

**ST. MARY'S COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS'
THURSDAY, MAY 16, 1996**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Commissioners met in Executive Session with the Board of Education to discuss a matter pertaining to a negotiated agreement (health insurance benefits for public school employees) as provided for in Article 24, Section 4-210(a)8. (Motion to meet in executive session was duly adopted at the County Commissioners' meeting of Tuesday, May 14, 1996.)

**Consolidation of County's Health Insurance Bid Packet
with Board of Education (Negotiations)**

Present: St. Mary's County Government:

Commissioner Barbara R. Thompson, President
Commissioner Paul W. Chesser
Commissioner Frances P. Eagan
Daniel F. Ichniowski, Acting County Administrator
Mary M. Langley, Recorder

Also present during portions of the meeting:

George Foster, Personnel Officer
Jim Haley, Procurement Officer
Steve Welkos, Finance Director

Present: St. Mary's County Board of Education / Public Schools

Dr. Jonathan C. Nelson, Board of Education (BOE)
John J. Roth, Jr., BOE
Rev. Robert Kirkley, BOE
Julie B. Randall, BOE
Fred J. Wallace, BOE
Dr. Joan D. Kozlovsky, Superintendent of Public Schools
Elaine M. Kramer, Director of Budget & Finance
William May, Director of Human Resources
A. Lorraine Okrie, Recorder

Authority: Article 24, Section 4-210(a)8

Time Held: 9:10 a.m. - 10:55 a.m.

Action Taken: The Commissioners discussed the referenced negotiations and agreed to take action in Open Session.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Present: Commissioner Barbara R. Thompson, President
Commissioner D. Christian Brugman
Commissioner Paul W. Chesser
Commissioner Frances P. Eagan
Commissioner Lawrence D. Jarboe
Steve E. Welkos, Finance Director
Marty Jones, Budget & Fiscal Analyst
Daniel F. Ichniowski, Acting County Administrator
Mary M. Langley, Recorder

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner President Thompson at 11:12 a.m. in the Commissioners' Meeting Room (#14) at the Governmental Center in Leonardtown.

FOLLOW UP ON EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Eagan moved, seconded by Commissioner Chesser, to direct staff to pursue the gathering of information in regards to health insurance as discussed in executive session. Motion carried 4-0. Commissioner Brugman abstained as he had not participated in the executive session and had not been briefed on the details of the discussion.

PRESENTATION OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Steve Welkos presented and reviewed a reference document for the FY97 Budget WORK SESSION which outlined operating budget highlights (major areas of increased spending, proposed tax rate and fee changes, major areas of revenue growth, additional and deleted positions), capital budget highlights (financing, major projects for FY97 and FY98-FY02), public budget hearing comments, potential revenue estimate revisions, tax and fee changes, and operating and capital budget increases requested above those appearing in the FY97 recommended budget.

BUDGET DISCUSSION AND ACTIONS

Wage and Classification Study

Commissioner Eagan moved, seconded by Commissioner Chesser, to grant a 2% Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) to county employees based on the current salary scale and their pay as of June 30, 1996, and to adopt the classification and wage recommendations provided in the study performed by DMG (David M. Griffin & Associates, Ltd.) Employees will be moved into the new salary scale at the next higher step on their anniversary date, which will not be changed. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Operating and Capital Budget Increases over FY97 Recommended Budget.

During review of the budget work session document dated May 16, the Commissioners initially approved all items therein with the exception of the following:

1) Three Oaks Homeless Shelter -- Revised Operating Budget Request

The Commissioners concurred in reducing the FY97 revised budget request by the Shelter for \$50,000 to \$5,000. (Original Request, \$0.00) This amount matches what is provided to Catholic Charities for homeless women and children. Commissioner Jarboe indicated his willingness to assist the Three Oaks Homeless Shelter in obtaining grants to fund costs for its operations.

2) Agricultural Preservation Project -- Revised Capital Budget Request

The Commissioners concurred in providing \$65,000 of the \$100,000 requested from the County's Transfer Tax for the Agricultural Preservation Project. The reduced amount will provide a match of \$65,000 from the Agricultural Transfer Tax fund and leverage \$277,500 in state matching funding as well as maintaining the county's certified status in the program.

Tax and Fee Changes -- Revenue Sources

Commissioner Thompson relinquished the position of chair to the vice-chair and moved that the property tax rate be maintained at \$2.13 and that the proposed amusement tax increase from 2% to 5% and the proposed re-establishment of the public accommodations tax at 5% be eliminated. Commissioner Chesser seconded. Motion failed, 2 to 3 with Commissioners Brugman, Eagan and Jarboe voting against.

