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COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Council Meeting

March 10, 2026; 5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Chuck F. Callahan - Via Telephone

Pete Leshner

Keasha N. Haythe

Lynn L. Mielke

Dave Stepp

Reported by

Diane Houlihan

1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

2

3 MR. LESHER: All right. I will call this
4 meeting to order. If you will all rise with
5 me, and we have opening remarks by Ms. Haythe.

6 (Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.)

7 MR. LESHER: All right. To start, Council
8 has the agenda before us. Are there any
9 additions, deletions, or corrections for the
10 agenda? And hearing none, the chair moves that
11 the agenda be approved by unanimous consent.

12 Next up is our minutes from February 24th.
13 We've had a chance to review those. Are there
14 any additions or corrections to the minutes?
15 Hearing none, the chair moves that the minutes
16 be approved by unanimous consent.

17 We have the disbursements of March 3rd and
18 March 10th before us. Are there any questions
19 on the disbursements? Hearing none, the chair
20 moves that the disbursements be accepted by
21 unanimous consent.

1 And we now have a proclamation for
2 Endometriosis Awareness Month. Madam
3 Secretary, let's get started by if you would
4 please read the proclamation into the record.

5 SECRETARY: Proclamation, Endometriosis
6 Awareness Month, March 2026.

7 Whereas, endometriosis is a disease
8 affecting at least one in ten women of
9 reproductive age whereby the endometrium, a
10 type of tissue that normally grows in the
11 uterus, also grows outside the uterus.

12 And whereas, many of the estimated
13 200 million women worldwide who have
14 endometriosis live with debilitating chronic
15 pain and fatigue, on average experiencing a
16 delay of up to ten years between the first
17 symptoms and diagnosis, with between 30 to 50
18 percent experiencing infertility.

19 And whereas, although endometriosis can
20 affect every organ of the body, even the eyes
21 and brain, at the present time the disease can

1 only be definitively diagnosed via a
2 laparoscopic surgical procedure. And health
3 care providers must focus on managing the
4 symptoms of the disease with various
5 treatments.

6 And whereas, the first worldwide
7 endometriosis march took place in 2014, with
8 events held in more than 40 countries. And by
9 2018, 63 countries around the world were
10 participating in the annual event, which has
11 been sponsored by the American Medical
12 Association, the American College of
13 Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American
14 Society for Reproductive Medicine, the Society
15 for Laparoendoscopic Surgeons, the
16 International Federation of Gynecology and
17 Obstetrics, and the European Society of Human
18 Reproduction and Embryology.

19 And whereas, there is a need for further
20 research and increased funding for research of
21 endometriosis, which would hopefully lead to

1 earlier detection, the discovery of the cause
2 of the disease, a reliable, less invasive, and
3 less costly way to diagnose the disease, more
4 effective ways to manage symptoms, and a cure.

5 Now, therefore, we, the County Council of
6 Talbot County, do hereby proclaim March 2026 as
7 Endometriosis Awareness Month in Talbot County
8 and urge all citizens to help increase
9 awareness of endometriosis and the importance
10 of diagnosing this disease, which to date has
11 no known cure.

12 Given under our hands and the great seal
13 of Talbot County, this 10th day of March in the
14 year of our Lord, 2026.

15 MR. LESHAR: Thank you. Is there a motion
16 and a second to approve the proclamation?

17 MS. MIELKE: So moved.

18 MR. STEPP: And a second.

19 MS. HAYTHE: Second.

20 MR. LESHAR: Madam Secretary, would you
21 please call the roll.

1 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.

2 MR. LESHER: Aye.

3 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

4 MR. STEPP: Aye.

5 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

6 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

7 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

8 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

9 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

11 MR. LESHER: Thank you. That stands
12 approved.

13 Ms. Hannawald.

14 MS. HANNAWALD: So first and foremost, I
15 want to say thank you.

16 MR. LESHER: Ms. Hannawald, if you would
17 introduce yourself for the record.

18 MS. HANNAWALD: I'm sorry. My name is
19 Shannon Hannawald. I am the founder of Endo
20 Warriors of the Eastern Shore.

21 I want to say thank you because you guys

1 have stood behind me and this mission that I've
2 had for the past seven years without question.
3 You have always been extremely supportive and
4 willing to do whatever possible to help me,
5 help the community know that they are not
6 alone.

7 So a little bit of my story. Most of you
8 have probably heard it before. So I apologize.
9 But if I don't keep repeating it, then nothing
10 is going to happen. So I have to keep
11 repeating it.

12 I'm a wife and a mother. I'm also one in
13 ten, one in ten women who have endometriosis.
14 I am the founder of Endo Warriors of the
15 Eastern Shore and an ambassador for the
16 Endometriosis Association.

17 Endometriosis is a disease that affects
18 all aspects of your life; emotionally, mentally
19 and physically. Endometriosis can take
20 everything from you, and it did to me until I
21 decided it was time to fight back, fight for

1 awareness, education, and support so that
2 generations after me do not have to go through
3 what I and so many other women have.

4 My pain started when I was 15 years old
5 and started out as a doctor saying I had
6 ovarian cysts rupturing.

7 After that, my pain just increased, and
8 the help and the knowledge from the doctors
9 decreased. My parents took me to so many
10 doctors. I had more CT scans and ultrasounds
11 than I can count. All coming back to the
12 results of nothing.

13 How is that possible? I was in
14 excruciating, debilitating pain that nobody
15 could seem to help me with.

16 My parents started to believe the doctors
17 that I was just trying to get out of school.
18 And honestly, when I look back on it now, they
19 didn't really have a choice.

20 Endometriosis affected me mentally, caused
21 severe depression and anxiety, and it also made

1 me attempt to take my life when I was 17 years
2 old because nobody would listen to me and I was
3 kind of at the breaking point of I don't know
4 what else to do because nobody was listening to
5 a word that I said.

6 After five years, I finally found a doctor
7 that would listen to me. And as soon as I told
8 him my symptoms, he said I'm certain you have
9 endometriosis. Endometriosis, what was that
10 and why had nobody else even mentioned this to
11 me or my parents?

12 The only way to diagnose endometriosis is
13 through laparoscopic surgery. No blood work,
14 no ultrasound, no MRIs, no CT scans, just
15 surgery.

16 We scheduled my surgery. And sure enough,
17 I had stage four endometriosis. That was the
18 first of my 20 surgeries to try and help remove
19 the lesions to help with the pain.

20 One of the other main symptoms of
21 endometriosis is infertility. The longer it

1 takes to diagnose, the less chance you have of
2 getting pregnant.

3 By the grace of God, I was to have my
4 first son with no intervention. But for my
5 second son, I had to go through fertility
6 treatments.

7 Endometriosis has taken so much from me.
8 I've missed so many important dates and
9 celebrations with family and friends. It took
10 away my ability to have children like other
11 women. It took a baby from me during fertility
12 treatments, a baby that was loved and dreamt
13 of, a baby that is missed and talked about
14 daily.

15 Endometriosis has no cure, only
16 treatments. Some doctors will say to have a
17 hysterectomy, but that will not stop it from
18 growing on other organs.

19 Some women do not experience the pain from
20 endometriosis. They only find out about their
21 condition when they are unable to conceive.

1 Unfortunately, there are not many doctors,
2 especially on the Eastern Shore, who have any
3 knowledge about this disease, which I have a
4 big problem with because it's listed as one of
5 the top most five painful conditions that you
6 can have, one in ten women have it, takes eight
7 to ten years to receive a diagnosis, yet the
8 doctors are getting 30 minutes of education on
9 it in medical school. And I will never
10 understand that.

11 So I just keep pushing, trying to get them
12 to inform the doctors a little bit more about
13 it.

14 Thankfully, over the past 20 years, there
15 has been more awareness and education about
16 endometriosis. But we are nowhere near where
17 we need to be, not even close.

18 I feel like my niece said it best, and it
19 applies it all of us who fight endometriosis.
20 She used the quote God grant me the serenity to
21 accept the things I cannot change, the courage

1 to change the things I can, and the wisdom to
2 know the difference. This quote to her shows
3 such importance in each of our stories and the
4 constant battlefield we are on.

