

The Wicomico County Council met in a Special Legislative Session on Monday, March 23, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. via teleconference.

In attendance: Larry W. Dodd, President; John T. Cannon, Vice President; Ernie Davis, Joe Holloway, Josh Hastings, and Nicole Acle. William R. McCain was absent.

Present: Laura Hurley, Council Administrator; Mr. Bob Taylor, Council Attorney; Mr. Wayne Strausburg, Director of Administration; and Mr. Weston Young, Assistant Director of Administration.

A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Mr. Weston Young for his years of service to Wicomico County.

Laura Hurley, Council Administrator

Resolution No. 18-2020 – To Authorize an extension of the Declaration of Emergency until no later than May 6, 2020 to address issues related to the Public Health Emergency created by COVID-19.

Mr. Cannon said he would like to make an amendment to change the date from May 6 to April 8. He said that will be the day after their County Council meeting, and he thinks, in light of what the national level and the State are doing, there is supposed to be a two week window with the Federal Government, and that two week window will close on about April 6, so he thinks it would be more prudent on Council's part to extend this until April 8 so they can reevaluate this at their first meeting in April, which is April 7.

On motion by Mr. Cannon and seconded by Mr. Holloway, Resolution No. 18-2020 was unanimously amended to change May 6, 2020 to April 8, 2020.

There being no further discussion, on motion by Mr. Cannon and seconded by Mr. Hastings, Resolution No. 18-2020 was unanimously approved as amended.

Discussion on Letter to Tim Ailsworth with the Local Government Insurance Trust: Mrs. Acle said she would like to make a motion to revise this letter. She said, under number 1, she would like to have the last sentence rephrased. The part that says the so-called Finance Director and Human Resources Director she would like reworded. Mrs. Hurley asked, for clarification, is Mrs. Acle saying she wants that last sentence to read "It is undisputed that the Finance Director and Human Resources Director neither has been confirmed by Council as required", to which Mrs. Acle responded, that is correct. Mr. Holloway said that sounds okay. He then asked if they are just taking out "so-called", to which Mrs. Hurley responded, correct, and she is also removing "In the case of". Mr. Holloway said that is fine.

Mr. Hastings asked if it would be better to say something along the lines of Council not wanting to infer that they are serving in these positions and that Council has approved that? He suggested, the individuals serving in this capacity have neither been officially confirmed by Council as required.

Mrs. Hurley said Mrs. Acle made the motion, so she would have to reword her motion or withdraw her motion. Mrs. Acle said she feels as though they need to stick with her original motion and make it as direct as possible, so she is going to stick with her original motion.

Mr. Cannon said he thinks they are going to have to vote on this original motion, but, again, he agrees with how Mr. Hastings determined it. He clarified, he does not want there to be any misinterpretation as to Council's position on these two positions, and if they just simply strike "so-called", it is almost a confirmation on the part of Council of acknowledging those two titles having been appointed. Mr. Holloway said he votes for Mr. Hastings' suggestion. Mr. Davis said they have to deny or confirm Mrs. Acle's amendment first. Mr. Cannon suggested Mr. Holloway withdraw his second, to which Mr. Holloway responded, he withdraws his second.

On motion by Mr. Hastings, seconded by Mr. Cannon, and by roll call vote, Mr. Davis, aye; Mrs. Acle, nay; Mr. Hastings, aye; Mr. Holloway, aye; Mr. Cannon, aye; and Mr. Dodd, aye, the letter was amended to reflect Mr. Hastings' suggestion.

Mrs. Acle said, in the fourth paragraph after number 4 she suggests a modification of that paragraph. She clarified, she wants to strike the paragraph completely. She said she thinks this speaks more to some opinions that could be reflected, and it is clearly stated throughout the letter on what Council's stance on the appointment is. Mr. Cannon said he recognizes what Mrs. Acle is saying, but he will vote no on striking it.

On motion by Mrs. Acle, seconded by Mr. Hastings, and by roll call vote, Mr. Davis, nay; Mrs. Acle, aye; Mr. Hastings, aye; Mr. Holloway, nay; Mr. Cannon, nay; and Mr. Dodd, nay, the amendment suggested by Mrs. Acle failed.

Mr. Holloway asked if they are just discussing this or will they be voting to send this letter, to which Mrs. Hurley responded, Council can certainly vote by roll call to make sure everybody is in favor of sending it.

Mr. Taylor said he does not think Council needs amendments to make these changes. He said, in item number two, Mr. Paul Wilber's last name is misspelled, and in the very last page of the letter it shifted to a different type font. Mr. Dodd said they will correct those.

