

April 30, 2020

The regular meeting of the County Commissioners of Allegany County was held in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, Allegany Room 100, 701 Kelly Road, Cumberland, at 5:00 p.m. on the above date. The following were present: Commissioner Jacob C. Shade; Commissioner Creade V. Brodie, Jr.; Commissioner David J. Caporale; County Administrator Brandon S. Butler; and County Attorney T. Lee Beeman, Jr. The following business was transacted:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present at this meeting.

The meeting was again available to the public by livestream only.

MOTION

There were no additions or deletions to the Agenda.

MOTION

Upon Motion by Commissioner Caporale, seconded by Commissioner Brodie, and Motion carried, the Commissioners approved the Minutes of the April 16, 2020, public business meeting.

Before proceeding with the Agenda for this evening, Commissioner Shade announced the passing of long-time County Attorney Bill Rudd early in the morning. He pointed out that Attorney Rudd was with Allegany County Government for 37 years, and he remarked on his knowledge and service to the County. Commissioner Shade then invited current County Attorney Lee Beeman to offer his remarks about Attorney Rudd.

Attorney Beeman described Bill Rudd as a "fantastic mentor" to him and talked about his kindness and assistance to him from the time he started as Assistant County Attorney in October 2018. Attorney Beeman noted that nearly the entire *Allegany County Code* was revised and reenacted during Attorney Rudd's time with the County.

Attorney Beeman then asked for a moment of silence in honor of Bill Rudd.

Following the moment of silence, the Commissioners thanked Attorney Beeman for his remarks.

Commissioner Brodie talked about his nickname for Bill Rudd, "Father Time", and he also asked that the flag be flown at half-staff in front of the County Building next Friday, then folded and packed and presented to Attorney Rudd's family.

Commissioner Caporale commented on Attorney Rudd's knowledge and said that his thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Commissioner Shade offered additional remarks about Bill Rudd and said that he would miss him.

PUBLIC HEARING

Item 1 – Fiscal Year 2021 Preliminary Budget Public Hearing – Jason M. Bennett, CPA, Director of Finance, presented and reviewed the Fiscal Year 2021 Preliminary Budget, a copy of which is posted on the Finance Department's page on the County's website and is attached to and made a part of these Minutes by reference. Before starting his review of the Preliminary Budget, Mr. Bennett also remarked on Attorney Bill Rudd's great knowledge.

At the start of his presentation, Mr. Bennett pointed out that the budget is balanced at \$94,548,469. He added that because of the COVID-19 situation, there will be changes needed to be made to the budget going forward. He then went over the details of the budget as presented on the website and in hard copies before the Commissioners.

During his presentation, Mr. Bennett commended the Allegany County Board of Education for coming in this year with a reasonable maintenance of effort request. He added that the Board has also gotten their audits back in line, and he expressed his appreciation for their hard work during the budget process. The other Commissioners agreed and also expressed their thanks to the Board of Education, as well as to the County's other outside agencies, for their cooperation.

Mr. Bennett pointed out various budget details of interest, including that debt service is being maintained at just over \$3,000,000, and that Economic Development is funded mostly from the County's Revolving Building Fund (RBF) rather than from the General Fund.

Following his review of the Preliminary Budget for FY-2021, Mr. Bennett briefly discussed the issues facing the County as a result of the COVID-19 situation. He pointed out that income tax will take a hit, hotel/motel taxes will be down, and income from the Rocky Gap Casino will be way down, as they have been closed for some time and still remain closed. Mr. Bennett estimated the loss in Rocky Gap income at \$208,000 per month, and also mentioned that the County will likely take a hit of \$200,000 in interest income. He explained that budget cuts will have to be made.

Commissioner Shade reported that 4,300 people in Allegany County have filed for unemployment as a result of COVID-19. He said that the County will have to keep watching the situation to see how things go and how long it goes on.

