

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF CAROLINE COUNTY

109 Market Street, Room 106

DENTON, MD 21629

**Minutes
June 7, 2022**

Present: President Larry C. Porter; Vice President Daniel J. Franklin, Commissioner Wilbur Levensgood, Jr.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Invocation by Pastor Doug Morley.

There was no public comment.

Angel Perez, Caroline County Pride Organization – Pride Month Proclamation: Mr. Perez thanked the Commissioners for their support and for the proclamation to recognize the Pride Festival. Around 900-1,000 people attended the Pride Festival in the Town of Denton. Mr. Perez stated that around 65% of attendants were around the ages of 16-22 years old. Mr. Perez thanked the Commissioners for allowing the Courthouse to be lit with rainbow lights to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Introduction to the new Caroline County Medical Director: Mr. Sheridan Introduced Dr. Uribe to the Commissioners and provided the following information, “Dr. Uribe grew up in New York City and attended College at the City College of New York (CCNY) of the City University of New York (CUNY). Graduated from Temple University School of Medicine in North Philadelphia and completed his Emergency Medicine Residency at Lincoln Medical and Mental Center in the South Bronx. He completed his Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Fellowship at Newark Beth Israel. During his fellowship, he served as Deputy Medical Director for Monmouth Ocean Hospital Service Corporation (MONOC), providing administrative and operational EMS medical direction, tactical emergency medical support for state and several government SWAT agencies, and was the sole medical provider in many international flights and several events. Currently, he is working at MedStar Montgomery Medical Center in Maryland as attending faculty and is the EMS Base Station Medical Director. He also works at Washington Hospital Center in D.C as teaching attending faculty. He is the current Associate Medical Director for Prince Georges County. Dr. Uribe is very passionate about education and training and his hobbies include playing soccer and traveling.” The Commissioners thanked Dr. Uribe stated they are looking forward to working with him.

Valerie Connelly, Vice President of Government Affairs & Public Relations – Broadband Grants Update & Amendment: Ms. Connelly was accompanied by Mr. Mike Malandro, CEO Mr. Tim McGaha, VP of Tech Services and Mr. Matthew Tefteau, Manager of Government Relations. Ms. Connelly provided the following information “We expect to complete all construction on the FY2021 grant by July 31, 2022. That project will make broadband available to 976 locations in the County. Choptank Fiber will then begin construction on the newly issued FY2022 grant in August of 2022 with target completion in 1 year. The new project will provide

broadband service to an additional 2,241 locations. Combined, the grants make service available to more than 3200 previously “unserved” residents and businesses in Caroline County. Residents can register their interest and be notified when broadband is coming to their address by logging on to www.choptankfiber.com. Ms. Connelly stated that there is a change to the matching funds level for the FY22 broadband grant approved by the Office of Statewide Broadband, Choptank Fiber staff has drafted an amendment to the MOU signed earlier this year. The amendment updates the amount that will be contributed by Caroline County and Choptank. The original MOU said both parties would split the 10% matching requirement. Since the match is now 26%, the County’s match level is 9% consistent with the \$2 million previously appropriated by the Commissioners for the grant program. Commissioner Levensgood made a motion to sign the amendment. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted to sign the amendment to the existing MOU.

Katheleen Freeman, Director of Planning & Codes – Waypost Solar Discussion: Ms.

Freeman mentioned that she is joined by Mr. Matt Kaczynski, Development Review Coordinator. Ms. Freeman presented the Commissioners with 3 maps of the Waypost project and stated that the Waypost project is really “Cherrywood II” (bought out by a different company). Ms. Freeman stated that in 2018, the County passed solar regulations for a 2000-acre solar cap for the County. Currently, there are 4 commercial projects in the County including ones built, ones being built, and ones in the permitting process. Ms. Freeman stated that the Waypost project in addition to the 3 others, are all under the 2,000-acre cap with disturbed land. However, the actual land parcels are over 2,000-acres.

Ms. Freeman stated that the concern that has arose is the Energy Storage (battery storage) containers proposed in this project with Waypost. The Commissioners main concerns lie within keeping the safety and welfare of the County. There is history of thermal runaway and explosions that can release toxic gases during the meltdown of the energy storage systems. Ms. Freeman stated that the County should implement standards that requires companies to abide by the NFPA855 International Fire Code and International Code Council Chapter 12 standards. Currently, the State has not adopted Chapter 12. Ms. Freeman stated that after having conversations with Waypost, they have mentioned that they are planning on providing services that follow Chapter 12. Mr. Barroll stated that they will likely have some sort of suppression system for insurance and liability purposed. Commissioner Levensgood stated he has serious issues with the battery storage and the gasses that it creates. Commissioner Franklin stated he has issues with the acreage being over 2,000-acres, even though not all disturbed, and also has issues with it being close to biological areas and near North County Park. Commissioner Franklin stated that he has a lot of issues with this project. Ms. Freeman stated that Waypost is willing to offer annual trainings to fire departments, and equipment to help put out battery fires. The Commissioners stated the main issue isn’t the solar panels, it’s the battery storage. The Commissioners stated they are seeking additional information on the battery storage systems.

Consent Agenda: (All three Commissioners voted unanimously to pass the consent agenda): The Commissioners decided to vote on the two resolutions separately to adopt the FY23 Budget.

- [Resolution #2022-008 – FY023 Operating & Capital Budgets](#) (Commissioner Franklin made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Levensgood

- seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted to adopt the resolution.)
- [Resolution #2022-009 – FY2023 Fee Schedule](#) (Commissioner Levensgood made a motion to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Franklin seconded the motion. All three Commissioners voted to adopt the resolution.)
 - FY2022 Audit Engagement Letter

County Administrators Report – Jeremy Goldman: Mr. Goldman stated that he is waiting for results of a phone call he had earlier in the day and will update the Commissioners. Mr. Goldman closed his remarks by stating as a reminder, he will be in Leadership Maryland towards the end of next week and Ms. Leager will be out of town all next week on vacation.

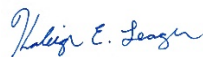
County Commissioners Open Discussion: Commissioner Levensgood stated he has a MACo board meeting tomorrow and Thursday morning. Commissioner Franklin attended the Denton Volunteer Fire Company gun bash this past weekend and won twice. He also mentioned he attended a campaign event for Johnny Mautz at C-Street. Commissioner Porter mentioned he has a zoom meeting with Compass Regional Hospice tomorrow and will be going out of town next week. Mr. Goldman mentioned the wonderful job that the Director of Economic Development, Debbie Bowden, and Kendall Teague did on the Economic Symposium. The Commissioners joined Mr. Goldman in praising the Economic Development team on a job well done.

There was no public comment.

Closed Session: Commissioner Franklin made a motion to enter closed session. Commissioner Levensgood seconded. All Three Commissioners voted to enter closed session.

Commissioner Porter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Franklin seconded. All three Commissioners voted to adjourn the meeting.

There being no further discussion the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Kaleigh Leager
Executive Assistant to the County Commissioners