

**Open Work Session
County Road Paving Projects
September 20, 2016**

Mr. Weston Young, Director of Public Works, and Mr. Lee Outen, Superintendent of Roads, came before Council. Mr. Young said, as requested, they have come prepared to talk about the County's paving program and how it is decided what roads are paved and how they choose the different surface treatments. Mr. Outen provided handouts to council members and apologized for not getting the handouts to Council yesterday as they had some network issues. Mr. Outen said the first sheet shows the revenues and expenditures. He said then what is important to look at are the different types of roads in the County. Mr. Outen said out of the 720+ miles of roads the County has, there are 346 miles of tar and chip road. Typically, tar and chip road should be treated every six years, so that is more or less clockwork. He said, on the tar and chip roads, there might additional work that needs to be done such as patching existing holes, trying to fill in some of the dips or replacing pipes. They try to do those projects before they tar and chip the road. Mr. Outen said tar and chip is about \$1.62 per square yard to treat. It is a very economical way to seal a road. Tar and chip is not a road fixer or a road smoother outer, tar and chip is simply a sealer that protects what is underneath road. Most of the County's tar and chip roads have evolved from dirt roads many, many years ago, and they are not necessarily smooth. He said some of them have bumps and dips, but that does not mean they are structurally deficient. It just means they are somewhat bumpy. Mr. Outen said the County keeps those roads sealed with tar and chip every six years. He said the chart shows all the tar and chip roads in the County. Mr. Outen said he tried to compile a list of roads based on when they were last treated and based on the six-year cycle when they would be treated again or when they should be treated again and to get them back on a six-year cycle. He is trying to get the County back on a cycle to maintain roads like it should so the road do not fall apart. He said, if you look at the chart, it describes the length and width of the road, the last treatment date and the next projected treatment date. He said, more or less, this chart puts the roads back on a six-year cycle for tar and chip roads. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if there any roads on the list that are beyond tar and chipping, to which Mr. Outen responded, there was one this year that the County had to pave and that was Morris Leonard Road. He said the edges of Morris Leonard Road were so deteriorated that tar and chipping was not an option. Mr. Outen said the chart shows all 346 miles of tar and chip road in the County. They will take one-sixth of the roads on the list and treat them this year. Mr. Cannon said after the first twenty roads on the list, it looks like everything is shown in alphabetical order. Mr. Outen said the roads are shown alphabetical order according to their treatment year. In another words, the roads showing on the chart are broken down by treatment year. Mr. Cannon said the first twenty roads are not in alphabetical order. Mr. Outen said it might be how they were sorted in that particular year. He said if you look at the treatment year, it will show when that road was tar and chipped last. For example, in looking at Davis Road, it was last treated in 2001. It should have been treated in 2007, but it will be treated in 2017. He said, if you remember from 2008 to 2014, the County did not treat any of the roads, so they are catching up and trying to get back on cycle. Mr. Outen said last year they were working on roads that were last tar and chipped in 1999. Mr. Outen said Davis Road is on the 2017 tar and chip schedule. Mr. Cannon asked if Davis Road is the next road on the list that will be treated as there are about 60 roads that have the 2017 next projection date. Mr. Outen explained that all the roads with the projection date of 2017 will get tar and chipped this fiscal year. Mr. Outen said Cannon Drive is also on the hot-mix list. Mr. Cannon said he knows a person on Cannon Drive who complains about the road quite a bit. Mr. Outen said there is a tremendous dip on Cannon Drive and that dip has been there forever. Their goal is to wedge and hot-mix that stretch of road where the dip is and then it will be tar and chipped over. Mr. Dodd clarified that the dip on Cannon Drive will be fixed as he thinks all the council members have heard from the resident on Cannon Drive,