Commissioner Shade then confirmed that this evening is the Public Hearing on the FY-2021 Preliminary Budget and said that anyone wishing to make public comment on the Budget should contact Mr. Bennett. Mr. Bennett pointed out that his contact information will be posted on the County's website. He then thanked the Commissioners for their support during the budget process.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Bennett and his staff for all their work, and Mr. Bennett expressed his particular thanks to Amy Williams of the Finance Department for her assistance in putting everything together. He also thanked the rest of the Finance Department staff for all their efforts to keep things going.

ACTION AGENDA

Item 2 – First Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding with Cumberland Economic Development Commission (CEDC), City of Cumberland, and the Board of County Commissioners – Board of County Commissioners to approve and agree to execute the First Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding between the CEDC, City of Cumberland, and the Board of County Commissioners to create the Allegany Development Corporation – David J. Caporale, Commissioner, called the other Commissioners' attention to the MOU before them and asked them to take action on it this evening. Commissioner Shade remarked that this draft of the MOU was a much more complete document than previous drafts. He pointed out that the merger of County Economic Development and the Cumberland Economic Development Commission (CEDC) will result in savings to both the City of Cumberland and Allegany County Government. Commissioner Shade also pointed out that the MOU provides that the new economic development entity, the Allegany Development Corporation, will be located in the County Building at 701 Kelly Road, and that there will be an advisory board appointed for Tourism.

Upon Motion made by Commissioner Caporale, seconded by Commissioner Shade, and duly unanimously carried, the Board of County Commissioners approved and agreed to execute the First Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding between the CEDC, City of Cumberland, and the Board of County Commissioners to create the Allegany Development Corporation.

Following action on the MOU, Commissioner Brodie offered brief comments, and Commissioner Shade expressed his hope that the City of Cumberland will also approve the MOU. He also again mentioned the savings to be realized by both the City and the County as a result of the merger. Commissioner Caporale thanked everyone who helped to finalize the MOU.

CONSENT AGENDA

As recommended by the County Administrator

Upon Motion by Commissioner Brodie, seconded by Commissioner Caporale, and Motion carried, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the Consent Agenda as recommended by the County Administrator.

Item 3 – Amendments to State Fiscal Year 2020/Federal Fiscal Year 2019 Homelessness Solutions Program Grant Agreement – Board of County Commissioners authorized the President of the County Commissioners to sign an Amendment to the SFY 2020/FFY 2019 Homelessness Solutions Program Grant Agreement accepting an additional \$179,000 on behalf of the Human Resources Development Commission, The Family Crisis Resource Center, the Allegany County Department of Social Services, and the YMCA of Cumberland, Maryland, Inc.; and, further, authorized the President to sign any Sub-recipient Agreements with each of these organizations, and to sign any Amendments, Sub-recipient Agreements, and related documents if any additional funding is awarded for the SFY 2020/FFY 2019 Homelessness Solutions Program Grant.

Item 4 – Grahamtown Water System – Board of County Commissioners approved the replacement of the pressure reducing vault for the Grahamtown water system and awarded the contract to W.C. Weil Company in the amount of \$50,382.

Item 5 – Declaration of Surplus Vehicles – Board of County Commissioners authorized the Allegany County Sheriff's Office to declare the following vehicles as surplus and dispose of them by advertised bid or sold at public auction: 2011 Ford Crown Vic, VIN# 2FABP7BV0BX181410; 2008 Ford Crown Vic, VIN# 2FAP71VX8X111990; and a 2006 Hyundai Santa Fe, VIN# KM8SC73D66U081476.

County Administrator Brandon S. Butler offered no further comments at this evening's meeting.

County Attorney T. Lee Beeman, Jr. offered no further comments at this evening's meeting.

Commissioners' statements, comments, recognition –

Commissioner David J. Caporale expressed his hope that everyone is staying safe and that things will soon turn around.

Commissioner Creade V. Brodie, Jr. echoed Commissioner Caporale's remarks and also remarked again on Attorney Bill Rudd, sending wishes out to his family.