There being no further discussion, by roll call vote, Mr. Davis, aye; Mr. Holloway, aye; Mrs. Acle, nay; Mr. Hastings, aye; Mr. Cannon, aye; and Mr. Dodd, aye, the letter was approved to be sent to Mr. Ailsworth as amended.

Public Comments:

Mrs. Hurley said they received some Public Comments, which are in the Brief Book, and she will read them into the record.

How is the county prepared to deal with the closings of schools for an extended period of time?

Is the county looking at extending technology accessibility to low-income households, etc.?

Natalie T Saint-Phard

Haitian-American Outreach Management Group

Original message sent March 5th to individual council members. Could you please read this message for public comment at the next scheduled meeting?

Thank you.

Bryan C

Wicomico County

At the last council's meeting that we the citizens were in attendance. I was interested in voicing my opinion on what I saw. I would like to take a few moments to have my voice entered on to the record. I watched as my fellow constituents voiced their concerns over urging the council to acknowledge and pass a resolution declaring Wicomico County a 2nd amendment sanctuary. While like others, I understand that a resolution of this matter would be symbolic and not binding. I would still like to see everyone on the council come together and vote this measure through. The people of Wicomico County need to know that their representatives locally are willing to defend the constitution as they have sworn to do and be the voice of their community and voters against harsh politics of Annapolis. Annapolis has proven over and over again by their massive unconstitutional over reach they are out of step with the voters across the state. Crystal clearly operating on their own accord and the urging of others outside the state (as seen at state hearings for which anti-gun groups testify) penalizing everyone for the actions of

Baltimore City. This year alone there have been numerous Bill's proposed that would have essentially banned any kind of rifle or shotgun that we all grew up hunting with, going to a shooting range with, bonding with our families shooting and building our own firearms. They have tried to ban manufacturing your own firearms, (this federally protected right by the way) stop the purchase of fire arms by law abiding citizens that are legally allowed to purchase fire arms. This shows proof that they are out of step. Legal gun owners are not the problem when it comes to gun crime. There is an average of 60,000 gun background checks done in Maryland yearly. So far this year there has been over 30,000 and we are only a little over two months in to the year. These guns are not the problem, neither is a built fire arm. According to the ATF and FBI, 39% of firearms that are involved in crimes in Maryland come from other states. Most are stolen fire arms that have been reported stolen and are in the possession of someone prohibited from obtaining and having a fire arm. That's already breaking the law while doing something to break the law. We need to focus on those key details instead of passing more laws punishing law abiding citizens with depriving their right to defend themselves and their family, their right to hunt, target shoot and bond over shooting and teaching gun safety. We need to tell Annapolis to stop shielding felons from jail time while disarming citizens that follow the law. The state tried pass multiple bills that would've have made a lot of residents of this county overnight felons. The states attorney needed more money for an estimated 800 more cases in this county. What would've it been if it were 20,000 more because of law changes by Annapolis. Breaking down Wicomico County alone, are you aware there is at least 10 gun shops in this county along with 3 licensed gun ranges? Out of the 10 gun shops, most support the community by donating their time to help fire companies fund raisers via sportsman bashes, tax revenue, gun safety, gun instruction, bullets, targets and so on. The ranges give a safe place to shoot, test, and fine Tune a firearm while teaching gun safety to others. This also generates tax revenue and brings people into the county all while helping the county stay informed on gun safety. In conclusion this state was founded on building and having firearms. During the revolutionary war, while there was no major battles fought here, the state and this area did however manufacture fire arms and ammunition for the colonies fighting the war. In 1867 when this county was founded. It was founded on the rights of the people and the responsibilities of the representatives to be the voice of the people and protect their rights. The sheriff is in support of this as well as the county executive. I encourage you to do the same. History will judge all of us for the tough times we are facing. Which side of it will you be on? The side that stood up for the rights of the people or the side that turned their backs on the people's rights. As the legislative body for this county. Please support this. You are our voices of the county.

I have forwarded a copy of this email to the County Executive, all council members and the Sherriff of Wicomico County Mike Lewis.

Thank you.

Bryan C

21804

Council Comments:

Mr. Hastings said he wants to let everybody know that Governor Hogan is supposed to talk at 11:00 a.m. today, and he just wanted to let folks know that. He said it will be interesting to hear what he says. He said also numerous folks have reached out to him asking what they are doing about the older adults in their community who are self-sufficient, but have a lot of underlying conditions and have been advised by their doctors not to venture out, so there are a lot of folks who still need help getting prescription drugs, groceries, and the like. He said of course a lot of individuals are worried about their jobs and how they are going to continue to pay their bills. He said he also had a lot of folks reach out over the weekend about the homeless issue. He said the Community Emergency Shelter Program closed this weekend, so that is 40 men who will be out on the streets, and of course contracting a contagious disease is always a little more challenging for individuals who are homeless because of the close living

conditions, poor access to bathrooms and hand washing, and a lot of other reasons. He said he is just throwing it out there for anyone who is listening that they still need to make sure the rest of their struggling populations do not get left behind during this.