and he has a legitimate complaint. Mr. Outen said tar and chip is not a road fixer and, if it was not for the County's tar and chip program, the County's roads would look like a third world country. Mr. Dodd asked if they will be taking the dip out of Cannon Drive, to which Mr. Outen responded, yes, the dip will be wedge and leveled with hot-mix asphalt. Mr. Outen said the County purchased a piece of equipment called a hotbox, so they can buy hot-mix from the plant and work on the tar and chip roads. The hotbox keeps the mix warm, and the patching crew goes through the road list and they do the best they can to fill in dips and smooth out the roads prior to them being tar and chipped. He said tar and chip is half of the County roads, and they are bumpy rural roads. He said if there is ever a desire to improve the road they will need to widen it like they did with Morris Leonard Road. He said there was a lot of traffic and a history of crashes on that road. They were able to fix a curve in the road, but not the whole thing. They replaced all the crossroad pipes, and they did some drainage improvements. The County spent about \$200,000 on Morris Leonard Road. He said if you take \$200,000 out of a \$3 million or \$4 million budget that is a big chunk when there is 700 plus miles of road. Mr. Outen said that is the process for the tar and chip roads. He said every time they take a road off the tar and chip list and it gets puts on the paving list, the maintenance costs increase dramatically from tar and chip to paving. He said the County can fix the road and then maintain it in perpetuity with another type of surface treatment like slurry seal or tar and chip. The county smoothes the road out, but the road is sealed with tar and chip or slurry. Mr. Dodd said Mr. Outen is explaining what the County does. He then asked what do the contractors do, to which Mr. Outen responded the contractors do all of it. He said with tar and chip, years ago when the County was slapped in the face with the real possibility that it was looking at a half million dollars a year for as far as it could see to treat roads, with trying to think about what is the County going to do in how to keep these roads from falling to pieces, it invested in a chip box. At one point in time, the County was paying less than a dollar for tar and chipping the roads. It was paying between sixty to eighty cents per square yard for tar and chip. Right now the contract price is a \$1.62. He said it has gone up tremendously over the past 10 years just like paving has. He said the County does a certain portion of the tar and chipping in-house to subsidize the work, so they can start catching up on the six-year cycle, and the dollars the County saves can be applied to black top and slurry seal. He said the County benefits from the in-house tar and chip as it helps get more roads covered up and sealed. The biggest portion of the contract is slurry seal and hot-mix asphalt and the small patchwork is done in-house. Mr. Dodd said cold weather is coming up. He then asked if there is a certain temperate that the roads crew cannot treat the roads, to which Mr. Outen said it has be above freezing to pave the roads. For tar and chipping and slurry seal, they want 50 degrees and above. When you get to that time of year, they shut it down and start back up in the spring. They do not want to put down slurry seal below fifty degrees because it takes a long time for the material to start setting up. He said there would be a traffic nightmare waiting six hours for the point traffic can go on the road. He said hot-mix can run later into the season. Mr. Outen said one or two years ago, he remembers paving in December and the plants did not shut down because it was a mild winter. Mr. Outen said, typically, they are able to pave until November and then they start again in March or April. Mr. Dodd said it looks like a lot of work. Mr. Outen said, even though they contract out the work, there is still a tremendous amount of work that the County does in-house in relation to surface treatment, as they have to cut the shoulders and spray for weeds on the tar and chip roads. He said they do not have the staff or money to spray everything like they used to, but they do not want to pave on top of grass. Mr. Dodd asked how much funding has come back from the state, to which Mr. Young responded about 10% from historical numbers. Mr. Outen said they were getting about \$7.5 million dollars in 2007, which dropped to \$312,000 and now the County is getting about \$626,000. Mr. Outen said the rest is being funded through the County. Mr. Strausburg said Councilman Holloway asked at the last meeting what the cumulative impact has been. He said from 2008 through 2015, he thinks the number is \$39.5 million dollars is the shortfall from the state in highway user revenue. He said you can estimate in 2016 it will be about \$6.5 million dollars. The County is \$46 million

