

January 26, 2023

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 David J. Caporale; Commissioner Creade V. Brodie, Jr.; Commissioner William R. Atkinson; County Administrator Jason M. Bennett; and County Attorney T. Lee Beeman, Jr.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

MOTION

There were no additions or deletions to the Agenda.

MOTION

Upon Motion made by Commissioner Atkinson, seconded by Commissioner Brodie, and duly carried, the Minutes of the January 12, 2023 public business meeting were approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

ACTION AGENDA

Item 1 – Salary Study Recommendations and Implementation – Board of County Commissioners to proceed with the recommendations outlined in the Salary Study presented January 12, 2023 by Evergreen Solutions, LLC – Kristi D. Liller, Director of Human Resources, and Jason M. Bennett, CPA, County Administrator. Kristi D. Liller, Director of Human Resources, reported on the work session held by the Allegany County Commissioners on January 12, 2023, during which there was a discussion regarding the preliminary results of the Compensation and Classification Study as prepared by Evergreen Solutions LLC. Mrs. Liller explained that the discussion included the current state of Allegany County's compensation program and market results for comparable employers, as well as recommendations from the study. She further explained that the recommendations include an updated pay plan for classified service, with pay adjustments ranging from five to fifteen percent (5% to 15%) for non-union County employees. Mrs. Liller added that union groups were recommended to maintain their current pay structure, with an overall market adjustment for each union. She reported that the County is in the process of meeting with each union in order to move toward adoption of the recommendations as presented by Evergreen Solutions.

Mrs. Liller explained that the cost to implement all recommendations as set through the study is approximately one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) for the current year. She pointed out that should the recommendations be approved this evening; each employee would receive an individualized letter from Evergreen Solutions communicating their personal pay adjustment. Mrs. Liller added that the plan would be to perform final calculations and enter any adjustments to implement as soon as possible, ideally the final pay in February of this year.

Mrs. Liller remarked on the importance that the County strive to retain great current County employees as well as to recruit qualified talent going forward. She asked the Commissioners for their approval to fully adopt the Evergreen Compensation and Classification Study recommendations per the Work Session held on January 12, 2023. Mrs. Liller explained that Evergreen was making final revisions to the final report, and that it should be received within the next few days. She thanked the Commissioners for their consideration and again asked for their approval of the overall recommendations of the Study.

Commissioner Caporale thanked Mrs. Liller and acknowledged the hard work she and other County staff have put in regarding the Study.

Commissioner Brodie discussed that the County at one time went six years flat with no pay increases and in recent years has been playing catch-up. He added that the County has been losing employees to other employers because of salary.

Administrator Bennett pointed out that the length of time of no pay increases for County employees was actually eight years. He remarked that increases per the Salary Study would be to get them back where they belong.

County Attorney Lee Beeman explained to the Commissioners that for legal clarification, the Motion before them regarding the County's classified employees would be to take action to directly adjust their pay; and with regard to each of the County's collective bargaining units, the Commissioners would be authorizing Attorney Beeman to make offers to those bargaining units consistent with the Salary Study recommendations. He added that there would still be some contractual work to be done on the back end.

Upon Motion made by Commissioner Brodie, seconded by Commissioner Atkinson, and duly carried, the Board of County Commissioners approved proceeding with the recommendations outlined in the Salary Study presented January 12, 2023 by Evergreen Solutions, LLC.

Item 2 – Retirement Incentive Authorization – Board of County Commissioners to proceed with offering a retirement incentive to eligible county employees to offset some of the increased costs with the implementation of the salary study – Kristi D. Liller, Director of Human Resources, and Jason M. Bennett, CPA, County Administrator. Kristi D. Liller, Director of Human Resources, that during the January 12, 2023 work session, there was also discussion of the recommendation to offer retirement incentives in order to offset the cost of the implementation of the Compensation and Classification Study. Mrs. Liller explained that a memo has been prepared to go to all County employees from County Administrator Bennett, to outline all of the details of the retirement incentive program. She discussed some of the details to be provided in the memo. Mrs. Liller stated that applications for retirement would be accepted through March 31, 2023, with an employee's retirement effective date to be no later than June 1, 2023. She discussed how eligibility for retirement would be determined and pointed out that the Human Resources Department would be available for questions and assistance, and that a retirement seminar would be held in early March.