5 I know some women do not want to speak
6 publicly about a disease that is so personal.
7 So I will speak for them. I will not stop
8 until when someone says the word endometriosis,
9 every single person will know what it is as
10 much as they know what strep throat or an ear
11 infection are.

12 It is imperative that we all work together
13 and support each other through this journey.
14 My passion and drive are because I do not want
15 anyone to go through what I have. But I have
16 chosen to fight because you never know who is
17 watching and learning from you.

18 I ask you to remember just because someone
19 looks okay on the outside, doesn't mean that
20 they are okay on the inside. If someone says
21 they have endo, please remember this point in

1 time and you will know how they feel.

2 Endo affects each of us differently. It's
3 such a complex disease, and it requires
4 numerous specialists for each patient. There
5 are no two stories the same.

6 I will always be one in ten, but I will
7 always be the one who speaks up and fights for
8 help for anyone who suffers from this disease
9 and their support system to help them through
10 this difficult path in life.

11 So thank you.

12 MR. LESHHER: Thank you, Ms. Hannawald.

13 And I think what you are doing in raising
14 awareness must be making a difference because I
15 just read about the ten-year average diagnosis
16 period in an article in the Baltimore Sun last
17 week. The word does seem to be getting out.
18 Thank you for your good work on this.

19 MS. HANNAWALD: Thank you very much.

20 MR. LESHHER: Any questions for
21 Ms. Hannawald?

1 MS. HAYTHE: No questions. Just again, I
2 echo what Councilman Lesher has said as well.

3 Thank you for coming in and sharing this
4 with us. And grateful to your continuing
5 support and education on this matter. Thank
6 you so much.

7 MS. HANNAWALD: Thank you.

8 MS. MIELKE: I want to thank you, too, for
9 bringing this message every year to us. It's
10 good.

11 MS. HANNAWALD: It won't stop.

12 MS. MIELKE: The public needs to know.

13 MS. HANNAWALD: Yes, they do.

14 MR. STEPP: I'll use your words earlier.
15 Thanks for being a broken record because
16 it's -- and I'm sure it's not easy to share
17 your story year in and year out as you do. But
18 I'm certainly glad you do it. And like you
19 said, it's getting out. So keep it up.

20 MS. HANNAWALD: Thank you very much.

21 MR. LESHER: All right. And if you'll

1 come forward, we have the proclamation for you.

2 MS. KILMON: You go first.

3 SPEAKER: Okay.

4 MS. KILMON: One more. There we go. All
5 right.

6 MS. HANNAWALD: Thank you. Thank you.
7 See you next year.

8 MR. STEPP: Yes, ma'am.

9 MR. LESHER: Okay. Next up, we have a
10 request from State's Attorney for Council
11 support of State legislation. Mr. Coale.

12 MR. COALE: Thank you. Joe Coale, for the
13 record. Talbot County State's Attorney. Thank
14 you for fitting me into your agenda. I know
15 you're extremely busy. I apologize for that.

16 I was not aware of certain legislative
17 deadlines that I'm running up against.

18 My request is that I put in my fiscal year
19 2027 and then relayed to the Council through a
20 letter as well as an increase in salary.

21 As you know from my request, the Talbot

1 County State's Attorney's salary is the lowest
2 in the State of Maryland out of the 23
3 jurisdictions. It would be -- it's us,
4 Dorchester, and Somerset.

5 Most of the counties on the western shore,
6 except for some in western Maryland, are above
7 the salaries, equal to or above the salaries of
8 the District Court or Circuit Court attorneys.
9 Some are set by their County Councils or county
10 commissioners.

11 The neighboring counties, Queen Anne's
12 County, set by statute is 100 percent of the
13 District Court judge's salary, which is
14 substantially more than obviously Talbot
15 County. It's approximately \$40,000 more.
16 The -- it's a comparable office as far as
17 caseload. I think probably less serious
18 felonies. It's an office with five lawyers.
19 Whereas, Talbot County has six lawyers.

20 I think also comparable when you compare
21 the -- I think the reason that a lot of the

1 counties are comparable to the District Court
2 judges or Circuit Court judges, not to say that
3 the judges are not extremely busy as well, we
4 handle not all the District Court cases,
5 criminal cases, and all the Circuit Court
6 criminal cases.

7 Unlike a District Court judge, I have 13
8 employees. So not only do I have a full
9 caseload of Circuit Court cases, I also have
10 the administrative duties of running the
11 office.

12 The -- I think it's important to point out
13 that it's important for hiring and retention,
14 not that I plan on leaving. But if
15 circumstances were to develop where I did leave
16 over the next four and a half years or so, the
17 District Court judge would be in the position
18 of having to appoint someone and having to
19 recruit talented people to fill the position.
20 He would have to say well, I can offer you the
21 lowest salary in the State of Maryland. And I

1 don't think that that's a position that the
2 county wants to be in.

3 I would point out that Caroline County is
4 85 percent of the District Court judge's salary
5 and that the State's Attorneys, not that, I'm
6 not saying that the salaries are the reason,
7 but they, both of the State's Attorneys in
8 Dorchester and Caroline County are leaving
9 after one term in office.

10 So I would make that request.

11 Again, I apologize for it was somewhat
12 last minute.

13 This is really looking forward to second
14 term. And I say second term because right now
15 I'm running unopposed. I don't want to take
16 anything for granted, but it would apply for
17 2027, not this fiscal year. I would be, I
18 would be asking for in 2028, but I have to ask
19 now because the legislative session, it has to
20 be instituted before my next term.

21 The legislature, the Constitution does not

1 allow the legislature to increase the salary
2 during the term office for elected officials.
3 So that's why the timing is a little strange,
4 that I'm asking for a raise next year.

5 The other alternative is requesting that
6 the legislature be allowed to just allow the
7 County Council to set the salary for the
8 State's Attorney.

9 As I mentioned, some counties do it that
10 way. I think Garrett and Montgomery County do
11 it that way. And that would mean that if they
12 put that, the legislation in with that
13 language, that basically I would come back next
14 budget, the next fiscal year to make the
15 request and to talk about what an appropriate
16 salary would be.

17 MR. LESHAR: Questions for Mr. Coale.

18 You cited a few comparables, all, of
19 course, relatively small counties.

20 Are the counties that are, set this as a
21 percentage of the Circuit Court judge's salary,

1 is that true in the large counties, even like
2 Wicomico or Cecil and so forth?

3 MR. COALE: Yes. So Worcester County is
4 90 percent of the District Court judge's
5 salary. Wicomico is 90 percent of District
6 Court judge's salary.

7 MR. LESHAR: Those larger counties have
8 larger staffs and larger caseloads?

9 MR. COALE: Certainly Wicomico and
10 Worcester is obviously larger during the summer
11 and they shrink down during the winter.

12 The counties on the western shore, for
13 instance, St. Mary's County is 100 percent of
14 the Circuit Court judge's salary. Allegheny is
15 90 percent of the District Court. Cecil County
16 is 95 percent of the District Court judge's
17 salary. Garrett County, as I said, the county
18 commissioners set the salary for the State's
19 Attorney.

20 But the, again, the Somerset, Dorchester,
21 and Talbot are the lowest. Caroline is

1 85 percent.

2 MR. LESHHER: And the draft letter for the
3 State legislature doesn't make a specific
4 request. You would be leaving it up to the
5 legislature as to what percentage to set this
6 by or to turn it over to the --

7 MR. COALE: Oh, no. I was making the
8 request to the Council, that I just assumed
9 that it would be -- well, I assume that the
10 delegation would value your input to a great
11 degree. I don't think that they would want,
12 they really want to overstep what, you know, do
13 something that the Council wasn't willing to
14 support.