Commissioner Jacob C. Shade spoke again about Attorney Rudd. He also commented that this is a difficult time in government, and also talked about the problems continuing to face small businesses and individuals in Allegany County. Commissioner Shade reported that additional assistance is going to be made available to them, with grants to come soon and announcements to be made in the next week. He thanked the community for their efforts during this difficult time.

Reminders/Upcoming Meetings –

Next Public Business Meeting – Thursday, May 7, 2020, 5:00 p.m.

Bryan Gowan's of WCBC-Radio asked for confirmation that the County has now signed off on the merger of County Economic Development and the CEDC. Commissioner Shade confirmed this and also confirmed that the City still needs to sign off on it.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come to the attention of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Jacob C. Shade, President

True Copy
Attest:

Cynthia A. Young
Recording Secretary



ALLEGANY COUNTY, MARYLAND

Finance Office

701 Kelly Road, Suite 205, Cumberland, Maryland 21502
(301) 777-5916 FAX (301) 777-2072
finance@alleganygov.org www.gov.allconet.org

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Jacob C. Shade, *President*
Creade V. Brodie, Jr.
David J. Caporale

Jason M. Bennett, CPA, *Director of Finance*

April 30, 2020

Allegany County Commissioners
County Office Complex
701 Kelly Road
Cumberland, MD 21502

Dear Commissioners:

FY 2021 Preliminary Budget

Submitted today for your review is the Fiscal Year 2021 Allegany County, Maryland Preliminary Operating Budget. At this time, the budget is balanced and represents a total general fund budget of \$94,548,469. This amount is an increase of \$2,759,605 or 3% from FY 2020's budget.

Included in this budget, at your request, are **no tax increases**.

This budget incorporates an increase of \$29,670 in property taxes due to a very slight increase in assessments and a \$55,598 decrease in DNR PILOT revenues to pay for State of Maryland owned lands in Allegany County as a result of a SDAT reassessment. This budget also includes a \$1,087,807 or 4% increase in our income tax revenues as a result of strong FY 2020 performance along with a disparity grant that continues to incorporate the supplemental teacher's pension grant that was enacted during 2012's General Assembly session.

Included in this budget is flat funding for our outside agencies, including the Allegany College of Maryland, the Allegany County Health Department and the Allegany County Library System. The Board of Education received a slight funding increase of \$404,335 due an increase in Maintenance of Effort as a result of the State of Maryland's mandated Education Effort Escalator. This budget incorporates revenues and expenditures representing activity from EMS activities, which continue to expand from year to year. Also included in the budget presented today is a 2% Cost of Living Adjustment for Allegany County employees and flat health insurance costs as a result of a re-bid of our health insurance.

For FY 2021, we will be right on par with our stated debt service goals of \$3 million. This represents an increase over FY 2020 of \$612,339 which is the result of be able to use bond premium from our 2018 PIB to cover the first year's debt service in FY 20.

During last year's budget preparation, we found it necessary to use \$854,122 of fund balance to finalize our budget. This year's budget utilizes \$784,570 of fund balance as a result working with our operating departments to reduce staffing costs by \$500,000. Even in using nearly \$800 thousand in fund balance, this still allows us to maintain two months- worth of operations in our fund balance as recommended by GASB 54.

The hard decisions and tough cuts and sacrifices of the past several years are allowing us to present this budget with slight increases and allows us to continue to maintain a strong financial position that the tax payers deserve of their government. We have reached or exceeded our goals for debt service and fund balance continues to be well positioned so that we may offer the services we promise to our citizens.

Not included in this budget are the long-term effects of the COVID-19 crisis, which has gripped the country. We are still analyzing the full effect of this crisis and will certainly need to work towards reducing this budget in the very near future. While reductions will be imminent for us, we are well positioned with reserves in our fund balance for budget stabilization to mitigate these reductions, while continuing to deliver services to our citizens.

This preliminary budget document will be available on our website at www.gov.aliconet.org Budget Adoption is scheduled for May 28, 2020 and we will be accepting public comment on this document during our May 2020 public business meetings.

Respectfully,



Jason M. Bennett, CPA
Director of Finance