	Page 1
1	COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
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4	Budget Public Hearing
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6	
7	May 3, 2022; 7:00 p.m.
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9	
10	Easton Elementary School, Easton, Maryland
11	
12	
13	COUNCIL MEMBERS:
14	Chuck F. Callahan
15	Pete Lesher
16	Frank Divilio
17	Corey W. Pack
18	Laura E. Price - Via Telephone
19	
20	Reported by
21	Diane Houlihan

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	Page 2		Page 4
1	TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS	1	dedicated employees through the various
2		2	departments and agencies working on important
3	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Let's go ahead and		efforts.
4	get started. I want to welcome everybody.	4	Several areas and/or accomplishments
5	We'll go ahead and keep on moving with the	5	include the Emergency Services Department had
6	meeting here from this afternoon, and I'll	6	the successful implementation of a new 911
7	probably turn it over to Mr. Lesher to read a	7	telephone system, which enables our dispatchers
8	few things.	8	to get help to people quickly and effectively.
9	But once again, I want to thank you guys	9	They worked on rolling out the field use
10	for all your hard efforts. We worked well	10	of ultrasound technology by paramedics. And
11	together this year. We're looking forward to	11	this helps paramedics better diagnose critical
12	hearing your comments, and we really once	12	injuries and illnesses.
13	again, it's a pleasure working with you guys.	13	And they were able to implement the first
14	I think this year we've done very well	14	phase of the expansion of another 24/7 EMS crew
15	together. So thank you.	15	that would cover the north end of the county.
16	So I'll turn it over to Mr. Lesher, Vice	16	Big accomplishments in a mission critical area.
17	President Lesher.	17	Our volunteer fire companies that you
18	MR. LESHER: Thank you, Mr. Callahan.	18	support every year, you were able to enhance
19	This is a continuation of the budget	19	their communications efforts as well as to
20	hearing, and we will start by asking Ms. Moran	20	invest in their longevity program, which
21	to read the title of the bill, of Bill 1498.	21	directly helps their recruitment and retention
	Page 3		Page 5
1	SECRETARY: Bill Number 1498, an act to	1	efforts.
2	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and	2	Additionally, County Council, you approved
3	appropriation ordinance.	3	funding for compensation increases and
4	MR. LESHER: And I will ask our county	4	retirement enhancement for public safety
5	manager, Mr. Stamp, to give us the, introduce	5	services.
6	the overview.	6	And our Roads Department was very busy
7	MR. STAMP: Thank you, Mr. Council	7	throughout the year with the completion of an
8	President, Members of the Council.	8	estimated 30 miles or more of ongoing road
9	I want to take just a minute to reflect on	9	resurfacing work, along with ditch maintenance
10	this year, some of the work that's been done by	10	and culvert replacement efforts.
11	the dedicated county employees and members of	11	Our Planning and Zoning and Permits
12	other organizations that the County Council	12	Department was busy completing a comprehensive
13	funds.	13	review of their service delivery. And we are
14	I was told to read a little slower.	14	poised now to begin implementing efforts to
15	Apparently I read really fast earlier.	15	improve customer service in that department.
16	But anyway, good evening, Council	16	And they just rolled out the implementation of
17	President, Members of the Council. I welcome	17	new technology known as Open Gov, which, again,
18	this opportunity, along with our staff, to	18	hopefully improves or streamlines services.
19	offer an overview of the proposed 2023 annual	19	Our Economic Development and Tourism team
	offer all overview of the proposed 2023 aimidal		1
20	budget.	20	completed a master plan for the Frederick
20 21			

	Page 6		Page 8
1	supporting our businesses with grants and the	1	the operational strategy of investing in
2	roll out of a new economic development	2	personnel, processes, and projects, which are
3	monitoring tool called Blue Dot.	3	key elements in effectively providing public
4	Additionally, Ray Clarke has been busy	4	safety and other general services.
5	expanding sewer service to failing septic	5	At this point, if you don't mind, I would
6	systems. We've been working with Easton	6	like to turn it over to our acting finance
7	Utilities for the expansion of broadband, which	7	director, Mr. Ken Davis, who will continue on
8	is going well.	8	with the presentation.
9	We're busy obtaining property easements	9	MR. DAVIS: Thank you very much, Clay.
10	for a major upgrade of two roads, Goldsborough	10	The FY23 proposed general fund budget is
11	Neck and Airport Roads, which is a major means	11	approximately 112.6 million, which is
12	of ingress and egress from the Bay Hundred	12	essentially flat compared to FY22.
