

County Connection

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JANUARY 2007



State of County address set for January 11 at Martin's

The Board of County Commissioners will present the annual State of the County address on Thursday, Jan. 11, at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

All three commissioners will attend. They typically discuss what the county has accomplished in the past year and priorities they have identified for the new year. Carroll's economic development issues are a primary focus.

Their remarks are followed by a question-and-answer session.

In addition to local business leaders, the Chamber of Commerce invites members of the Leadership Carroll class and students from the Academy of Finance program to the event, which is slated to begin at noon at Martin's in Westminster.

A booklet outlining key issues facing the county and major initiatives of various departments during 2006 will be distributed to attendees. The publication will be made available online afterward.

The corporate sponsor of this year's luncheon is the Bank of Hanover.

For information about the luncheon or to purchase a ticket, call the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce at 410-848-9050 by Thursday, Jan. 4.



Commissioners, from left, Dean L. Minnich, Michael D. Zimmer, and Julia W. Gouge listen to Circuit Court Clerk Donald Sealing during their December 4 swearing-in ceremony.



Photos: Office of Public Information



Commissioner Julia W. Gouge records her signature on the official signature sheet at the Circuit Courthouse.



Above, Commissioner Michael D. Zimmer speaks with Eagle reporter Heidi Schroeder in his first interview after taking office. Above left, Commissioner Dean L. Minnich takes his oath of office.

New board takes office

Carroll County
*a great place to live
a great place to work
a great place to play*

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DID YOU KNOW?

- Prior to 1854, the Board of County Commissioners had nine members.
- Carroll's first commissioners were Jacob Reese, Joshua Gist, John Erb, William Shepherd, Henry Brinkham, John Larumoth, Joseph Steele, Amirod Gardner and Sterling Gaei.
- Julia W. Gouge is the second-longest serving commissioner in Carroll County history. The only person to have served more years was Charles Melville, who was first elected in 1919 and completed his final term in 1942.

Policies, procedures established for new board

In the first meeting of the 58th Board of County Commissioners, Carroll's three commissioners established general policies and procedures for how they will conduct business during their term.

Meetings will continue to be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Room 300A of the County Office Building. Twice a month, time will be set aside for members of the public who would like to comment on an issue before the board or want to draw attention to a concern involving the County.

The following guidelines are meant to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak to the commissioners in an orderly manner:

- ◆ Anyone wishing to address the Board is asked to fill out a comment card, lo-

cated on the table inside the Board room, and give it to the Chief of Staff so a member of our staff can contact you with any follow-up information.

- ◆ Comments are generally limited to three minutes per speaker. When your allotted time expires, you may complete your thought. If you are unable to complete your comments within the allotted time, you may submit written remarks to the Board.

- ◆ Statements to the Board should concern a recent agenda item, an item that is expected to appear in a future agenda, or a matter of general policy over which the Board has authority. You are welcome to call the Commissioners' Office at 410-386-2043 to see if the Board can help with your issue.

- ◆ Signs and posters may not be displayed during meetings. Instead, the Board encourages you to submit written comments.

- ◆ We apologize, but we cannot discuss certain topics, such as personnel matters, pending appeals, and the actions or statements of individual staff.

- ◆ While our goal is to keep you informed, our Citizen Participation time is not intended to be a question-and-answer session. If you have specific questions, we will make sure that an appropriate staff member responds to your questions later.

- ◆ If you are not able to comply with these guidelines, the presiding Board member may ask you to leave the meeting.

Cable Channel 24 offers weekly news highlights

Residents can catch up on county news highlights on a new weekly program that now airs on Carroll County Government Channel 24 and streams on the county's web site.

Carroll County News delivers information on issues affecting Carroll County. The electronic news gathering format fills a void created when the county's former cable provider, Adelphia, stopped broadcasting Carroll County news, said media production specialist Chris Swam.

Some of the material is taken from public meetings held the previous week. Other items are generated just for the broadcast. Topics are driven by what the county's departments are doing. They include new appointments, amendments, programs and initiatives.

Five minutes of each show will be devoted to the Carroll County Sheriff's Office.

Carroll County News airs on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays each week. It begins at the top of the hour when no other regular programming is scheduled.

Online, the show can be viewed, beginning Friday, Jan. 5, by going to the county's site, <http://ccgovernment.carr.org>, and clicking on Meetings & Agendas.

Carroll County News began airing on Dec. 4. Its creators, Swam and Chief of Administrative Services Cindy Parr, expect the show to evolve.

To view *Carroll County News*, watch Comcast Channel 24. The schedule can be found online at <http://cablecast.cmcmd.tv/cablecast/public>. For more information, call 410-386-2801.



Crews decide how to upright a tanker that derailed on December 15.

Disaster averted along railway

On an unusually warm December day, emergency crews tested their training and equipment in what could have deteriorated quickly into a catastrophe: a train carrying toxic chemicals derailed in Patapsco State Park.