15 MR. LESHHER: So are you making a specific
16 request?

17 MR. COALE: I'm making the request of 100
18 percent of the District Court.

19 MR. LESHHER: Of 100 percent?

20 MR. COALE: Yes. I think that it's
21 comparable to Queen Anne's County. As I said,

1 I think that it's a larger office and a
2 comparable caseload, although I believe that we
3 have more on the felony dockets, the major
4 felony cases.

5 MR. LESHHER: It would be a 25 percent
6 increase?

7 MR. COALE: Yes.

8 MS. MIELKE: I think, you know, what he's
9 pointing out is that if we ask for it, they
10 will come, the State delegation.

11 MR. LESHHER: Okay.

12 MS. MIELKE: And so I think, you know,
13 having had experience with the State's
14 Attorney's Office, not when you were in charge
15 but in years past, I know what, the scope of
16 what that office needs to do and what it needs
17 to handle. So I'd be in favor of this.

18 MR. LESHHER: Okay.

19 MR. STEPP: So, Judge, to make sure I got
20 it clear. Are you asking for 100 percent of
21 the District judge's salary?

1 MR. COALE: That's correct.

2 MR. STEPP: Which we would then, in turn,
3 submit to our State legislators, which would
4 put forth legislation to have the State
5 legislature vote on it yes or no?

6 MR. COALE: Correct.

7 MR. STEPP: Okay. Would be no need to go
8 to referendum, correct?

9 MR. COALE: Correct. That's my
10 understanding.

11 Now, again, I apologize for this. I need
12 an answer very quickly because I, I did not --
13 I wasn't aware of the filing deadlines for the
14 legislature. They're asking me to do it
15 quickly to get it in in this legislative
16 session.

17 MR. LESHER: Would you be amenable to a
18 request to frame it up as asking the Council to
19 set that as part of our regular budget process,
20 then?

21 MR. COALE: I would, yes. And I mean I

1 saw that as a second.

2 Most of them are percentages, but some --
3 different counties do things differently under
4 the Criminal Procedure Article that governs.

5 And I do see that as I believe they do
6 that because if -- the Constitution prohibits
7 the legislature from raising the salary during
8 the term of an elected official. And so I
9 don't believe it prohibits the County Council
10 or county commissioners or county executive, if
11 it's designated delegated by statute, to raise,
12 raise the salary.

13 MR. LESHAR: Sure. Just we're accountable
14 to the lower, to the -- we're accountable to
15 the voters of Talbot County and making
16 decisions about the use of the taxpayers'
17 funds of Talbot County. I'd be kind of more
18 comfortable going in that direction.

19 MR. STEPP: In addition to or just in lieu
20 of?

21 MR. LESHAR: Have the Council set it

1 rather than the State legislature.

2 MS. HAYTHE: I would agree with that. I
3 mean yeah. I think that would be better. I
4 mean because that would hold more
5 accountability to the county like we do when we
6 go through the budgeting process.

7 Just for me, right now, I just feel like I
8 would need more information because it is last
9 minute.

10 You've be in the seat for four years. And
11 I'm not trying to be disrespect. But I would
12 think that you would know when the deadline is
13 if you wanted a raise, instead of coming to the
14 Council last minute.

15 But I do agree with Mr. Lesher's proposal
16 for the Council to set the increase.

17 MR. LESHER: Any further discussion?

18 MR. STEPP: I don't think so.

19 MR. LESHER: Is there a -- Mr. Callahan.

20 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, yes.

21 MR. LESHER: Any input on direction for

1 this about moving ahead? And if so, in what
2 direction?

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Well, I think I see
4 everybody's point. But I think, I think our
5 taxpayers should be doing the selection of that
6 salary.

7 MS. MIELKE: I didn't understand what he
8 said.

9 MR. CALLAHAN: I agree with you.

10 MR. LESHER: For having the Council do
11 that as part --

12 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes. Correct, correct.

13 MR. LESHER: All right. Is there a motion
14 and second to forward a letter to the local
15 delegation seeking support for this
16 legislation, then?

17 MS. MIELKE: I'll move.

18 MR. STEPP: Can we clarify that, that
19 we're moving to support a support letter for
20 legislation to be generated by our State
21 delegation in favor of the County Council

1 setting the State's Attorney's salary?

2 MR. LESHHER: Is that your motion?

3 MS. MIELKE: Yes.

4 MR. STEPP: I'll second that motion.

5 MR. LESHHER: We have a motion and second.

6 MS. HAYTHE: When does it go into effect,
7 then?

8 MR. STEPP: For fiscal year '28, correct?

9 MR. STAMP: Ask of 100 percent of the
10 District Court judge. That's the ask.

11 Your motion wouldn't address that. Your
12 motion would only address that you would set a
13 salary.

14 He's looking for --

15 MR. LESHHER: Right.

16 MR. STEPP: Which we would have the
17 opportunity to do for FY28.

18 So Mr. State's Attorney, that is what
19 you're asking for, for the FY28 and beyond,
20 correct?

21 MR. COALE: Yes. Yes. I wasn't

1 foreseeing any increase in salary until 2027 at
2 the earliest if you granted it. Yes.

3 MR. LESHHER: At the start of that State
4 fiscal year?

5 MR. COALE: Yes.

6 MR. LESHHER: In middle of 2027.

7 MR. STEPP: Which still gives us for FY28,
8 which would put -- that would be July 1st of
9 2027.

10 MR. LESHHER: Right.

11 MR. STEPP: Yeah. So it still gives us
12 time to get through a budget cycle with that
13 request. Okay.

14 We have a motion and a second?

15 MR. LESHHER: We do have a motion and
16 second.

17 Is there any further discussion?

18 MS. HAYTHE: What's the deadline for
19 getting it to the delegation?

20 MR. LESHHER: Presumably as soon as
21 possible.

1 MR. COALE: As soon as possible.

2 MR. LESHHER: We're at the, what, halfway
3 point of the legislative session.

4 MS. HAYTHE: -- specific date.

5 MR. COALE: Yes.

6 MS. HAYTHE: Okay.

7 MS. MIELKE: Second.

8 MR. LESHHER: We have your motion,
9 Mr. Stepp's second on that to forward that
10 letter requesting legislation for the County
11 Council to be delegated the power to set the
12 State Attorney's salary, State's Attorney's
13 salary.

14 Would the secretary call the roll, please.

15 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshher.

16 MR. LESHHER: Aye.

17 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

18 MR. STEPP: Aye.

19 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

20 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

21 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

1 MS. HAYTHE: Nay.

2 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

4 MR. LESHER: Thank you very much.

5 MR. COALE: Thank you.

6 MS. MIELKE: Thank you.

7 MR. LESHER: All right. Next, we have an
8 administrative resolution. Madam Secretary,
9 would you please read the title of the
10 administrative resolution into the record.

11 SECRETARY: Administrative resolution
12 establishing the Office of Community
13 Partnerships for Talbot County, Maryland.

14 MR. LESHER: Thank you.

15 Mr. Stamp.

16 MR. STAMP: Good evening, Council. So I
17 would like to invite Nancy Andrew, Linda Webb,
18 and Andy Hollis to come to the table, if you
19 don't mind.

20 MR. LESHER: Please.

21 MR. STAMP: So Council, what you have

1 before you this evening is a potential solution
2 to some challenges being faced in our
3 community.

4 So let me just start out by, first of all,
5 recognizing these three individuals who work
6 hard every day with a number of nonprofits
7 serving our community and making a difference.

8 And I've asked them to come here today
9 because we're trying to solve a problem, or at
10 least make some slight impact, in what is
11 perceived to be a growing challenge for our
12 nonprofits to serve folks when it comes to
13 homelessness, hunger, and some other needs in
14 our community.

15 Specifically, and I think I would like for
16 them to speak to this before we talk about a
17 potential solution, is that they are seeing an
18 increase in demand and need, they're seeing a
19 decrease in resources from grants from the
20 federal government, the State government. And
21 so that's forcing more and more pain on the

1 local community to step up and try to meet a
2 growing demand.

3 And for those three reasons, for those two
4 reasons along with the fact that each year,
5 Council gets individual requests from
6 nonprofits for funding so that they can provide
7 these services.

