**Dorchester County Council Meeting, April 15, 2025, Unofficial Notes – Submitted By Sharon Smith, CAN**

Present: George Pfeffer, President; Mike Detmer, Vice President; Rob Kramer, Jr; William Nichols; Ricky Travers; Jerry Jones, County Manager; Irene Barnes, Administrative Specialist; Charles MacLeod, Attorney

Cash on hand $33,359,662.70

The Consent Agenda was passed without discussion, but Councilman Ricky Travers abstained.

A commendation was presented to the Cambridge South Dorchester High School Boys Basketball Team for winning the 1A State championship. Several of the team members and coaches were present to receive copies of the commendation.

Week of April *13th Proclaimed Public Safety Telecommunicators Week* – 911 emergency telecommunication specialists are often the first contact the public has during an emergency, police, medical and firefighters. Last year, they handled over 22,000 911 calls, 13,000 fire/EMS calls, and were involved in 91,000 law enforcement incidents. The 17 full-time, and three part-time specialists work 24/7, 365 days a year.

Week of May 4th *Proclaimed Correctional Officers Week* - - the officers are responsible for ensuring the custody and safety of inmates in jails and prisons. They also help inmates develop skills to return to being productive members of society, while working under very stressful conditions.

In legislative session the council voted to introduce two new pieces of legislation. The first was the 2026 Dorchester County Budget, with no discussion or comments. The next discussion and hearing was to raise the 911 fee to $4.25 per line, per month. Two emails were received objecting to the increase in 911 fees: one from Verizon and another from the Cable and Television Industry Association (CTIA). After offering the public the opportunity to speak and hearing none, the Council voted 5-0 and approved the fee increase. The second new piece of legislation introduced a motion to decrease the age for the senior property tax credit to age 67 and increase the credit/rebate.

A public hearing was held to close and transfer a portion of Farm Creek Road and the Toddville Boat Ramp. An attorney for the Horseman family, owners of the adjacent property is requesting that a portion of the road and the boat ramp be transferred to them in exchange for 9,000 square feet just south of the boat ramp. An attorney spoke on behalf of the Horseman Enterprises, LLC, which bought their property three years ago and is returning it to productive use. Local fishermen attempt to use the decrepit boat ramp, which has no parking or turn-around space, and either trespass on the Horseman land or get stuck in the swamp. John Horseman also discussed liability issues he has been facing. The council voted 5-0 to initiate the transfer process.

A public hearing was held to approve the sale of lots 11, 12, and 13 in the technical park for $296,400, development after which will create 200-300 jobs. After no public comment, the motion was approved 5-0.

A motion was approved 5-0 to proceed with the design of a wildlife fence for the airport, for $35,000 from the current budget.

A motion was approved to award a contract to convert the Hurlock tennis courts to pickleball courts to Outdoor Concepts, LLC for $68,640, 90% funded from Project Open Space.

Comments:

Jerry Jones, city manager, commented that April 21-25th is National Roadway Safety Week and to be mindful of the safety of workers on the highways.

Commissioner Detmer has been discussing impact fees with citizens and welcomes your comments.

President Pfeffer shared that the state declined the county’s request for a deadline extension to request a waiver on maintenance-of-effort education costs, so no relief will be received.

**TUESDAY, MAY 6TH, IS THE FIRST PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2026 COUNTY BUDGET.**