While good fortune chose the sparsely populated site and the balmy weather, training and professionalism kept the incident from escalating. Cooperation and communication were crucial.

Emergency managers made use of several new technolo-

gies. A "virtual" operations center enabled maps and images to be seen online. Geographic information systems helped to pinpoint which homes needed to be evacuated. The 911 center alerted residents who needed to stay inside while the tanker was being moved.

A mobile communications vehicle became the command center, with its computers, radios, maps, weather stations, televisions and more.

The story did not lead the news because everyone worked together as they were trained.

Votes made, actions taken by the Board of County Commissioners during December

DECEMBER 4

57th Board of County Commissioners

◆ Animal control. Voted 2-1 to reconsider amendment to Chapter 81, Animals. On a second 2-1 vote, removed restrictions regarding tethering animals during the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m., and added that the amendments will go into effect in 60 days (except for the new licensing fees, which began immediately). Commissioner Dean L. Minnich cast the opposing vote in both cases.

DECEMBER 5

58th Board of County Commissioners

◆ Board positions. In three separate 3-0 votes, agreed that Julia W. Gouge will serve as president, Dean L. Minnich will serve as vice president, and Michael D. Zimmer will serve as secretary of the 58th Board of County Commissioners.

◆ Committee assignment. Consensus for the following assignments: Commissioner Gouge – National Association of Counties, Maryland Association of Counties, Planning and Zoning Commission, Carroll Community College; Commissioner Minnich – Commission on Aging, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, MACo alternate; Commissioner Zimmer – Board of Education, Economic Alliance, Baltimore Art Museum; Chief of Staff Steve Powell – Farm Museum. All three commissioners attend Economic Development Commission meetings.

◆ Procedures. Voted 3-0 to accept written set of rules and procedures.

◆ Public participation. Agreed 3-0 to accept as amended the public participation guidelines for public meetings, which limits the time allotted for each speaker to three minutes.

◆ Solid waste. Agreed 3-0 to proceed to public hearing with the update to the Ten-Year Solid

Waste Management Plan.

◆ Purchase of property. Voted 3-0 to exercise the county's option to purchase property for \$7,830 that will connect the existing waterlines between Conan Doyle Way and Pine Knob Road.

◆ John Owings Landfill. Agreed 3-0 to award a \$60,075 contract to Maryland Environmental Services for the monitoring of well installation, landfill gas investigation, field data collection, and report preparation for the site of the former landfill.

◆ Hampstead annexation. Voted 3-0 to change the official County Zoning Map to reflect Hampstead's annexation of the Weikers property, located at 900 Clearview Avenue, which became effective on Nov. 8, 2006.

◆ Hoff Log Barn Committee. Agreed 3-0 to sign two letters to the Maryland Historical Trust in support of the committee's application for \$50,000 in grants. One letter supports the relocation of the Hoff Log Barn to the Carroll County Farm Museum. The other, an owner commitment letter, acknowledges that if the grant is awarded, the barn will be subject to a perpetual preservation easement to protect the historical integrity of the structure.

◆ Release of funds. Voted 3-0 to request a release funds to the developer who rehabilitated Spencer Village Senior Apartments. The project coordinator completed all documents and public notices for the environmental review. Commissioners needed to sign the request for release for the Department of Housing and Community Development.

DECEMBER 12

◆ Agricultural land preservation. Voted 3-0 to exercise options on two county-held preservation easements: 81.6 acres at 956 Oak Tree Road, Westminster, for \$831,250; and 79.5 acres at

916 Oak Tree Road for \$759,500.

◆ Hydrogeological study. Sitting as the Board of Health, Commissioners agreed 3-0 to recommend against requiring a hydrogeological study for the Deer Trail Estates subdivision in Finksburg.

◆ Circuit Court positions. Approved 3-0 the transfer of \$30,500 to the Juvenile Master budget. As of Jan. 1, 2007, Carroll's second juvenile master will be a full-time position with a judicial assistant. The transfer of funds covers the changes. The state will reimburse the county for the full cost of the master's salary and benefits for fiscal year 2007.

◆ Bonds. By consensus, agreed to re-fund outstanding general obligation bond issues at lower interest rates in order to save money.

◆ Banking services. Voted 3-0 to approve an updated agreement and signature card that is required by BB&T bank following any changes in the membership of the Board of County Commissioners.

◆ Tandem roller. On a 3-0 vote, awarded a \$45,597 contract to Ingersoll Rand for a new vibratory tandem roller, smooth drum type with trailer.

DECEMBER 14

◆ Water and sewerage plan. Agreed 3-0 to accept public comments for 30 days after the Dec. 14, 2006, public hearing on the Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage.

◆ Emergency shelter. Voted 3-0 to accept a \$31,400 grant on behalf of Human Services Programs to pay for operating costs of the Intact Family Shelter, homeless prevention activities, and the "Rapid Exit" housing model. Funds for the Intact Family Shelter were reduced this year by 23 percent, and HSP will make up the shortfall within its current budget allocation

from the County.