8 And you'll recall in previous years as we
9 put together the budget, you asked staff to
10 work to try to come up with a solution to where
11 we could direct funding in the future through a
12 process to ensure it got to the right place for
13 the right people.

14 So for that reason, we came up with a
15 framework that we would like to discuss with
16 you this evening.

17 But I would like to turn it over to the
18 three of these folks to just talk a little bit
19 about their needs.

20 Andy Hollis was most effective in sitting
21 in the chair that I'm sitting in right now.

1 But anyway, he is the executive director of
2 Neighborhood Service Center. That is the
3 community action agency for Talbot County. And
4 he's already starting up and doing a wonderful
5 job there.

6 Nancy Andrew is the executive director of
7 Talbot Family Network, which is the Local
8 Management Board for Talbot County.

9 And Linda Webb is a most-experienced
10 director of Social Services for Talbot County.

11 And all three are excellent in their jobs.

12 I would like to just ask you to share a
13 moment about what you're seeing in the
14 landscape of delivering human services.

15 MR. HOLLIS: Good evening, Council.

16 I've had the benefit, or the misery,
17 depending on how you look upon it, of sitting
18 in your seat during budget time. And I know
19 the number of nonprofits that come in front of
20 Council seeking funding.

21 And I'm well aware with my new position at

1 Neighborhood Service Center that that number of
2 asks of you all is increasing, especially with
3 either flat funding or reduced funding at both
4 the State and federal level.

5 So I think it is absolutely critical in
6 today's atmosphere for us to have a
7 coordinating agency or office that all of the
8 nonprofits can work through collectively to
9 make sure that we're not competing against each
10 other, that we're not duplicating services, and
11 that we, on behalf of you and the citizens, are
12 providing the best services we can to the
13 people of Talbot County.

14 I think this office, looking at the
15 resolution, gives that ability to one entity.
16 We're supposed to not mention Nancy's name, but
17 whoever leads this office would have the unique
18 capability I think of making sure that happens.

19 And I think it makes your job easier, and
20 I think it's helping in terms of prioritizing
21 the needs of the community. And I think, and

1 Nancy is already doing this in her current
2 role, there's a collaboration among nonprofits
3 on a regular basis to her credit in terms of
4 conversations and meetings that have not taken
5 place before.

6 So I think this is just the beginning of
7 what I think is a very positive process and
8 outcome for the nonprofits in the county.

9 MR. STAMP: Thank you.

10 Linda.

11 MS. WEBB: Good evening. I agree with
12 everything that Mr. Hollis said.

13 From my perspective at the Department of
14 Social Services, we are seeing increased need
15 and we will continue to see increased need.
16 Primarily due to the passage of some recent
17 federal legislation that places additional work
18 requirements on individuals receiving SNAP,
19 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program,
20 formerly food stamps. And then sometime next
21 year for individuals receiving Medicaid.

1 And what often happens when those
2 requirements increase is that people lose
3 benefits because for one reason or another,
4 they simply can't meet the requirements.

5 We saw some of that during the recent
6 federal shutdown when Nancy helped me convene a
7 number of nonprofits. And we educated the
8 community about the fact that the Department of
9 Social Services issues in excess of \$600,000 in
10 SNAP benefits every month.

11 So as we see people lose those benefits,
12 we're going to see an increased demand made
13 upon the nonprofits in the community, resulting
14 in probably additional budget requests of you
15 all.

16 So as Mr. Hollis said, Nancy is currently
17 convening a number of groups.

18 There are many generous individuals in
19 this community, many of whom support and work
20 for the nonprofit community.

21 But really what is needed and what Nancy

1 has been doing in this office and will
2 continue, is coordinating those efforts so that
3 we're all working together in the most
4 efficient and effective manner to serve the
5 residents of Talbot County.

6 So I think this is something that should
7 be supported, should be approved. I certainly
8 support it. And while I'm not a nonprofit, I
9 will certainly do whatever I can to support the
10 office, if approved.

11 MR. STAMP: Thank you, Linda.

12 And Nancy. Nancy is currently the
13 executive director of our Local Management
14 Board, which is the Talbot Family Network. And
15 they carry out a lot of good work in our
16 community, but it is solely directed by the
17 Office of the Governor. And it doesn't
18 necessarily reflect the needs on the ground
19 here in our community.

20 And you'll find when we go through the
21 proposed framework, it would be shifting her

1 from this role to be able to be in a position
2 to answer to Council and carry out Council,
3 their priorities, as well as to keep the L&B
4 going as well.

5 Nancy, from your lens, could you just
6 share a little bit?

7 MS. ANDREW: Sure. So Clay, thank you to
8 both of you for your general comments about
9 the, sort of the landscape, thinking about the
10 needs in the community.

11 As Linda alluded to, we have changes
12 coming with the one big beautiful bill and
13 changes with SNAP benefits, Medicaid benefits.

14 And there's a confluence of things here
15 because since the pandemic, we've seen
16 increasing challenges with affordability, both
17 for our households in the county, but also for
18 like our food pantries. It's becoming more
19 expensive for them to purchase food.

20 Maryland Food Bank, who is really an
21 important partner in our feeding network in

1 this county, it is more challenging for them to
2 have food available, which is taxing to our
3 food pantries, many of who are all volunteer
4 efforts.

5 I think we also have increasing awareness
6 in this county that we're relying on a hotel to
7 provide our, much of our sheltering for our
8 neighbors who are unhoused. TIS does a
9 wonderful job in this community, but they are a
10 high barrier shelter. They're really about
11 helping our neighbors seek independence who
12 have been unsheltered. So there are criterias
13 to enter their facility.

14 But for someone who, when you think of the
15 cold weather that we had in January and
16 February, who needs a place to get in from out
17 of the cold, we're sending them to a hotel.
18 And if suddenly that hotel weren't here, we'd
19 really have an extraordinary challenge in this
20 county.

21 So because we're working together more,

1 we're also able to get more data around these
2 issues, which is very informative to making
3 sure that we can work together.

4 I think ultimately while we see needs
5 increasing and we all want to see people stand
6 on their own and realize their best potential,
7 we know that we have to be able to do this
8 together.

9 We don't have every service we need in
10 this county. We have a lot. And compared to
11 some of our neighboring jurisdictions, we are
12 well positioned in some ways. But we want to
13 make sure that the services we do have are
14 accessed by our neighbors, that there's no
15 wrong door for people to get to the services
16 that we need, that they need, and that we're
17 supporting our workforce so that we continue to
18 have the wonderful people who show up and do
19 frontline work every day in our human services
20 system.

21 MR. STAMP: So Council, and I know you all

1 are aware of the challenges that we face, and
2 they're echoing what you know to a large
3 degree.

4 So in trying to tackle this problem, what
5 we really wanted to try not to do is try to
6 create a government bureaucracy. Nobody wants
7 that. And frankly, it's not effective.

8 We already have high-spirited individuals
9 out there and nonprofits serving our community
10 with passion. And their paycheck is pride.
11 And so when government steps in, they begin to
12 rob that pride and you start to see a
13 diminishment in service.

14 So when we tried to come up with a bit of
15 a framework and work together on it, we tried
16 to create something that would not be invasive,
17 if you will. And it's basically having a
18 centerpiece that you see in the graphic.

19 And again, we're talking about shifting
20 one person from one role into another and
21 bringing a project manager on to help with a

1 lot of the work to roll out some of these
2 grants and what have you. That is it.

3 This is not one. This is not three, four,
4 five, six, ten people. This is moving one
5 person and adding a project manager. It's a
6 minimal investment to what I believe would be a
7 decent solution.

8 Program area one is the Local Management
9 Board. This individual, this office would
10 continue to lead and oversee the Local
11 Management Board, which is the Talbot Family
12 Network. They would carry out the
13 State-directed mandates that are funded by the
14 State.

15 In program area two, the Council have
16 already moved to recognize this organization to
17 oversee the cannabis fund administration.
18 These are grant dollars to help make a
19 difference in our community. And this
20 coordinating office would in essence help
21 facilitate that as well.