Mrs. Liller concluded her presentation by asking the Commissioners for their approval of the Retirement Incentive Memo from County Administrator Bennett, dated January 23, 2023, in order for the memo to be distributed to County employees and the incentive program offered immediately.

Upon Motion made by Commissioner Atkinson, seconded by Commissioner Brodie, and duly carried the Board of County Commissioners approved proceeding with offering a retirement incentive to eligible county employees to offset some of the increased costs with the implementation of the salary study.

CONSENT AGENDA

As recommended by the County Administrator

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

Item 3 – Allegany County Department of Public Works American Rescue Plan Funding – Board of County Commissioners approved \$161,500 from the American Rescue Plan Stimulus funding to purchase three used mini excavators from Grantsville Equipment Company, Grantsville, Maryland, to be utilized by the Department of Public Works Roads Division.

Item 4 – Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Fiscal Year 2023 Marketing Grant – Board of County Commissioners approved a grant agreement in the amount of \$22,085 with Maryland Heritage Areas Authority for a Fiscal Year 2023 Marketing Grant to support Allegany County Tourism, and authorized the County Administrator to sign the agreement.

Item 5 – Community Promotions – Board of County Commissioners authorized the County Finance Department to remit \$1,000 budgeted from the Community Promotions Account to the Cumberland Scottish Rite Foundation in support of the 2023 Robert Burns Night to raise money for RiteCare Early Childhood Speech and Language Disorders Clinics in Western Maryland.

Item 6 – Allegany County Commission for Women Board Appointment – Board of County Commissioners approved the appointment of Victoria J. Hoverman as a member of the Allegany County Commission for Women, with her term to expire on July 1, 2025.

Item 7 – Extension of Notice of Interim Trail Use Agreement Negotiation Period – Board of County Commissioners to authorized the County Attorney to file a one (1) year extension of the Notice of Interim Trail Use Agreement negotiation period with the Surface Transportation Board.

Constituents – In order of sign-up sheet –

Mr. Richard Shearer, of 13814 Marshall Porter Road, LaVale, spoke about code enforcement issues involving his neighbor.

County Administrator Bennett told Mr. Shearer that the County is looking into his concerns and that he will receive a response.

Mr. Don Llewellyn, Secretary-Treasurer of the Embassy Theatre, discussed his concerns that the renovation of Baltimore Street will have a negative effect on the Theatre, resulting in loss of

business.

Commissioner Caporale told Mr. Llewellyn that he would have to speak with the City of Cumberland about his issues.

County Attorney Lee Beeman had no further comments to make at this evening's meeting.

County Administrator Jason Bennett talked about the work done on the Salary Study and thanked County staff for their support.

Commissioners' statements, comments, recognition –

Commissioner William Atkinson had no further comments to make at this evening's meeting.

Commissioner Creade Brodie discussed the recent PACE events and related infrastructure projects, remarking that everything went very well.

Commissioner Brodie then informed the Commissioners that the race promoters at the Cumberland racetrack is defunct. Commissioner Brodie added that he would like to find out if anyone else would be interested in taking over the events, by putting out a request for proposal.

Commissioner Brodie also acknowledged State's Attorney James Elliott as well as County Sheriff Craig Robertson, accompanied by his wife, all present in the audience at this evening's meeting.

Commissioner David Caporale also talked about the recent PACE events, and agreed with Commissioner Brodie about the good meetings and positive reception regarding County projects.

Reminders/Upcoming Meetings –

Next Public Business Meeting – Thursday, February 9, 2023, 2023 5:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come to the attention of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

David J. Caporale, President

True Copy
Attest:

Cynthia A. Young
Recording Secretary