DECEMBER 21

◆ Medicare grant. Approved 3-0 the development of a grant application to the National Council on Aging for developing methods to identify, educate and enroll individuals who are eligible for the Medicare Part D program. The county will provide an in-kind match through staff hours spent on the program.

◆ Emergency equipment grant. Voted 3-0 to accept grant funds awarded to the county by the Maryland Emergency Management Agency that will be used for the purchase of self-contained breathing apparatus for the county's technical decontamination vehicle.

◆ Agricultural land preservation program. Agreed 3-0 to designate matching funds of \$1.3 million, which is required in order to receive \$2 million for easement purchases from the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation.

◆ Sewer line inspections. On a 3-0 vote, approved a contract to Abel Recon at a rate of \$162.37 per hour to provide closed-circuit television inspections of the county's sewer collection system as needed.

◆ Postage meter. Approved 3-0 the lease of a new digital postage meter from Shannon Business Systems for \$41,685.60 over five years. The U.S. Postal Service requires the replacement of all rotary letterpress postage meters with digital printing meters.

◆ Bond resolution. Voted 3-0 to execute a bond resolution that authorizes the refunding of some outstanding general obligation bond issues. The sale is expected to save the county \$900,000. The affected bonds are Consolidated Public Improvement Bonds of 1995, Consolidated Public Improvement and Refunding Bonds of 1998, and Consolidated Improvement Bonds of 2000.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Unless noted otherwise, meetings will be held in the County Office Building at 225 North Center Street, Westminster. All times are subject to change. Check the County's Web site closer to the date of the meeting, or call 410-386-2400.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3

9:30 a.m. Board of Zoning Appeals – Room 003
2:30 p.m. Zoning Administration Variance Hearings – Room 124C
3 p.m. Public workshop - Proposed Amendments to the County's Employee Defined Benefit Retirement Plan – Room 106

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4

9:30 a.m. Board of Zoning Appeals – Room 003

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

1 p.m. Carroll County Farm Museum Board of Governors – George Grier Meeting Room, Carroll County Farm Museum, 500 S Center St.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

1 p.m. Board of County Commissioners – Room 300A

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

9 a.m. Board of License Commissioners (Liquor Board) – Room 003
10 a.m. Commission on Aging, Westminster Senior Center, 125 Stoner Ave.
3 p.m. Circle of Caring Committee – Human Services Programs Conference Room, 10 Distillery Drive, Westminster
3:30 p.m. Public workshop on proposed amendments regarding obstructions that block sight distance for motorists – Room 105



THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

Noon Board of County Commissioners speak at annual Chamber of Commerce State of the County Luncheon – Martin's Westminster
4 p.m. Public workshop on residential uses in Planned Business Centers – Room 105

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

County offices closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16

8 a.m. Department of Social Services board of directors, DSS Conference Room, 10 Distillery Drive
9 a.m. Planning and Zoning Commission – Room 003

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

3 p.m. Environmental Advisory Council – Room 003

THURSDAY, JANUARY 18

10 a.m. Roundtable discussion with Cabinet and allied agencies – Room 300A
1:30 p.m. Board of County Commissioners – Room 300A
1:50 p.m. Public hearing for rezoning of property located on the north side of MD 26 east of Klees Mill Road – Room 300A

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23

7:30 a.m. Industrial Development Authority – Room 105
9:30 Open community discussion with commissioners – Room 300A
10 a.m. Board of County Commissioners – Room 300A
10 a.m. Public hearing on proposed amendments regarding obstructions that block sight distance for motorists – Room 300A

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

8 a.m. Economic Development Commission – Room 105
10 a.m. Board of County Commissioners – Room 300A
10 a.m. Public hearing on residential uses in Planned Business Centers – Room 300A
1:30 p.m. Board of County Commissioners – Room 300A

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26

2 p.m. Public information meeting for Ten-Year Solid Waste Management Plan Update – Room 003

MONDAY, JANUARY 29

6 p.m. Planning and Zoning Commission – Room 003

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30

10 a.m. Board of County Commissioners – Room 300A
10 a.m. Public Hearing for Ten Year Solid Waste Management Plan Update – Room 300A

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Commissioners@ccg.carr.org

Not sure whom to contact?

Email PublicComments@ccg.carr.org

Vision

Carroll County offers a safe environment in which all its residents may live, work, and play. The rural character of our county is preserved through measures that protect our natural and cultural resources, minimize future residential sprawl, and save farmland. Carroll County is enriched by sustainable agriculture and agribusiness as well as responsible, productive business and industry that offer family-wage jobs and employ the county's skilled workforce.

Mission statement

The mission of Carroll County Government is to provide excellent, efficient service to our residents in a courteous, friendly manner. We conduct business openly. We encourage each resident to play a role in keeping Carroll County a great place to live, to work, and to play.



CARROLL COUNTY

a great place to live, a great place to work, a great place to play