1 And that's really prescribed by the
2 Council ultimately. Those grant funds come to
3 the county through the Local Management Board.
4 This individual would still oversee the Local
5 Management Board and that as well.

6 Program area three is interesting because
7 this is where all the nonprofits can come
8 together and collaborate and to make sure that
9 everyone is playing to their strong suit,
10 right, and that they're not duplicating things.

11 She, Nancy, has already started this
12 process through what she calls pulse meetings
13 that are quite successful. Big turnouts.
14 Nonprofits are showing up. They're sharing
15 their information openly, and we're seeing some
16 good things happen.

17 But in this program area, what it allows
18 for, it answers the question that the Council
19 asked me several years in a row, is what do we
20 do for individual nonprofits that are coming to
21 us to receive annual funding from the county

1 budget, can we come up a process.

2 This program area could grow that area,
3 could grow a process by which the county would
4 feel comfortable at some point in time to put
5 money in an area that they would feel confident
6 could be distributed and meet a need. That
7 would be something down the road.

8 And then finally program area four is
9 supporting our community action agency, which
10 is the Neighborhood Service Center presently,
11 who are in the process of retooling and
12 growing, and growing to meet a lot of needs in
13 the community.

14 So by implementing this framework, what
15 the county does is it doesn't try to take over
16 the good job that's being done. It doesn't own
17 it. It doesn't buy it. It simply facilitates
18 and convenes and puts air under the wings of
19 people that are doing the job.

20 So it's a less intrusive manner of trying
21 to address a growing need in our community.

1 So hopefully you have, you know, subject
2 matter experts here that have come to the table
3 and talked to you. We've worked hard to come
4 up with a solution. Hopefully it's to the
5 liking of the County Council.

6 And if it is, I would recommend that
7 Council consider approving this recommendation
8 or this administrative resolution.

9 MR. LESHHER: Thank you, Mr. Stamp.

10 Are there questions from Council for
11 either Mr. Stamp or any of our expert panel
12 here?

13 MS. MIELKE: No.

14 MR. STEPP: I don't think so.

15 MR. LESHHER: Mr. Hollis, one of the things
16 that you said added a dimension -- I understand
17 about the value of coordination. But you added
18 something to this, which is the value to the
19 Council of sorting this, sorting out the
20 budget, the budgetary end of this.

21 And so if I understand what you told me,

1 that coordination would take place before it
2 comes to Council's desk. As we're doing it
3 now, we're getting all these separate requests.
4 That could come -- that could be coordinated
5 before it comes to Council with budget requests
6 so that we are aware that -- we don't have to
7 be asking questions about are we duplicating
8 services here.

9 Am I reading that correctly?

10 MR. HOLLIS: So the way I read the draft
11 administrative resolution, yes. I think
12 Council has the ability to determine just how
13 much of that recommendation is tight before it
14 comes to you. But it will certainly be in a
15 more manageable manner for you all to make your
16 decisions about.

17 And I think it also gives the office the
18 ability to prioritize what the Council's
19 objectives are going forward each and every
20 year.

21 MR. LESHAR: Anything further? Any

1 further discussion on this?

2 MS. MIELKE: No.

3 MR. LESHHER: Are we ready for a motion and
4 a second on the administrative resolution as
5 presented?

6 MR. STEPP: I'll make a motion.

7 MS. MIELKE: Second.

8 MR. LESHHER: We have a motion and second.
9 Madam Secretary, will you call the roll.

10 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshher.

11 MR. LESHHER: Aye.

12 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

13 MR. STEPP: Aye.

14 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

15 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

16 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

17 MS. HAYTHE: Abstain.

18 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan. Mr. Callahan.

19 MS. HAYTHE: I don't think he's there.

20 MR. LESHHER: He's still on.

21 MS. MORRIS: I'm not sure.

1 MR. CALLAHAN: Aye.

2 MS. MIELKE: Kept us hanging.

3 MR. CALLAHAN: I was on remote. Sorry.

4 MR. LESHAR: He's a long way away.

5 Sometimes there's a little delay in the
6 electronics.

7 MR. CALLAHAN: Y'all know me by now.

8 MR. LESHAR: Thank you, all. Motion
9 carries.

10 MR. STAMP: Thank you, Council.

11 And thank you, all, for coming in and what
12 you do every day.

13 MS. WEBB: Thank you.

14 MR. HOLLIS: Thank you.

15 MS. ANDREW: Thank you very much.

16 MR. LESHAR: We'll move on to introduction
17 of numbered resolutions. Madam Secretary,
18 would you read the title of the first numbered
19 resolution into the record.

20 SECRETARY: A resolution to amend the
21 Talbot County comprehensive water and sewer

1 plan to reclassify and remap six parcels of
2 real property located at 25516 Bushey Heath
3 Road, 25520 Bushey Heath Road, 25524 Bushey
4 Heath Road, 25533 Bushey Heath Road, 25575
5 Bushey Heath Road, and 25608 Bushey Heath
6 Road/Solitude Road as shown on tax map 40 as
7 parcels 98, 86, 2, 82, 4, and 110,
8 respectively. From unprogrammed to S-1,
9 immediate priority status. Pursuant to
10 applications filed by Daniel D. Haley and Dawn
11 A. Haley, Jacqueline H. Smith, and Federal QTIP
12 Residuary Trust of Jerry B. Hook, Katherine A.
13 Heikes, Kenneth R. Adami and Beth Adami, and
14 the Harry G. Broadman Family Trust.

15 MR. LESHER: Thank you.

16 Mr. Stamp, I see you have your county
17 engineer here for any questions on this.

18 MR. STAMP: Yes. And tonight I'll make
19 sure I should call on Ray Clarke. At the last
20 Council meeting, he was sitting right in front
21 of me, and I called Josh up.

1 MR. CLARKE: That's okay.

2 MR. STAMP: And forgot to invite Ray up.

3 MR. CLARKE: Ray Clarke, county engineer.

4 MR. ELLIOTT: Josh Elliott, assistant
5 county engineer.

6 MR. CLARKE: Thank you. We did receive an
7 application from the six property owners,
8 Bushey Heath Road. They are seeking sewer
9 service from the force pump, force main that's
10 going from the Royal Oak pump station into
11 St. Michaels.

12 Looking at this, it would be, from our
13 standpoint, a feasible extension to take care
14 of.

15 At the same time, I think we'd be taking
16 six houses off of septic systems.

17 I will note that we have sent this over to
18 the Office of Environmental Health, and we've
19 not heard anything from the Office of
20 Environmental Health at this time, but we'll do
21 what we can to get that information to the

1 County Council by the public hearing.

2 So if you have any questions.

3 MR. LESHHER: You just -- my question was
4 about environmental health, and you've
5 anticipated that, preempted it. Thank you very
6 much.

7 Are there any other questions from
8 Council?

9 MS. HAYTHE: No.

10 MS. MIELKE: No.

11 MR. LESHHER: So hearing none, by a show of
12 hands, who wishes to introduce the bill?

13 And Mr. Callahan, if you want to weigh in
14 by voice.

15 SECRETARY: Mr. Callahan.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. I'm good.

17 MR. LESHHER: Introduced by --

18 MR. CALLAHAN: It is hard to hear, though.
19 I can't quite hear.

20 MR. LESHHER: Introduced by Misters
21 Callahan, Stepp, Ms. Haythe, and Ms. Mielke.

1 MR. CALLAHAN: Yup.

2 MR. LESHHER: Okay. Madam Secretary, would
3 you read the title of the next?

4 SECRETARY: You want the number?

5 MR. LESHHER: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes. If you
6 will give us the number and the hearing date,
7 please.

8 SECRETARY: This will be known as
9 Resolution Number 392, and the public hearing
10 will be held on Tuesday, April 14th, at 5:30
11 p.m.

