



# Government Affairs Newsletter

November 8th

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## LOWER EASTERN SHORE ACTIVITY

Good Afternoon Everyone,

Next week we'll be hearing from Mayor Jordan of Delmar, Mike Dunn, and Amanda Pollack. They've prepared a presentation for us and we'll have the time to talk and discuss septic solutions for the county, and hopefully the Lower Eastern Shore as a whole. We know septic hurts Wicomico the most right now, but MDE's regulations will soon be affecting the other two counties.

My hopes is we have a unified front and can come as one to our state representatives to see if we can't get something done in Annapolis.

Maryland Realtors has met with MDE to discuss a state-level septic inspection bill as well. I'm waiting to hear how that went. I submitted our thoughts on the matter.

The Coastal Association is a plaintiff in the suit against the Federal Government regarding the construction of the offshore wind project. This is still at the early stages of the suit and no major news has come from it. It has made national headlines.

Also, I want to make this meeting public for association members via zoom or in person; they won't have input but my hopes are to allow members to see what we're talking about and they feel willing to engage with me and local leaders.

Please let me know if I have missed anything and thank you.

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# Elections

## LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS

### **U.S. Senate:**

Prince George's County Exec Angela Alsobrooks bested former Governor Larry Hogan by 6.4 points, and she will become our next Senator.

### **U.S. Congress District 1:**

Andy Harris was reelected with 64.9% of the vote.

### **Wicomico County Question A (the removal of the office of the County Executive):**

This ballot measure was defeated with 55.3% of Wicomico County residents voting against.

### **Ocean City:**

Rick Meehan was reelected to his position as Mayor with a vote of 1,324 to Peter Buas's 1,132

Both Town Council members seeking reelection, John Gehrig Jr. and Tony DeLuca, won their bids while newcomers Larry Yates and Jake Mitrecic will fill the final two open seats.

The Council will now be Tony DeLuca, John Gehrig Jr., Larry Yates, Jake Mitrecic, Matt James, Will Savage, and Carol Proctor.

On November 7th, the newly appointed mayor and councilmembers met, and a Council President and Secretary was selected. James and DeLuca retained their positions as president and secretary.

I have called and congratulated all of our new Ocean City elected representatives and went to the convention center on Election Day to speak with everyone running.

Good conversations all around.



# Worcester County

## R-1 UPDATE

The R-1 and MH Public Hearing is on November 19th.

The ordinance language has not change from the initial draft I shared with you all two weeks ago. I have a verbal and written testimony for the Association to present on that date.

I've met with the OC Planning and Community Development Director (the ordinance's author) and have learned the following:

1. The length of stay requirement is the weakest component of the ordinance.
2. The redefinition of occupancy in OC is the real prize from this. It is possible that the "two plus two" rule could be implemented in other zoning districts.
3. The Mayor and Council has tasked the P&CD Department with taking a holistic look at rentals in OC. This will not be the last time that a rental ordinance will be introduced in the near future.
4. The P&CD Department will be sure to run things by us regarding housing / rentals.

I've also been reaching out to members of the commission in order to learn their thoughts, their goals for this ordinance, how they feel about "length - of - stay", and where they will likely vote.

We have a while before this becomes law. Not only must some version of this pass through the commission, but it must also go through a work session with the Town Council and have second and third readings.



# Worcester County

## OTHER NEWS

Snow Hill will be adding a Planning and Zoning Director to the staff. This has been written into their charter and presents a great opportunity for the association to have a hand in Snow Hill's future growth.

The town as a whole has tightened their governance. There's now written language requiring the publishing of agendas, public hearings, video, and more to create a more transparent government process. Additionally, they've refined their election process and have a salary for council members.

This tells me that the town will be making a big push for economic and population growth in the near future.

Additionally, I've begun to schedule meetings with local elected leaders in the county as a part of my larger relationship-building goals.



# Wicomico County

## COUNTY UPDATE

**HORIZON Tax:** A public hearing was held before the county council last week. On December 3rd, the council will form a decision on whether to sunset or keep this tax credit program.

I'm in the process of scheduling several meetings with local stakeholders including the City of Salisbury's Council President, the mayor, the Salisbury COC Chair, and others.

The goal of these conversations is to build relationships and ensure the association and this committee has a seat at the table now and in the future. Please let me know if there are others that I should meet with.



# Somerset County

## ***SOMERSET COUNTY UPDATE***

Somerset has explored new ordinances to expand the cannabis business in the county.