13	area.	13	The budget includes over 3 million in
14	And then finally, what I would say in	14	transfers to the capital projects fund for
15	naming a few is that the last year, obviously	15	investments in infrastructure and 3 million for
16	you know and our community knows we've been	16 equipment purchases.	
17	hard at work facilitating communications to the	17	This budget is partially funded by a
18	best of our ability as we're been wrestling	18	14.3 million transfer from our accumulated fund
19	with the pandemic. And I just want to	19	balance.
20	recognize your leadership and the leadership of	20	The FY23 budget for operating expenses is
21	all the organizations in our community that	21	increasing by 7.7 percent, which is less than
	Page 7		Page 9
1	week after week after week and our business	1	the 8.5 percent increase in the consumer price
2	community just working hard to try to do our	2	index.
3	best to navigate a very difficult time.	3	This budget includes a one-cent increase
4	So those are things that we worked on,	4	to the property tax rate above what is allowed
5	well return on investment from last year.	5	under the real property tax cap as authorized
6	As we move forward and look at this	6	by Talbot County voters in 2020. It includes a
7	budget, the proposed FY23 budget has been	7	one-cent education supplement to support our
8	developed to maintain core services to provide	8	public schools' budget initiatives.
9	for workforce stability, invest in capital	9	Also, you'll see on the following slide
10	projects addressing infrastructure, and in the	10	that public safety is a top priority in this
11	improvement of public safety, education, and	11	budget.
12	other general services.	12	We're funding the expansion of our
13	Additionally, it closely mirrors the FY22	13	paramedic unit for 24/7 coverage in the
1.4	riddicionally, it closely initions the 1 122		
14	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund	14	northern end of the county, which will improve
14	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund balance in order to optimally be positioned for		emergency response times.
	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund balance in order to optimally be positioned for future economic uncertainties, such as are	14	emergency response times. We're also funding enhancements to
15	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund balance in order to optimally be positioned for	14 15	emergency response times.
15 16	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund balance in order to optimally be positioned for future economic uncertainties, such as are being seen with inflationary pressures, escalating fuel and commodity costs, and the	14 15 16	emergency response times. We're also funding enhancements to
15 16 17	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund balance in order to optimally be positioned for future economic uncertainties, such as are being seen with inflationary pressures, escalating fuel and commodity costs, and the possibilities of delays or disruptions to	14 15 16 17	emergency response times. We're also funding enhancements to volunteer fire departments to address operational costs to support training, personnel retention, and recruitment.
15 16 17 18	funding levels and maintains a healthy fund balance in order to optimally be positioned for future economic uncertainties, such as are being seen with inflationary pressures, escalating fuel and commodity costs, and the	14 15 16 17 18	emergency response times. We're also funding enhancements to volunteer fire departments to address operational costs to support training,

Page 10 property acquisitions to house the Sheriff's Ne're fully funding the educational We're fully funding the educational Commitment plus supplemental capital requests From Talbot County Public Schools. We're making investments in roadways, culvert replacements, and sewer services, and making investments in information technology, for greater efficiency, transparency, and data security. Again, this increase in the operations We're covering increased retirement expense associated with our paramedics joining the Law Enforcement Officers Pension System. And providing cost of living step increases for all eligible employees to address inflationary, recruitment, and retention sissues. Page 11 Sheriff's Department, Permits and Inspections, Page 11 Page 11 Sheriff's Department, Permits and Inspections, Page 11 Page 11 Page 11 Page 11 Page 11 Page 11 Sheriff's Department, Permits and Inspections, Page 11
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2 Parks and Recreation, and county administrative 2 always maintain I quess be in the block. So
2 Tarks and recreation, and county administrative 2 arways maintain 1 guess of in the black. So
3 functions, which are detailed further on this 3 this is one of the times we're not borrowing
4 slide. 4 general funds. We actually have to operate
5 With that, I would like to hand it over to 5 sufficiently without having to take money from
6 my colleague, Ray Clarke. 6 the general fund. So these rate increases will
7 MR. CLARKE: Thank you. Again, Council, 7 actually help us in doing that.
8 with this, I guess starting in July 1st, the 8 Our current debt ratio right now, and I
9 county is actually going to have to have a rate 9 think this will get us close to the one, we'll
10 increase with the sanitary district. And 10 probably have to revisit this next year. So
11 ultimately, it will be across the board with 11 there's a potential for additional rate
12 all our conitory districts 12 increase next year. But we'll have to an have
12 all our sanitary districts. 12 increase next year. But we'll have to see how
12 all our sanitary districts. 12 increase next year. But we'll have to see how 13 We're looking at raising the rates to \$325 13 things play out with MDE and the funding level
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	Tuloot County 1 do		<i>8 8 7</i>		