12 MS. MIELKE: You say 392?

13 SECRETARY: 392 is the resolution.

14 MR. LESHHER: Thank you.

15 And then if you can read the title of the
16 next numbered resolution.

17 SECRETARY: A resolution to amend the
18 Talbot County comprehensive water and sewer
19 plan to reclassify and remap a 26-acre portion
20 of certain real property located at 25662 and
21 25664 St. Michaels Road, St. Michaels,

1 Maryland, as shown on tax map 32 as a portion
2 of parcel 31. Consisting of 112.0718, plus or
3 minus, acres in total. From unprogrammed to
4 S-1, immediate priority status. Pursuant to an
5 application filed by James Edward Heikes,
6 Trustee of the residuary trust under the will
7 of James Irving Heikes.

8 MR. CLARKE: Again, Council, we did
9 receive the application. The Heikeses are
10 actually part of the previous resolution as
11 well.

12 They have two houses on the parcel in
13 question that would be seeking to be amended to
14 the comp water and sewer plan.

15 Again, you know, from our standpoint, it's
16 feasible to extend them sewer, and we have
17 forwarded this information over to the Office
18 of Environmental Health. We have not heard
19 anything back. And again, we will do our best
20 to get that information to you by the public
21 hearing.

1 MR. LESHHER: And Mr. Clarke, is this
2 property -- this is over 100 acres. So this is
3 subdividable potentially?

4 MR. CLARKE: I think what's happened here
5 is that the parcel is divided by Maryland Route
6 33, if I'm not mistaken.

7 And so we're only bringing that portion,
8 that's I guess it was the 20-some-odd acres
9 that's in the sewer service area. It is a
10 larger parcel, 112 acres. We're only bringing
11 that portion that was on the east side of
12 Maryland Route 33.

13 MR. LESHHER: So this would be for less
14 than the full 112 --

15 MR. CLARKE: It is less, yes. It's really
16 just specifically for those areas where we have
17 the two houses. We weren't bringing the whole
18 parcel in.

19 MR. LESHHER: Okay. And there will be a
20 revised map to reflect that?

21 MR. CLARKE: I think, yes. We'll

1 definitely -- I thought we had that in there,
2 but we'll make sure that's provided as well.

3 MR. LESHER: Thank you very much.

4 Any questions for Mr. Clarke on this one?

5 MS. MIELKE: No.

6 MR. LESHER: Hearing none, by a show of
7 hands, who wishes to introduce the bill?

8 And Mr. Callahan, do you wish to introduce
9 the bill as well?

10 MR. CALLAHAN: Yes, yes.

11 MR. LESHER: Introduced by Misters
12 Callahan and Stepp, Ms. Mielke, and
13 Ms. Haythe.

14 SECRETARY: This will be known as
15 Resolution Number 393, and the public hearing
16 will be held on Tuesday, April 14th, at 5:30
17 p.m.

18 MR. LESHER: Thank you very much.

19 MR. CLARKE: Thank you.

20 MR. LESHER: We move on to public hearing.
21 And Madam Secretary, would you please read the

1 title of Bill Number 1624 into the record.

2 SECRETARY: Bill Number 1624, a bill to
3 amend Chapter 190, zoning, subdivision, and
4 land development, of the Talbot County Code for
5 the purposes of providing that cannabis growing
6 and the processing of cannabis grown on site
7 shall be permitted by special exception in the
8 agricultural conservation, countryside (sic.)
9 preservation, and western rural conservation
10 zoning districts, providing that the processing
11 of cannabis grown off site shall be permitted
12 by special exception in the village mixed,
13 general commercial, and limited industrial
14 zoning districts, and providing that cannabis
15 dispensaries shall be permitted by special
16 exception in the limited commercial, general
17 commercial, and limited industrial zoning
18 districts, each subject to certain conditions
19 and defining terms associated therewith.

20 MR. LESHER: Okay. Thank you.

21 Mr. Thomas. And we have Mr. Yelton from

1 Planning & Zoning here.

2 MR. THOMAS: Yes.

3 MR. LESHER: Would you like to walk us
4 through what we're looking at?

5 MR. THOMAS: Yes. So as the title states,
6 the purpose of the bill is to regulate cannabis
7 growing, processing, and dispensaries in the
8 county.

9 For growing and processing, it imposes
10 strict setbacks from preexisting and
11 residential and institutional uses, including
12 schools, of 1,000 feet, which is greater than,
13 significantly greater than what was in the
14 previous legislation.

15 It also increases the lot size requirement
16 to 75 acres, which is also a significant
17 increase from the previous bill.

18 The dispensary requirements are as strict
19 as they can be under the current State law.

20 And all of the uses are only permitted by
21 special exception, which means that if this

1 bill were approved as it's presented, that the
2 Board of Appeals would have to approve any
3 growing, processing, or dispensaries.

4 MR. LESHHER: Thank you.

5 Mr. Yelton.

6 MR. YELTON: I have nothing to add unless
7 the Council has any questions.

8 MR. LESHHER: Questions from Council?

9 MS. MIELKE: Yes. I just have one
10 question. I just want to clarify that if we
11 were to enact this bill, it would be more
12 restrictive than if we did nothing?

13 MR. THOMAS: That is correct because right
14 now, the county has no regulation to address
15 these uses.

16 MS. MIELKE: And so we'd be controlled by
17 State law?

18 MR. THOMAS: Yes.

19 MS. MIELKE: Which is a lot more liberal
20 than this?

21 MR. THOMAS: Yes.

1 MR. LESHHER: Okay. Thank you very much.

2 Is there any further discussion on Council
3 for this one?

4 MR. STEPP: I'll just --
5 I'm sorry, Chuck. Go ahead.

6 MR. CALLAHAN: Do what?

7 MR. LESHHER: Mr. Callahan, do you have any
8 discussion of the cannabis legislation?

9 MR. CALLAHAN: Are we voting on this or
10 just...

11 MR. STAMP: Public hearing.

12 MS. HAYTHE: Public hearing.

13 MR. LESHHER: Oh, this is the public
14 hearing. Yeah.

15 MS. HAYTHE: Yeah.

16 MR. CALLAHAN: Yeah. Okay. Got you. I
17 don't have much to say.

18 I'm not a big fan of it, I can tell you
19 that much.

20 MR. LESHHER: Very well.

21 So now, I will open up the public hearing.

1 And if you wish to speak on Bill Number 1624,
2 you'll have three minutes as an individual. If
3 you're speaking on behalf of an organization
4 and the one speaking on behalf of that
5 organization, I'll give you five minutes.

6 Is there anybody who wishes to speak on
7 Bill 1624? If so, please come forward to the
8 table and identify your name and address.

9 We heard from quite a few last time.
10 Maybe we have all the public input from last
11 time I suppose.

12 MS. HAYTHE: Yes.

13 MR. LESHER: Nobody on this.

14 I will then close the public hearing on
15 Bill 1624.

16 Is there any further Council discussion at
17 this time?

18 This will be moved to the agenda for a
19 vote at our next meeting, then.

20 MS. MIELKE: That is correct. Yes.

21 MR. LESHER: All right. Bill 1624 is

1 eligible for a vote on March 24, 2026. Thank
2 you.

3 Next up is a request from our Planning &
4 Zoning for approval of the Maryland
5 Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, or
6 MALPF, proposed easement sale prioritization
7 formula.

8 Mr. Yelton, welcome back.

9 MR. YELTON: Thank you. Appreciate it.
10 Bryce Yelton, Talbot County Planning & Zoning,
11 the assistant director.

12 We're here tonight to discuss the Maryland
13 Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation
14 ranking sheet. So I just want to preface with
15 the Council and for the public's benefit what
16 the MALPF program is.

17 The MALPF program is one of the county's
18 largest land preservation initiatives. Council
19 puts forth money in the budget every year to
20 support the State's efforts in that. The State
21 takes applications through our office for the

1 MALPF program, and farms are ranked on this
2 prioritization schedule for those easements.

3 They are competitive. The best farms
4 usually get offers in the spring and in the
5 summer. And those are rolled over for the next
6 fiscal year for offers to go out.

