two six dollars (\$0.126) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value

The Town of Indian Head:

- This year's calculation for FY2027 is zero point zero two nine dollars (\$0.029) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value.
- Last year's calculation was zero point zero two four dollars (\$0.024) per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed value.

Each of the Towns agreed to these calculations.

**Break 5:19 p.m. – 6:01 p.m.*

Public Hearing: Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budgets, the Fiscal Year 2027-2031 Capital Improvement Program, and Proposed Fees, Rates, and Charges

The Commissioners conducted an in person then virtual public hearing on the Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget and the Fiscal Year 2027 through Fiscal Year 2031 Capital Budget. Mr. Jacob Dyer, Director, Ms. Samantha Chiriaco, Chief of Budget, and Ms. TaTanya Bowman, Assistant Chief of Budget, Department of Fiscal and Administrative Services, presented an overview of the proposed budget. Mr. Dyer reviewed what was included in the proposed budget and the considerations taken to reach this budget which included discussions with departments and agencies to set priorities, community engagement, embedding equity into the budget process, balance the budget through internal reallocation of resources, no property or income tax rate increases. This budget supports Public Education & Blueprint impacts, Public Safety, Crime Prevention, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, County Infrastructure & Resilience Improvements, Employee Compensation, and State Mandated Cost Shifts. The proposed balance budget for FY2027 is six hundred and forty-one million eight hundred and twenty-six thousand five hundred dollars (\$641,826,500.00). The proposed FY2027-FY2031 Capital Improvement Program proposed funded projects of one billion one hundred and thirty-nine million eight hundred and nineteen thousand dollars (\$1,139,819,000.00).

There were thirty-five (35) in person comments provided by the community. There were no virtual comments.

A motion was made by Commissioner Stewart, seconded by Commissioner Bowling and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to keep the record open until May 8, 2026.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to end this public hearing.

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A motion was made by Commissioner Patterson, seconded by Commissioner Coates and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to set the tax rate on Tuesday, May 12, 2026 between 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. during the BOCC Hybrid meeting.

At 8:23 p.m., a motion was made by Commissioner Bowling, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with all Commissioners present, voting in favor to adjourn.

Carol A. DeSoto, Clerk to the Commissioners

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President