	Page 14		Page 16		
1	Tilghman Island area would go up \$745 per year.	1	capital outlay, transfers to other funds, and a		
2	The county currently bills this on a	2	one percent contingency reserve.		
3	quarterly basis. And we'll probably work with	3	Highlighting some of the larger capital		
4	the Finance Office to possibly look at doing	4	projects going on in the county. We have about		
5	this on a monthly basis.	5	20 million of several of these projects related		
6	MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Ray.	6	to public safety and health, approximately		
7	Looking a little more closely at revenues	7	1.8 million to expand broadband service to our		
8	and expenditures. The expense budget, again,	8	communities, 5.7 million in highways and street		
9	is 112.6 million. And budgeted revenue by	9	projects, and about a half a million in capital		
10	design equals the expense budget.	10	projects related to the school system.		
11	Proposed property taxes are up compared to	11	And this slide demonstrates our fund		
12	FY22, driven by the increase in the property	12	balance. The discretionary portion of the		
13	tax rate and higher assessed values.	13	accumulated fund balance is projected to be		
14	Income and other local taxes, such as	14	31.6 million, as shown at the bottom right of		
15	recordation and transfer taxes, are expected to	15	the slide. And this is a very healthy level.		
16	be up five and a half percent.	16	The balance serves as a buffer, as we encounter		
17	Other revenues from accommodations tax and	17	increased costs or loss of revenue during		
18	county fees are projected to be up 17 percent.	18	uncertain times and unpredictable events.		
19	And on the expense side, the key drivers	19	So thank you very much. That concludes		
20	to the operating expense budget are related to	20	our summary of the budget.		
21	increased funding for Emergency Medical	21	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Well, I appreciate		
	Page 15		Page 17		
1	Services, the Sheriff's Department, and	1	that. Thanks a lot, Mr. Davis.		
2	employee benefits associated with health care.	2	I just wanted to say a couple of things.		
3	This graphic illustrates the distribution	3	Ms. Price is with us tonight on the phone		
4	percentage wise of general fund revenues.	4	and listening. She had an obligation with MACo		
5	Property tax revenues fund 45 percent of the	5	in Frederick tonight. So I just wanted to let		
6	budget. Income taxes, local taxes, and other	6	everybody know that she is here listening, and		
7	revenues fund in summation at 41 percent of the	7	we welcome her, too.		
8	revenue budget.	8	So being that's said, Mr. Vice President,		
9	We used 14.3 million from our accumulated	9	you want to go ahead and read into the record.		
10	fund balance to support this budget, which	10	MR. LESHER: Yup. I will now open the		
11		11	public hearing on Bill Number 1498, an act to		
12	helps moderate the need for increased property		1 0		
13	helps moderate the need for increased property tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher	12	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and		
1					
14	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher	12	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and		
14 15	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax	12 13	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance.		
	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax revenue, which has helped keep the fund balance	12 13 14	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance. For those wishing to make comments, would		
15	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax revenue, which has helped keep the fund balance in a healthy position.	12 13 14 15	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance. For those wishing to make comments, would you please come to the podium, state your name		
15 16	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax revenue, which has helped keep the fund balance in a healthy position. This slide shows the distribution of	12 13 14 15 16	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance. For those wishing to make comments, would you please come to the podium, state your name and address for the record. You will be given		
15 16 17	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax revenue, which has helped keep the fund balance in a healthy position. This slide shows the distribution of expenditures from a percentage standpoint.	12 13 14 15 16 17	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance. For those wishing to make comments, would you please come to the podium, state your name and address for the record. You will be given three minutes to speak if you are representing		
15 16 17 18	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax revenue, which has helped keep the fund balance in a healthy position. This slide shows the distribution of expenditures from a percentage standpoint. Eighty-six percent of the county budget is	12 13 14 15 16 17 18	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance. For those wishing to make comments, would you please come to the podium, state your name and address for the record. You will be given three minutes to speak if you are representing yourself, five minutes to speak if you are		
15 16 17 18 19	tax rates. In recent years, we've had higher than expected real estate and income tax revenue, which has helped keep the fund balance in a healthy position. This slide shows the distribution of expenditures from a percentage standpoint. Eighty-six percent of the county budget is evenly divided between county operations and	12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	establish the 2022-2023 annual budget and appropriation ordinance. For those wishing to make comments, would you please come to the podium, state your name and address for the record. You will be given three minutes to speak if you are representing yourself, five minutes to speak if you are speaking on behalf of a group or association.		