7 We're talking about a lot of money here.
8 There is a substantial benefit to being in land
9 preservation under the MALPF program. And so
10 this ranking sheet is incredibly important.

11 Our ranking sheet has been changed twice
12 in our history. It was originally concocted in
13 2000, and it was last updated in 2011 by the
14 Council.

15 So this is really what we're coming to you
16 today for is a recommendation to the MALPF
17 Board at the State. They're the ones that have
18 to approve the final rankings after they come
19 before the Planning Commission and the County
20 Council every year. And so therefore, this
21 ranking sheet has to go before them as well.

1 We're hoping that if it gets approved by
2 the Council tonight and the MALPF Board at the
3 end of the month at their online meeting, that
4 we'll be able to use this ranking formula for
5 this fiscal year's applications that we're
6 currently taking until the middle of April.

7 Just want to go over the ranking sheet
8 really quick. It was included in the packet.

9 The ranking sheet, because this deals with
10 a lot of private property rights and a lot of
11 money, isn't very public. And so I just wanted
12 to run through for the benefit of the public
13 the changes that we're making.

14 A lot of the changes that you'll see on
15 page one pertain to what they used to call
16 MALPF districts. So before they did the offer
17 sheets, what they did was they would put you in
18 a MALPF district, which wasn't an easement. It
19 was a pre-cursor. And then they would switch
20 that to an actual easement when they put you in
21 the program. Those do not exist anymore.

1 And so our ranking sheet hasn't been
2 updated since those were changed. And so
3 really a lot of that is topical and grammatical
4 in nature that we're changing that.

5 One of the largest changes is under B for
6 farm quality. The median farm size is what we
7 used for our rankings. The last time we
8 changed that was from the 2007 ag census. Our
9 average farm size has gone down significantly
10 from 100 acres to 67 acres since then.

11 The only rankings that should change based
12 on the actual point outcomes for MALPF program
13 are under the back side of the page under the
14 priority preservation area status. We had
15 taken the liberty of going over this with the
16 Ag Pres Board, just spreading out the actual
17 acres nearby that are already preserved that we
18 give points for.

19 And so essentially the way that the
20 ranking sheet used to be was if you had zero
21 acres up to 250 acres nearby or 499 acres

1 nearby, you would still get ten points
2 automatically. And the difference between the
3 lowest amount of points you could get and the
4 highest amount of points was ten, 20, 30, and
5 40.

6 We've taken the liberty of going over this
7 with Ag Pres Board. And they agree that
8 widening that gap will provide a lot better
9 quality in our applications and hope that we
10 can actually spread out some of our
11 applications that are very close in number.

12 The other largest thing was at the bottom.
13 In the event of a tie score, I don't know that
14 we've had a tie score in a very long time.
15 However, our current tie score takes into
16 account how long you were in an ag district,
17 which does not exist anymore.

18 And Dorchester County uses the largest
19 number of acres that you've applied for in the
20 event there's a tie score and you have to pick
21 one over another.

1 And so we proposed to change that here to
2 just allow for an actual tie breaker that would
3 make sense for us.

4 Again, just looking for a recommendation
5 of approval here for the MALPF Board tonight.
6 And if anybody has any questions.

7 MR. LESHAR: Could you go back to item B?

8 We're now judging, we're awarding points
9 now based on whether you're above or below the
10 median farm size, as opposed to set acreages.
11 Is that the change?

12 MR. YELTON: So there is no change to the
13 actual way that we rank the points. It was the
14 actual average that we were using.

15 So we're still ranking the points the
16 same. However, the average farm size has
17 changed drastically since what we were using.
18 So we were ranking everybody based on the
19 average in 2007.

20 Now we're proposing to change it to the
21 most recent ag survey census --

1 MR. LESHER: I see.

2 MR. YELTON: -- which is 2022.

3 MR. LESHER: I see. So it's always been
4 based on the median farm size?

5 MR. YELTON: Exactly. We're just changing
6 the actual number because what we were using
7 was old data.

8 MR. LESHER: Okay. Thank you for the
9 clarification.

10 Other questions for Mr. Yelton?

11 MS. MIELKE: Nope.

12 MR. LESHER: Are we ready for a motion?
13 Is there a motion and second to approve the
14 MALPF easement sale prioritization formula?

15 MS. HAYTHE: So moved.

16 MR. STEPP: I'll second it.

17 MR. LESHER: We have a motion and second.
18 Ms. Secretary, would you call the roll.

19 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.

20 MR. LESHER: Aye.

21 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

1 MR. STEPP: Aye.

2 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

3 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

4 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

5 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

6 MR. STAMP: Chuck.

7 MS. MORRIS: He's gone.

8 MS. MIELKE: He's gone?

9 MS. MORRIS: Yeah.

10 MR. LESHER: Okay. Motion carries without
11 opposition. Thank you very much.

12 MR. YELTON: Thank you, Council.

13 MR. LESHER: Next item is our county
14 manager's report. Mr. Stamp.

15 MR. STAMP: Good evening, Council. I have
16 only three items for you this evening. No
17 boards and committee appointments.

18 Is Mr. James Adair available? Can you
19 come forward, please?

20 Mr. Adair is here representing Choptank,
21 Habitat for Humanity Choptank. They're

1 requesting a letter of support from Council for
2 their application to the Maryland Department of
3 Housing Community Development for an operating
4 assistance grant to assist with weatherization,
5 roof repairs, accessibility improvements, and
6 other critical health and safety repairs for
7 homes.

8 No county funds are required.

9 And I probably stole his thunder, but I
10 would turn it to you to share your request with
11 the Council.

12 MR. ADDAIR: Well, pleasure to meet you
13 all. It's my first time here. Habitat just
14 brought me on not too long ago. And so I've
15 never been to one of these meetings before.

16 MR. LESHAR: Welcome.

17 MR. ADDAIR: Thank you. I do enjoy it.

18 So I'm not sure if there's anything that
19 you would like to ask me questions about.

20 Typically JoAnn Hansen, who is the CEO of
21 the organization, is usually here. But she's

1 got another appointment, and I stepped in to
2 assist in any way that I could.

3 So is there something that you require
4 from me?

5 MR. STAMP: Well, I just finished up the
6 request.

7 Again, they're asking for this letter of
8 support for the Maryland Department of Housing
9 Community Development's operating assistance
10 grant.

11 And again, this would require no monetary
12 input from the county.

13 And obviously, Council knows that they do
14 great work in the community.

15 MR. LESHER: We do, indeed, see that all
16 the time. I've been to many of Habitat's
17 events and seen the good work around, around
18 the county.

19 And seen, of course, what you do beyond
20 Talbot County as well. Thank you for all that.

21 Are we ready for a motion on authorizing

1 this letter of support?

2 MS. MIELKE: So moved.

3 MS. HAYTHE: Second.

4 MR. LESHER: We have a motion and second.

5 If there's no discussion, we'll have the
6 secretary call the roll.

7 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.

8 MR. LESHER: Aye.

9 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

10 MR. STEPP: Aye.

11 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

12 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

13 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

14 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

15 MR. LESHER: Thank you very much.

16 MR. STAMP: See how good a job --

17 MR. LESHER: -- opposition.

18 MR. STAMP: See how good a job you did?

19 MR. ADDAIR: -- mail something. I'm
20 sorry?

21 MR. STAMP: See how good a job you did?

1 MR. ADDAIR: Thank you very much. Yes.

2 I do greatly appreciate it.

3 It does mention in here it's the critical
4 home repairs program. So they brought me on.
5 I'm the new manager for that division.

6 So you do see a lot of new homes, but
7 we've done a lot of stuff in this county as
8 well. But I do handle all the critical repairs
9 that people need that are already homeowners
10 that reach out for that assistance.

11 So it is greatly appreciated. And it's
12 certainly changed by life from coming over here
13 from where I had been before. So it's very
14 nice. And I thank you very much for your time.

15 MS. MIELKE: Thank you for all do.

16 MR. STEPP: Thank you.

17 MR. LESHER: Thank you.

18 MR. STAMP: Okay. Council, the next item
19 that I have is a request from our Roads
20 Department. Recommendation to award Bid Number
21 26-02, furnishing of AASHTO M43 size. Anyway,

1 washed aggregate with 25-mile radius of 605
2 Port Street.

3 And you as read in your packet, the Roads
4 Department is requesting Council approval to
5 award this bid to a sole bidder, Vulcan
6 Construction Materials Company. And the unit
7 price of \$45.50 per ton, with a total bid of
8 \$136,500. Funding of \$174,000 is available in
9 the budget.

10 This is an annual request that we come
11 bring to Council to help with our road
12 resurfacing projects.

13 MS. HAYTHE: Motion to approve Bid Number
14 26-02.

15 MS. MIELKE: Second.

16 MR. LESHER: We have a motion and second.
17 If there's no discussion, Ms. Secretary would
18 you call the roll, please.

19 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshner.

20 MR. LESHER: Aye.

21 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

1 MR. STEPP: Aye.

2 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

3 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

4 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

5 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

6 MR. STAMP: And this is the, the next one
7 is a similar bid. This is Bid 26-03.

8 Furnishing the same material with polymer.

9 And again, the Roads Department is
10 requesting Council approval to award Bid 26-03
11 to the low bidder, Slurry Pavers, Incorporated,
12 at a cost of \$2.63 a gallon for the furnishing
13 and delivery of emulsified asphalt with polymer
14 at a cost of \$3.15 a gallon for the furnishing,
15 delivery, and application of emulsified asphalt
16 with polymer.

17 And again, this is an annual request from
18 our Roads Department in our efforts to
19 resurface roadways.

20 MS. HAYTHE: Motion to approve Bid Number
21 26-03.

1 MR. STEPP: Second.

2 MR. LESHHER: We have a motion and second.

3 Madam Secretary, would you call the roll.

4 SECRETARY: Mr. Leshher.

5 MR. LESHHER: Aye.

6 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

7 MR. STEPP: Aye.

8 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

9 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

10 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

11 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

12 MR. STAMP: Council, that completes your
13 county manager report this evening.

14 As always, thank you for your support.

15 MR. LESHHER: Thank you, Mr. Stamp.

16 Council, next we have public comment. We
17 have nobody signed up in advance.

18 Is there anybody present who wishes to
19 speak? Please come forward to the table and
20 give your name and address.

21 MR. RIGGIN: Thank you for the opportunity

1 to talk to you folks once again. For the
2 record, I'm Phil Riggin, and my address is
3 29736 Sullivan Drive in Easton.

4 I'm here, and I wasn't planning on saying
5 anything until I looked at some of these,
6 looked at two of these, these two resolutions
7 regarding continued public hookup for water and
8 sewer. And these two resolutions are
9 apparently to connect eight parcels or six
10 parcels in one resolution, two in another with
11 covering a substantial amount of property,
12 again, over in the western side of the county.

13 I'm not here -- I'm here -- we've all
14 talked about how this, how this, this public,
15 connecting these properties is beneficial for
16 environmental reasons and for environmental
17 purposes.

18 But, you know, there is a cost to this.
19 And I'm assuming it's, the cost is being borne
20 by the county taxpayers.

21 MR. LESHAR: It shouldn't be.

1 MR. RIGGIN: And maybe, and maybe assisted
2 by some grant funding from the State or the
3 feds.

4 But, you know, clearly, clearly I do think
5 that if, you know, if we have to be more
6 aggressive in getting additional funding from
7 the State or federal government, you know,
8 we're in a position to make a good case for
9 that.

10 And I guess so there are questions as to
11 how long it's going to go on. I mean is this
12 an unending thing? Will we be doing this for
13 years and years and years, or is it, is there's
14 some defined end to this?

15 And I think finally, from a purely
16 financial standpoint, the other question would
17 be how long will it take the county to recoup
18 the cost of these, because I assume there's a
19 charge being made for these homeowners or
20 property owners and there will be an annual fee
21 and how much that would -- these are all

1 internal questions to be asked I think among
2 yourselves, as much as anything else.

3 But as someone who has watched this now
4 for two years almost, it's been a constant
5 process.

6 And again, I've expressed my support for
7 it. But, you know, there is a cost. And, you
8 know, as long as that's under control, that's
9 my only concern. Thank you.

10 MR. LESHER: Thank you, Mr. Riggin.

11 MS. MIELKE: Thank you.

12 MS. HAYTHE: Thank you.

13 MR. LESHER: And you give us food for
14 thought as we move into the next phases of
15 this. Appreciate it.

16 MR. RIGGIN: Food for thought.

17 MR. LESHER: Any other public comment
18 tonight?

19 Hearing none, we'll close public comment
20 and move on to Council comments.

21 Anybody like to start tonight?

1 MS. HAYTHE: I have no comment tonight.

2 MS. MIELKE: Do you have any comments?

3 MR. STEPP: Same.

4 MS. MIELKE: I was just going to say that
5 last Saturday we went to the last of the fire
6 company banquets. And they're just such a
7 wonderful event.

8 Not only do we give them a little gift,
9 but it's just wonderful to see these volunteers
10 and how dedicated they are and the community
11 that they create as being in the fire company.
12 And, you know, it's spouses and children and
13 everything.

14 And we're just so fortunate to have such
15 dedicated volunteers that do so much for this
16 county and I don't think get enough praise or
17 thanks. So I'm giving it to them.

18 MR. LESHAR: Thank you, Ms. Mielke.

19 I was going to comment on exactly the same
20 thing. I joined Ms. Mielke for that, as did
21 Mr. Stepp. And really, a wonderful, wonderful

1 show of community down in that corner of the
2 county.

3 If there's nothing further, Mr. Stepp will
4 you take us out tonight.

5 MR. STEPP: Sure thing.

6 The County Council's next meeting will be
7 held on Tuesday, March 24th, beginning at
8 5 p.m. The Council will be convening in open
9 session at 2 p.m. for an FY27 budget work
10 session and then adjourning into closed
11 session, as listed on the statement for closing
12 that meeting.

13 On Thursday, March 12th, and Thursday,
14 March 19th, the County Council will be holding
15 meetings at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom with Provident
16 Strategies for a briefing on the Maryland
17 General Assembly. The meetings are open to the
18 public.

19 The Council will also be holding FY27
20 budget work sessions on Thursday, March 12th,
21 at 5 p.m., Tuesday, March 17th, of 2 p.m., and

1 Thursday, March 19th, at 5 p.m. Those meetings
2 are also open to the public.

3 Therefore, is there a motion to adjourn
4 this meeting and reconvene as noted?

5 MS. HAYTHE: So moved.

6 MS. MIELKE: Second.

7 MR. LESHER: We have a motion and second.

8 Madam Secretary, would you call the roll.

9 SECRETARY: Mr. Lesher.

10 MR. LESHER: Aye.

11 SECRETARY: Mr. Stepp.

12 MR. STEPP: Aye.

13 SECRETARY: Ms. Mielke.

14 MS. MIELKE: Aye.

15 SECRETARY: Ms. Haythe.

16 MS. HAYTHE: Aye.

17 MR. LESHER: Thank you, all. And good
18 night.

19 (Meeting concluded at: 6:16 p.m.)
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STATE OF MARYLAND

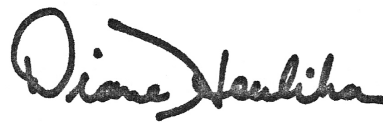
I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland, County of Talbot, do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot County Council Audio, personally appeared before me at the time and place herein set according to law, was interrogated by counsel.

I further certify that the examination was recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed from my stenographic notes to the within printed matter by means of computer-assisted transcription in a true and accurate manner.

I further certify that the stipulations contained herein were entered into by counsel in my presence.

I further certify that I am not of counsel to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel, nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way interested in the outcome of this action.

AS WITNESS my hand Notorial Seal this 16th day of March, 2026, at Easton, MD.



Diane Houlihan
Notary Public

My commission expires September 16, 2029

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