Mr. Holloway said Council is waiting on the second amendment legislation. He clarified, it is his understanding that the Executive's Office has a copy that the Sheriff sent them, so Council is waiting on that. He said, regarding the coronavirus, follow the instructions they are hearing, stay safe, and keep to yourself as much as you can. He said he knows that is tough when people are out there trying to buy groceries, and there is a lot of uncertainty in this, so stay safe and watch out for your families and friends and take care.

Mr. Cannon said he would like to thank Mrs. Hurley for putting this teleconference together, and also thank Mr. Strausburg, Mr. Young, and Mr. Shipley for attending this. He said he talked to Bill Chambers and asked if he could present the County Council with some breakdown of exactly where they are in Wicomico County with businesses that have had to go under, and what he anticipates the real damage might be not only in sectors but in individual businesses alone so that Council might be able to prepare themselves along with the Executive Branch in sending a letter to the Governor asking him not to forget what Wicomico County's concerns are. He said Mr. Dodd has been kind enough to agree to put that on the Agenda for Council's first meeting in April, and he thinks that would be a proactive measure for trying to find relief for the businesses in Wicomico County.

Mr. Cannon then asked if Mr. Shipley had anything to add, to which Mr. Strausburg responded, he is not sure that Mr. Shipley is still on the line, but he sent an email to County Council over the weekend that they had two more confirmed cases over the weekend, so that brings them to four. He said he just got an email from Lori Brewster that a number of Dove Pointe residents are presenting themselves at PRMC with respiratory issues, and there is one person who, unfortunately, has passed away. He clarified, there has been no testing yet, so they cannot confirm that it is coronavirus related, but he wanted Council to be aware of that. He said Mr. Hastings already mentioned that Governor Hogan is having an 11:00 a.m. press conference, and he would anticipate the Governor taking further measures. He said they also have a 4:00 p.m. conference call daily with David Shipley, Lori Brewster, and various municipal leaders, along with fire and EMS. He said he will send that call-in information to Mrs. Hurley so if any Councilmember wants to listen in or participate in that meeting, they will have the ability to do that. He said they do that every day at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Cannon said Council really appreciates Mr. Strausburg being on this call. He said it is terribly important for Council to be in concert with Administration, and he is very pleased to see both he and Mr. Young taking part.

Mr. Strausburg said, from all the health experts he has been talking to, Maryland is really at the juncture where the spread of this virus is going to mushroom, and Councilmembers have already urged citizens to take the social distancing precautions very seriously, and he would simply echo that. Mr. Dodd thanked Mr. Strausburg and asked him to share any future press conferences on this virus with the Council Office. Mr. Strausburg said, as things change on a day to day basis, he will send daily updates to all Councilmembers keeping them informed of the current status as they understand it. He said he thinks it is important that everybody is fully aware of the status, so he will make a point of doing that by email each day.

Mr. Young said he thinks it is beneficial for Council to know what is going on, but, again, he thinks this will be the last Council Meeting he is involved in, so he thanks Council for their time.

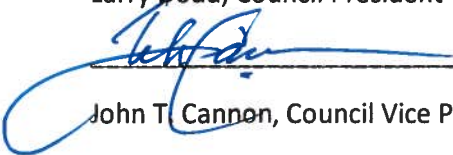
Council President Comments:

Mr. Dodd thanked Mrs. Hurley for putting this meeting together. He said it was not perfect, and Mr. Holloway said in the beginning this is a historic event for them, and it is quite possible they will have to do this for the next meeting. He thanked everyone who participated with them and for bearing with them. He said he appreciates everyone from the public who sent their comments in.

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Cannon, seconded by Mr. Davis, and unanimously approved, the Legislative Session was adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

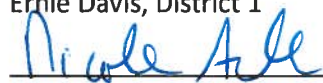


Larry Dodd, Council President



John T. Cannon, Council Vice President

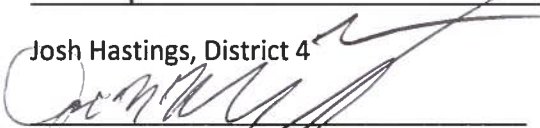
Ernie Davis, District 1



Nicole Acle, District 2



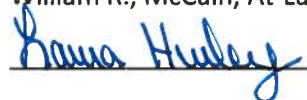
Josh Hastings, District 4



Joe Holloway, District 5

_____ absent _____

William R., McCain, At-Large



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator