

Public Business Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 8, 2024 - 5:00 PM

*Allegany County Office Building, 701 Kelly Road, Allegany Room 100
Cumberland, Maryland 21502*

WE ASK THOSE CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD TO REGISTER ON THE SIGN-UP SHEET AND CONDENSE THEIR COMMENTS TO FIVE MINUTES OR LESS. THIS WILL ALLOW AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE WISHING TO COME FORWARD TO HAVE A CHANCE TO SPEAK. WE WILL CONDUCT OUR MEETING IN AN ORDERLY FASHION AND ASK THAT EVERYONE WISHING TO SPEAK FIRST BE RECOGNIZED BY THE PRESIDENT, COME TO THE MICROPHONE, AND GIVE HIS OR HER NAME AND ADDRESS PRIOR TO THEIR COMMENTS.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

2. Call to Order & Roll Call

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 05:02 PM on 2/8/2024. Present: County Commissioner William R. Atkinson, County Commission President David J. Caporale, County Administrator Jason Bennett, County Attorney Lee Beeman. Excused: County Commissioner Creade V. Brodie, Jr.

3. Approval of Agenda

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

4. Approval of Previous Meetings Minutes

Upon Motion made by County Commissioner William R. Atkinson, seconded by County Commission President David J. Caporale, and duly carried, the Minutes from the previous public business meeting were approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

5. Presentations

A. Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine's 'Best of Awards', Citation presentation to Mandela & Jamie Echefu - Ashli Workman, Director of Tourism

One of the goals for the county's Tourism Department this year was to get as many local businesses and experiences featured in the coveted "Best of the Blue Ridge" awards, which is put on each year by Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine. We had ten businesses and experiences featured as runner ups in their respective categories, and one business that received the "Best of" award in the category of Best Bike Shop. That business was Wheelz Up Adventures in Cumberland, MD, owned and operated by Mandela and Jamie Echefu. The Commissioners invited The Echefus and staff up to the front to be presented with an official citation.

Ms. Workman also mentioned that Allegany County Government, Garrett County Government, and the Maryland Department of Commerce launched the "Make it in the Mountains" campaign. This is a regional, strategic marketing campaign to attract outdoor lifestyle manufacturers to western Maryland. Mandela's story and testimony is featured in the implementation of this campaign, which Ms. Workman publicly thanked him for.

B. Presentation of Potential Alley Closures in Bowman's Addition - **Wes McKee, Esq.**

Attorney Wes McKee and Allegany County resident John Wertz presented their proposal for the closure of two 15 foot paver alleys in Bowman's Addition. Mr. McKee explained that Mr. Wertz owns most of the property surrounding the alleys, and paperwork was submitted to county officials. They plan to return for a public hearing on March 21st.

6. Public Hearing

7. Action Agenda

A. Code Home Rule Bill 1-24 - Introduction - "An Act to Amend the Violations and Penalties Found in Chapter 225 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Allegany County, Maryland" - **T. Lee Beeman, Jr., County Attorney**

This is the animal control section. The purpose of this bill is to update references in our Code to outdated sections of the state Code that have been repealed and replaced with other references.

B. Code Home Rule Bill 2-24 - Introduction - "An Act to Amend the Position of County Investigator Found in Chapter 16 of the Code of Public Local Laws of Allegany County, Maryland" - **T. Lee Beeman, Jr., County Attorney**

The States Attorney's office has historically employed a single County Investigator that operates on behalf of the State's Attorney's office. In recent times, there has developed a need for more specialized positions within the County Investigator role. We have identified a need for a more narcotics focused County Investigator, as well as a more technology and body cam focused Investigator. The purpose of this bill is to amend the Code to allow for up to three County Investigators, which will allow the State's Attorney to fill and fund these positions according to County Code.

C. Baltimore Street Grant Program - **Jeffrey Barclay, Director of Economic and Community Development**

Looking for the approval of the Baltimore Street Grant Program, which will provide up to a total of \$50,000. This program is in partnership with the City of Cumberland, who will also be providing up to \$50,000. The program will go live tomorrow on the website, where business owners can go to fill out the application.

Motion: Approve, By: William R. Atkinson, Seconded: David J. Caporale. Yes: William R. Atkinson, David J. Caporale. No: None. Abstain: None.

