

ST. MARY'S COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
Tuesday, April 1, 2014

Present: Commissioner President Francis Jack Russell
Commissioner Lawrence D. Jarboe
Commissioner Todd B. Morgan
Commissioner Cynthia L. Jones
Commissioner Daniel L. Morris
County Administrator, Dr. Rebecca Bridgett
Sharon Ferris (Recorder)

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner President Russell called the Joint Board of County Commissioners and Patuxent River Naval Air Station Encroachment Prevention and Mitigation Meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Attendees:

CAPT Benjamin Shevchuk, CO, Naval Air Station, Patuxent River
CAPT Heidi Fleming, XO, Naval Air Station, Patuxent River
Gary Kessler, Executive Director, Naval Air Station, Patuxent River
Ken Barbour, AICIZ Program Manager, Naval Air Station, Patuxent River
Sabrina Hecht, Assets Manager, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC)

Additional County Staff:

Robin Finnacom, Acting Director, Department of Economic and Community Development
Phil Shire, Director, Dept. of Land Use and Growth Management
Jeff Jackman, Sr. Planner, Dept. of Land Use and Growth Management
Brian Loewe, Director, Dept. of Recreation and Parks

CAPT Shevchuk welcomed the Commissioners and acknowledged the need for cooperation between the base and the County as they each carry out their mission. He thanked the Commissioners for the resources they have invested in the JLUS study. He commented on the recent shootings at the Navy Yard and Norfolk Naval Base and noted the base has conducted security assessments and feel they are in a good position. Gate 1 will be the secure gate overnight and he does not see a change in service hours on Gate 2 and 3 because of lack of funding.

Commissioner Morgan provided a status update on the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). Public Hearings have been held around the State to introduce and explain the JLUS process to the communities and receive input from them. Following these public hearings the initial draft report will be forwarded to the Policy Committee.

Commissioner Morgan provided an update on Wind Turbines, House Bill 1168. He noted the County Commissioners support House Bill 1168 which would prohibit the Public Service Commission from granting final approval for construction of a specified type of wind-powered generating station within a specified area until further research on the impact to Patuxent River Naval Air Station is completed. He emphasized the Commissioners are not opposed to the wind turbines, but the location and height is a concern. The bill will be going to the Economic Matters Committee today then to the Senate floor. Commissioner Morgan will be testifying later today at the Senate Hearing.

Mr. Shire delivered an update on the Lexington Park Master Plan. He discussed the Air Installation Capability Use Zone (AICUZ) overlays and the sub-districts designated for NAS; sound level contours; open space in the APZ; and clear zones at Webster Field and NAS Patuxent River.

Ms. Finnacom highlighted initiatives to enhance the future economy of St. Mary's County. Since sequestration and cutbacks in the Navy have a large impact on the County, the County has funded a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The University of Maryland will conduct many baseline studies including Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and will help the County identify strategies for commercial growth in areas such as technology-based manufacturing, research related industries, and as agriculture. Other areas of interest include developing centers of excellence for information integration, retail hospitality and other ways to increase the quality of life in the County.

Ms. Weathers, Demonstration/Experimental Integrated Product Team Lead (IPTL), provided an overview of the Navy Unmanned Combat Air Systems Carrier Demonstration (UCAS-D) Program and accomplishments to-date. Future testing will be conducted as funding and priorities allow.

PUBLIC FORUM AT NORTHERN SENIOR CENTER, 29655 CHARLOTTE HALL RD., CHARLOTTE HALL

Commissioner Russell opened the Public Forum at 6:30 pm.

Public Comments. *(Comments as noted below are intended as highlights of testimony given and are not verbatim.)*

Pat Meyers, Mechanicsville, MD

President of the Northern Senior Center Council. Would like to have the status of the following items and requested acceleration: (1) heating/air conditioning at Northern Senior Center has been bad for years; (2) kitchen exhaust fan does not work; (3) cleaning of Center is unsatisfactory; (4) wants security cameras for building; and,(5) status of installation of security cameras on Three Notch Trail. What is status of work on Garvey Senior Center?

Would like to see Garvey completed first then need to add space to the Northern Senior Center. The Northern Center has space for a 40 x 40 addition. The Council is holding fund raising functions to assist in some of the funding needed to help with construction.

Commissioner Russell said we would check status. Lori Jennings-Harris addressed the issue of the Garvey Center stating that the planning for the Garvey Senior Center is budgeted for 2018 with building in 2020.