dollars in a cumulative loss. He said the Governor has tried to institute an eight-year bring back program, but the Senate and House leadership has rejected the program. Mr. Strausburg said, frankly, he does not see any real movement. He said from a planning standpoint, the County continues to plan on the basis that is what the County will get from the state. He said the County may incrementally be getting a little bit more money, but he does not think, in this political environment, the County will get a whole lot. Mr. Outen continued, he said the chart shows all the tar and chip roads in Wicomico County. Mr. Cannon asked if the priority roads are the ones shown in bold, to which Mr. Outen responded said the ones in bold are because they were pasted over, so do not pay attention to bold formatting. Mr. Outen explained that if you look at the next projected date that is what the plan is for tar and chipping. If you look at the next projected date column and the column next to it, when those two dates match, the treatment is back on track. Mr. Outen said that is what they are trying to do is get back on track. He said the cost for tar and chipping should decrease because they are doing more now to try to get back up to speed. Mr. Outen continued he said there is not a road in the County that will get paved or sealed that does not need it. He said the County has approximately 300 miles of hot-mix roads, and they are major collector roads as well as minor and local streets, which are subdivisions. Mr. Outen said there are 150 subdivisions in the County and then there are minor collector roads. He said they are on the roads every day and they get complaints from the public, so they have a pretty good idea with what is going on with the County roads. He said they formulated a list that they look at to see what roads they can seal at this point because the biggest list is the slurry seal. Slurry seal is a preventative maintenance tool. Mr. Outen said the difference between sealing and paving is \$2 per square yard versus \$13 to \$14 per square yard. He said the lifespan of slurry seal is 8 to 10 years and hot-mix is about 15 years. He said you cannot go by the number of years since the last treatment with hot-mix asphalt. He then showed a picture of Zion Road. He said Zion Road was paved 2005, so it has been 11 years since it was paved. He said you can start to see some surface cracks and the color lighten, which means the road is oxidizing, so this is the time to seal the road because the County will save a ton of money by sealing it now. Mr. Joe Holloway said on the list, he does not see a projection date, to which Mr. Outen responded there is not a projection date for them yet. He said eventually the idea would be to have a slurry tracking list like the tar and chip list. It will be 10 years in a subdivision then they will seal it again. He said that gives them a very good idea moving forward what the County's budget needs are going to be. Mr. Joe Holloway said on the list you show the road name, the name of the subdivision and then within the subdivision area, it indicates three patches. Mr. Outen said that is an internal comment box. Mr. Cannon asked if someone asked Council members tomorrow what road was going to be slurry sealed or hot-mix, what road would they tell them. Mr. Young explained that the list provided to Council is not a complete list of the slurry and hot-mix roads in the County. Mr. Outen said the list is just what will be done this year. Mr. Outen said they were able to pave Wesley Drive and a section of Quantico Creek Road this past year, so it is being moved off the list. Mr. Joe Holloway clarified that all the roads on the list will be done this year, to which Mr. Outen responded, yes, that is correct. Mr. Outen said disregard the yellow color. He said the yellow are the hopes and dreams if there is money left over at the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Dodd asked if those roads are the low priority ones, to which Mr. Outen responded, not necessarily, but they would like to treat them if they have the funding. Mr. Cannon clarified that the list shows the roads that will get done except for the ones highlighted in yellow, and they are the "maybe" ones. Mr. Outen explained that the formatting is for their internal use. Mr. Young said, as mentioned during the budget session and other Council meetings, it is their intention to put all of the roads and all the proposed surface treatment years on the County's website so the public can look at them. He said, of course, things change and some roads will oxidize quicker than others, or they will have geo technical issue or the weather will affect the schedule. The list is evolving, but they will have a pretty good idea of the road treatment schedule. Mr. Outen explained that over the winter, they may have roads that go through a major freeze cycle and will need to be treated in the spring. He said, in that situation, something will

need to be taken off the list if it can wait. Mr. Outen said, with the slurry schedule, they are aiming to save roads when they can, but, after the winter, the list may change. He said if you look at the Zion Road picture that is an excellent road for the County to slurry right now because the County will save a ton of money. He said, if you look at Zion Rod on the slurry schedule, it shows how much it will cost to slurry the road and how much it will cost to pave the road. He said it is \$300,000 plus versus \$70,000 plus in costs. He said the County will be able to slurry the road and get eight years out of it. He said, if you look at the dollar cost, slurry seal and tar and chip is the way to go when you look at the lifecycle. It is not as smooth and people do not like it as much but, in terms of keeping the roads going, it is the best thing to do. He said people do not pave their driveway, they seal them. Mr. Young explained that the roughness will wear down as there is more traffic on the road. He said it takes a while, but it does smooth out over time. Mr. Outen said the next picture is an example as to why you cannot go by the number of years. The picture is of Heather Glenn Drive. He said the Heather Glenn Subdivision was built in 1999. In 2007, the main road had to be paved again because it was falling apart. Now we are in 2016 and the road needs to be treated again. Mr. Dodd asked if that is due to a poor mix, to which Mr. Outen responded it is more likely a subgrade issue. He said the County's standard at the time was three inches of stone and two inches of hot-mix, which on that type of soil is not enough. Mr. Young said the standards have gotten more stringent with subdivision roads. He said, with the three-year maintenance period, they can see if there are subgrade issues and try to correct the roads within that three year period. He said, with some of the older subdivisions, they have to go back to work on them. Mr. Outen then showed a picture of Morris Road, which is where Salisbury Middle is located. He said that road is horrendous, as it has needed something done to it for years. He said it is in very bad condition, and they plan to fix it this year. Mr. Davis said that is good as he had someone call him about that road. Mr. Outen continued he said the next road is Dagsboro Road, which was last paved in 2006 and now 10 years later it needs to be treated again, as it is turning white and cracking. The County will slurry that road this year. Mr. Outen continued he then showed a picture of a section of Jersey Road, between Robinson Street and Naylor Mill Road. He said the road was reconstructed in 2002, which the County used state aid money for at that time. The road is 14 years old, and it is falling to pieces. He said a lot is due to oxidation. Mr. Matt Holloway asked if the repair work is beyond slurry seal, to which Mr. Outen responded, yes, the County will have to spend \$250,000 on this stretch of road to fix it. He said he would not be comfortable for this road to go through another winter as the County is going to be in a situation where there will be liability issues if the road is not fixed soon. Mr. Outen continued he said the next picture is of the same road, Jersey Road. The road was paved in 2007, so there is five years difference in the two surface treatments. He said the picture is not the best, but the road is starting to turn white. He said it is the same road just paved at different times. They will slurry seal the road now, and it will save the County a ton of money. Mr. Outen said once the County catches up it will be able to pay a little more attention to the bumpy tar and chip roads. Mr. Matt Holloway said the main issue he sees is that the revenues are \$6.3 million and the total expenses are \$6.95 million. He then asked what is the County going to do about that. Mr. Outen said the total does not take into consideration the slurry seal. Mr. Young explained that those numbers are for the County to treat with hot-mix asphalt. Mr. Outen said slurry seal is not built in the total because, historically, the County did some amount of slurry seal work, but not the amount the County is doing now. Mr. Matt Holloway then asked if the amount will go down. Mr. Young said they will be able to treat more roads, but it is about the condition on whether or not the slurry seal is applicable for the condition of the road. Mr. Matt Holloway asked if the \$6.3 million will cover the projection. Mr. Outen said if you look at the slurry list, at the bottom, it tabulates the miles of treatment, the total dollar amount for the slurry seal and, if the County treated those roads in hot-mix asphalt, what that number would have been. Mr. Outen explained for slurry seal, the County is spending \$1.1 million dollars roughly but, if the County paved them with hot-mix, it would have spent \$5.6 million dollars. Mr. Cannon asked for the slurry road list, tar and chip road list and hot-mix asphalt

list to be sent to Council electronically, to which Mr. Young responded, yes, he would send them electronically. Mr. Joe Holloway asked how the roads division is making out with the contractors, to which Mr. Young said they had difficulty with the hot-mix asphalt contractor. They had to give two one-month extensions. Typically, the work is supposed to wrap up in June at the end of the fiscal year, but they had to push it into July and August. The contractor got everything done that they requested, but it was difficult. Mr. Young said there were municipalities, such as Crisfield and Ocean City, which were given priority over Wicomico County. Mr. Joe Holloway asked if there needs to be a change in the bidding process to allow the County to use more than one contractor or refuse a contractor if they are not doing what they should be doing. Mr. Young said they are looking into that process. He said a vendor review at the end of a project would be good for the project manager to write the pros and cons of the vendor. Mr. Young said, if the contractor does great work and they seem to work well with the County, that could possibly give them a bump up to be used again, of course, with cost as the primary consideration. Mr. Young said on the flipside, if a vendor has poor reviews and complaints, which the County did with the hot-mix asphalt vendor this year, those comments could then be used to go with the second lowest bidder. Mr. Young said part of it is also for taking the two extra months to perform the work. Some firms will bring in additional crews if the County gives them additional work or they can wrap things up faster by bringing in multiple crews. Mr. Young said their chosen vendor was not able to do that. Mr. Joe Holloway said sometimes the lowest price is not always the best price. Mr. Young said it is something they will look into. Mr. Joe Holloway said he has heard some complaints about the current vendor. Mr. Outen said it puts everything behind, such as when they are waiting to see what roads get done, and they need to put out a bid for the coming fiscal year. They need to know if they should take some roads off the list from last year and put them on this year's list. Mr. Outen said it can delay the whole process in moving forward. Mr. Kilmer said he would like to talk about Barren Creek Road at some point. Mr. Strausburg said administration is working on putting together a summary memorandum on Barren Creek Road.

Signatures are on the next page.


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John T. Cannon, President



Matt Holloway, Vice President




Ernest F. Davis, District 1




Marc Kilmer, District 2



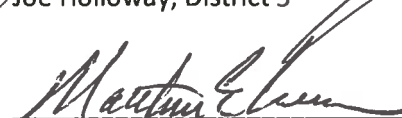
Larry W. Dodd, District 3



John B. Hall, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5



Matthew E. Creamer, Council Administrator