Commissioner Brugman moved, seconded by Commissioner Jarboe, to strike the amusement tax increase as well as the public accommodations tax, and to reduce the property tax rate to \$2.11. During discussion it was noted that the elimination of the amusement tax increase would reduce projected revenues by \$97,500 and would not fully fund the budget categories as determined up to this point in the meeting. Commissioner Brugman suggested reducing the Sheriff's budget by this amount. Motion failed, 2 to 3 with Commissioners

Chesser, Eagan and Thompson voting against.

Commissioner Eagan moved, seconded by Commissioner Thompson for the purpose of discussion, to keep the \$2.11 property tax rate, to eliminate the public accommodations tax, and to keep the amusement tax increase from 2% to 5% to fully fund the Sheriff's revised budget request. Motion failed 1 to 4 with Commissioners Brugman, Chesser, Jarboe and Thompson voting against.

(The Commissioners took a short break to eat lunch at the meeting table from 1:25 p.m. to 1:50 p.m.)

Commissioner Eagan moved, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, to go forward with the operating and capital budget, as agreed upon at this point, at the constant yield rate of \$2.11, to do away with the accommodations tax, to keep the amusement tax increase to 5%, to keep the 911 fee increase to \$.50 in order to fully fund the Board of Education's & Sheriff's revised request. During discussion Commissioner Chesser stated he was against reducing the property tax from \$2.13 to \$2.11 but that he would vote with the motion in order to maintain the budget appropriations without reductions to the Sheriff's budget. Motion carried 3 to 2 with Commissioners Brugman and Jarboe voting against.

EMPLOYEES' BENEFITS

Referring to the St. Mary's County Employees' Association letter of May 9, 1996 which provided input from the majority of 75 county employees attending the Association meeting to react to the Commissioners' and Efficiency Task Force's recommendations concerning pay and benefits, the Commissioners took the following actions:

Holiday Benefits

Commissioner Brugman moved, seconded by Commissioner Eagan, to remove all floating holidays, convert Good Friday to a fixed holiday, make the day after Thanksgiving a fixed holiday, and eliminate election day effective January 1, 1997. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Sick Leave

Commissioner Jarboe moved, seconded by Commissioner Chesser, to make no change in the maximum number of days accruable per year, and to allow up to five (5) days per year to care for illness of immediate family member with approval of immediate supervisor. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Sick Leave Bank

Commissioner Brugman moved, seconded by Commissioner Chesser, to allow employees to donate unlimited accrued annual leave to create a sick leave bank available for their peers during times of need, and to task the Personnel Office with preparing implementation policies and procedures for review by department heads, employees and final approval of the Board of County Commissioners. Motion carried 5 to 0.

Personal Leave

Commissioner Eagan moved, seconded by Commissioner Jarboe, to eliminate the current 3 days of personal leave and to adjust the administration of 3 days annual leave to be used as liberally as personal leave. Motion failed, 0 to 5.

Commissioner Brugman moved, seconded Commissioner Eagan, to reduce personal leave from 24 hours to 12 hours per year, effective January 1, 1997. Motion carried, 5 to 0.

Annual Leave

Commissioner Brugman moved, seconded by Commissioner Chesser, to accept the Efficiency Task Force's recommendation concerning the distribution of annual leave earned by number of years worked. Motion failed 2 to 3, with Commissioners Eagan, Jarboe and Thompson voting against. The Commissioners' will review methods of implementation for new hires and bring back to the table in the Fall for further consideration.

Commissioner Jarboe moved, seconded by Commissioner Eagan, to maintain the current accrual rate of annual leave. Motion carried 4 to 1, with Commissioner Chesser voting against.

Bereavement Leave

Commissioner Jarboe moved, seconded by Commissioner Chesser, to make no change to the current bereavement leave policy. Motion carried, 5 to 0.

Maternity & Military Leave, Benefit Eligibility and Education Benefits

Commissioner Eagan moved, seconded by Commissioner Brugman, to make no change to the current maternity leave and military leave policies, to make no change to health insurance benefit eligibility, and to accept ETF's recommendations related to the establishment of education benefits. Motion carried, 5 to 0.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was duly adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Minutes Approved on 5/21/96
by Board of St. Mary's County Commissioners

Mary M. Langley
Mary M. Langley, Recording Secretary