	P 40		D 20
1	Page 18 MR. CALLAHAN: Do we have a sign-up sheet?	1	Page 20 students.
2	MS. MORRIS: I'll check.	2	We've made major revisions to our overall
3	MR. LESHER: If not, we can just invite	3	curriculum in most core content areas. And
4	•	4	this year, the Board of Education has been
5	you to MR. CALLAHAN: If not, I know Kevin wants	5	planning and budgeting for the new Strive for
6	to start.	6	25 Strategic Plan, which encompasses four major
7	MR. SHAFER: I'll pass.	7	areas of opportunity; early childhood learning
8	MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: I signed up.	8	readiness for success, social emotional
9	MR. CALLAHAN: You did sign up. Okay.	9	learning support services, equitable access to
10	Come on up here.	10	academics and support for success, recruitment
11	MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: You have one.	11	and retention of a diverse staff.
12	MR. CALLAHAN: Come on up here.	12	Our goal has been maximizing the learning
13	MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: Thank you very much,	13	potential of every child we serve, all 4,500 of
14	President Callahan, Council Members, County	14	them. And we certainly hope next year it's
15	Manager Mr. Stamp. My name is Susan	15	more like 47 so we can get back to the numbers
16	Delean-Botkin. I'm president of the Talbot	16	we had pre-pandemic.
17	County Board of Education.	17	Coming out of the pandemic has been
18	We want to thank you very much. The	18	difficult and stressful for everyone. But each
19	Council this year really listened, and I know	19	of you took the time to listen to the needs of
20	after the difficult times we've had in the two	20	the public schools, our children, and you
21	previous years because of the pandemic, first	21	proposed a budget that will meet most of those
-	Page 19		Page 21
1	off, it's really nice just to be here in public	1	needs.
2	with	2	We are working diligently to cover the
3	MR. CALLAHAN: Sure is.	3	areas where there are extra expenditures with
4	MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: a small group.	4	additional grants.
5	MR. CALLAHAN: Right.	5	The next several years will be challenging
6	MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: And to be able to look	6	for us as we meet the challenges of a changing
7	everybody in the face and see how well we are	7	demographics. This year we have 24 percent
8	doing.	8	Hispanic students, 14 percent African American,
9	We, even with the pandemic, we have	9	52 percent 54 percent Caucasian, and we have
10	definitely seen a return on your investment	10	the increased expectations of the blueprint,
11	over the past several years. Look at the	11	which has now been implemented statewide.
12	96 percent graduation rate and less than	12	Recognition does have to go out to our
13	two percent dropout rate. This just shows that	13	thousand of community partners who help us do
14	what we are doing in Talbot County education	14	our work. Our current budget request of you
15	system is working for us, for you, for all of	15	would have been much higher without their
16	us.	16	participation.
17	We've made tremendous progress in the	17	We originally requested 4 million more
18	expansion of Grow our Own program, sending our	18	than fiscal year 2022 in creating the budget
19	students onto college and universities so that	19	this past winter. This was to take into
20	they may return and serve us. We are really	20	consideration the expectation of House Bill 13,
21	looking to have our teachers reflect our	21	the blueprint bill.

			<i>ξ</i> ,		
	Page 22		Page 24		
1	In this draft proposal we have tonight,	1	specifically giving a life line for people who		
2	you have allocated more than \$3 million, plus	2	needed access to bandwidth who needed to find		
3	an additional 500,000 in capital projects.	3	way to actually apply for unemployment or have		
4	Again, we have to thank you.	4	access to information. So they realized we're		
5	While we, of course, would like to see	5	more than just a repository of books, but		
6	full funding of all of our projects for 2023,	6	really a capacity support for the community		
7	we are very grateful of the Talbot County	7	at-large.		
8	Council for listening to the needs of the	8	And we greatly appreciate the support for		
9	school system to support us moving forward with	9	our staff. As you know, they were seen as		
10	a world class educational system that	10	essential workers. They were working		
11	ultimately will allow the community to thrive	11	throughout and continued under difficult		
12	economically through an educated workforce.	12	circumstances to support the community in a		
13	Thank you for making the investment in us,	13	variety of different ways.		
14	the county, the Talbot County's children. We	14	As many of you know, I know Mr. Pack went		
15	always strive to be the best, and you're	15	on a tour. The facilities in St. Michael's,		
16	helping us to get there. Thank you.	16	and Mr. Lesher as well, are somewhat compacted		
17	MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you.	17	and contained, not meeting the needs currently		
18	MS. DELEAN-BOTKIN: Any questions?	18	of the community that we have. We have a wide		
19	You did the hard work.	19	variety of different organizations that use the		
20	MR. LESHER: Thank you.	20	meeting space. We have teens as well as		
21	Next on the sign-up sheet is Robert	21	families who are compacted into a small area.		
	Page 23		Page 25		
1	Forloney.	1	And we're looking forward to expanding our		
2	MR. FORLONEY: Thank you very much. I	2	resources and capacity for meeting the needs of		
3	greatly appreciate the time speaking with you.	3	3 the community.		
4	And I'm representing the Talbot County Free	4	So through your generous support, we're		
5	Library. My name is Robert Forloney. I'm the	5	able to match a State grant in capital funding		
6	vice president of the board. I am also a	6	and look toward the design going forward.		
7	resident of St. Michael's.	7	So thank you very much. We greatly		
8	And one of the things that we want to	8	appreciate your support.		
9	greatly express our gratitude for is the	9	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Thank you.		
10	ongoing support of the operations of the	10	MR. LESHER: Thank you. Those were all		
11	library in general, but specifically with	11	the people who signed up in advance.		
12	regards to the support for our projected	12	So we will, Mr. Callahan, we can open it		
13	expansion in St. Michael's, as well as the	13	to the floor and see if there is anybody else		
14	ongoing support for our staff.	14	who would like to come forward.		
15	As you know, during the pandemic, it was	15	MR. CALLAHAN: Okay. Andy, you want to		
16	exceptionally difficult for the community going	16	come up?		
17	through the difficult situation that we found	17	MR. BURKE: No comments at this time. All		
18	ourselves in. And I think many people realized	18	set. Thanks.		
19	how essential the library truly was with	19	MR. CALLAHAN: Thank you. And your		
20	regards to the opportunities that we offered,	20	partner in crime right here?		
21	the relationships that we had, but also	21	MR. BURKE: Mr. Shafer.		
1					

	y	8 8 ,
1	Page 26 MR. CALLAHAN: Is he okay over there?	Page 2: 1 SPEAKER: Who seconded?
2	MR. SHAFER: I'm great. Thank you,	2 MR. CALLAHAN: Corey.
3	Mr. Callahan.	3 (Hearing concluded at: 7:26 p.m.
4	MR. CALLAHAN: Nice job on the building,	4
5		5
6	too. Anybody else would like to speak over	6
7	here? Okay.	7
	Mr. Lesher.	8
8		9
9	MR. LESHER: Well, I think it's	10
10	appropriate, then, for us to close the public	11
11	hearing at this time.	12
12	There's still an opportunity to provide	13
13	written comments. Written comments will be	
14	accepted by the County Council until Wednesday,	
15	May 4th, at noon. That is tomorrow. E-mail	15
16	comments can be sent to	16
17	publiccomment@talbotcountymd.gov.	17
18	And Bill Number 1498 is eligible for a	18
19	vote on Tuesday, May 17, 2022.	19
20	I believe that is all the business that is	20
21	before us.	21
	Page 27	Page 2' 1 STATE OF MARYLAND
1	Council will next meet on Tuesday,	2 I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and
2	May 10th, at six o'clock p.m. The Council will	for the State of Maryland, County of Baltimore City, 3 do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot
3	meet at 2:30 that day with the MACo director	County Council Audio, personally appeared before me 4 at the time and place herein set according to law,
4	and president. We'll move into final budget	was interrogated by counsel.
5	deliberations at 3:30. Council will go into	I further certify that the examination was
6	closed session at 4:30 to discuss personnel,	6 recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed
7	real estate, and legal matters, as listed on	from my stenographic notes to the within printed 7 matter by means of computer-assisted transcription
8	the statement for closing that meeting.	in a true and accurate manner.
9	Council members will also be meeting on	8 I further certify that the stipulations
10	this Thursday, May 5th, at 4:30. Did I get	9 contained herein were entered into by counsel in my presence.
11	that time correct? P.m. for no. 6:30,	10
12	6:30 p.m. For a five-county meeting with the	I further certify that I am not of counsel 11 to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel,
13	directors of Chesapeake College.	nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way
14	Therefore, if there is no further business	12 interested in the outcome of this action. 13 AS WITNESS my hand Notorial Seal this 11th
1.5	before us, a motion to adjourn would be in	day of May, 2022, at Easton, MD.
15	before us, a motion to aujourn would be in	1 14
16	order.	14 15
	-	
16	order.	16 Diane Houlihan
16 17	order. MR. DIVILIO: So moved.	15 Dine Houliha
16 17 18	order. MR. DIVILIO: So moved. MR. CALLAHAN: Thanks a lot for coming	16 Diane Houlihan Notary Public

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