D. Fairgrounds Racetrack Promoter Agreement - **Adam Patterson, P.E., Director of Public Works**

Asking the Commissioners to authorize and approve an agreement with Mountain Maryland Ventures for the 2024 racing season held at the Fairgrounds. This will allow racing to begin in April and continue through the first Saturday in November. There are 15 - 20 opportunities to hold races. Mr. Patterson then invited the representatives from Mountain Maryland Ventures (Chris Toey, Jennifer Jeudy, and Seth Emerick) to approach the podium.

Motion: Approve, By: William R. Atkinson, Seconded: David J. Caporale. Yes: William R. Atkinson, David J. Caporale. No: None. Abstain: None.

Thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity, and said they have 19 races scheduled. They will offer a mix of races, along with some memorial ones.

- E. Resolution 24-2 - Submission of a Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Maryland Recovery Housing Grant Application for Archway Station Recovery Housing Project at 125 Fayette Street - **David Nedved, Community Development Representative**

Presented a resolution for approval by the commissioners in order to move forward in the process of submitting the grant application in order to acquire the property at 125 Fayette St in Cumberland for the Archway Station Recovery Housing Project.

Motion: Approve, By: William R. Atkinson, Seconded: David J. Caporale. Yes: William R. Atkinson, David J. Caporale. No: None. Abstain: None.

8. Consent Agenda

Motion: Approve, By: William R. Atkinson, Seconded: David J. Caporale. Yes: William R. Atkinson, David J. Caporale. No: None. Abstain: None.

- A. Resolution 24-3 - Rules and Regulations Governing Employees of Allegany County, Grade Allocation Table
This includes the update to the Recycling Coordinator position, which was added at the previous meeting.
- B. Resolution 24-4 - Establishment of the Allegany County Opioid Restitution Fund Task Force
This resolution is to form a 13 member board, which would consist of the County Administrator, Director of Emergency Services, State's Attorney, the Sheriff, the city Administrator of both Frostburg and Cumberland, Director of Social Services, the Allegany County Health Officer, and/or the designees of all of these positions. Other members include the Allegany County Board of Education Assistant Supervisor of School Safety and Security, Anthony Rumgay; Frostburg Police Chief Nick Costello; Cumberland Police Lieutenant Eric Bonner; Melissa Clark from AHEC West; and a faith-based member which will be named at a future meeting.
- C. Request to Award Consultant Services to EADS Group, Inc. for the Grahamtown Control Valve Study in the amount of \$18,000
This will be paid for by the users of the system, including the city of Frostburg.
- D. Accept Regional Navigator Grant for Jane's Place in the amount of \$73,845
This would include funding for the salary, benefits, and supplies for the office.
- E. Accept Victims of Crime Act Grant in the amount of \$134,976
This is also for Jane's Place.
- F. Energy Services Deferred Household Pilot Program Grant Agreement for an amount up to \$500,000
This will reimburse the County through HRDC for the cost of providing health and safety repairs to properties.
- G. Maryland DNR Requesting Approval for the Acquisition of the ENE Enterprises, LLC Property Located on Wills Mountain Road
This will be for DNR to acquire 348 acres, which will be in close proximity to the future Wills Mountain State Park.
- H. Old Allegany High School Field Use Agreement w/ Braddock Middle Baseball
This will be for this Spring, before the construction.

9. Public Comment

Constituents – In order of sign-up sheet: No one signed up to speak at this evening's meeting.

10. Reports

A. County Administrator

Had no further comments to add at this evening's meeting.

B. County Attorney

Had no further comments to add at this evening's meeting.

11. Commissioner Comments

- Commissioner Atkinson - Wanted to remind everyone the "Positive People" nomination form is open through Sunday, February 11, 2024. Also, Allegany County with the help of the library system, are administering a grant program to distribute Chromebooks to eligible households in the County. The first event was held this week, and had great success. The next event is Saturday, February 10th at the LaVale library. Details on who is eligible and documents needed are on our website.
- Commissioner Caporale - Thanked the city of Cumberland for their cooperation with the grant program for downtown businesses.

12. Reminders/Upcoming Meetings

A. NEXT MEETING - Thursday, February 22, 2024, 5:00 PM

13. Adjournment

There being no further business to come to the attention of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 05:24 PM.