Linda Brock, 24014 Abells Run Dr., Hollywood MD

We were promised a light at St. Johns Road some time ago. There have been several accidents at the intersection of 235/St. Johns Road. We have a school and a new development in that area and individuals can't get in or out of St. John's Road.

Commissioner Russell said the Planning Commission would address that with builder.

Mike George, 20815 Lexington Park, MD

Former employee of the Sheriff's Office who said he was terminated as a result of an on-the-job injury. Requested a change to the St. Mary's County employee policy that allows an employee with a work related injury up to six months off with the possibility of an additional six month extension to return to work. He noted that there are some on-the-job injuries that may take more than a year and then require medical professional's approval to return to work. He also requested consideration to reinstate him as a County employee and allow him to complete his treatment.

Commissioner Morris thanked Mr. George for his service.

Rebecca Russell, 41820 Peachtree Way, Lexington Park MD

Mother of Mike George. The main objective is bring to your attention for you to maybe help my son in any way possible and to keep this from happening to any other employee/

Suzanne Verhaagh, 28931 Dandeline Dr., Mechanicsville MD

PTA President at Lettie Dent School. Concerned with the class sizes in the school. The school lost one position this year which resulted in fourth grade classes having 30 or more students per class (previous classes had 23 students). If this trend of larger classes continues we are concerned how it might affect additional students in our school. The school has been told to do more with fewer resources. The PTA spent \$13,000 for technology in the school. We are seeking your support to provide our school with the teaching position we have lost.

Dale Burch, 30670 Big Horn Ct., Charlotte Hall, MD

What is the status of the information I asked for last fall on the recent traffic study for Charlotte Hall, Mechanicsville and the Golden Beach area? Where do we stand on growth in the northern end of the County (since August)? I would like the most recent report and the one before that .

Commissioner Russell said information will be provided.

John Walters, 21063 Larkspur Ct., Leonardtown, MD

What is being done to ensure Evergreen Elementary School, which opened 5 years ago. Wildewood has a lot of new homes and is growing. The school is overcrowded by over 150 people -- where is the closest fire and rescue? When can I expect a response?

Commissioner Russell said we will check with the County's Emergency Services Dept. and the Board of Education. Mr. Walters asked again when he could expect an answer and Commissioner Jarboe said within a month.

Chuck Bryson, 39300 Persimmon Creek Rd., Mechanicsville, MD

I have been following Metcoms role as tax collector and their proposed rate increase. The water station on Golden Beach Road feeds about 250 homes and the feed from the station to the homes is in concrete asbestos pipe. I questioned this in 1976 when I developed a subdivision down there and they told me the water was perfectly healthy. Water, asbestos and concrete will deteriorate pipes. Would someone please look into that?

Carolyn Miller, 40610 Kavanaugh Rd., Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Treasurer for St. Joseph Community Center. We requested grant funding for summer camps and the funding was denied. I am here to request you reconsider. The grant will help 25 kids ages 8-13 attend camp for free. We have all the activities set up but need your help. Can you please reconsider?

Commissioner Russell asked that she bring her request back to the Budget Public Hearing which is scheduled for April 15, at Chopticon High School as that would be the forum to address this issue.

Randy Darnowsky, 22512 Iverson Dr., Great Mills, MD

Concerned with article in paper on technology in schools: (1) Has there been a study on why teachers don't like new technology; (2) Have you considered using other students who have graduated in St. Mary's County to help with training; (3) Why no increase in funding for new technology and what factors were considered when it was decided; (4) What factors were considered when you decided not to increase the \$9M requested by the school; and, (5) Would you consider the fact that local non-profits could help with teaching technology in High Schools?

Commissioner Russell noted the first two questions should be taken to the Superintendent of Schools. The suggestion was also made that he could contact the teachers union – Anna Laughlin.

The Commissioners explained that the Board has to work within their revenue resources and weigh the needs of the entire County. It's a balancing act. We have limited funds. We are the 4th lowest taxed County in the State. Taxes have not gone up in 8 years. We have met the fully funded requirement of the state and provided \$3M over the maintenance of effort.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Russell closed the public hearing and adjourned the Board of County Commissioners meeting at 7:10 pm.

Minutes Approved by the Board of County Commissioners on _____

Sharon Ferris, Senior Administrative Coordinator (Recorder)