



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

DATE: 02/29/2024

WORCESTER COUNTY:

Ocean City: Officials from planning and the city council met on 02/27/2024 to discuss new rental licenses as well as building height limits in downtown OC. While the city council instructed the city staff to flesh out some regulations for short and long term rentals some of the issues were occupancy limits for R1 zoning, mandating a local property management company, and room or square footage guidelines. The city council will have the final say on these possible regulations.

Worcester: The county has met with members of the states Accountability and Implementation Board, or AIB to discuss the looming funding requirements in the Kirwan plan. These requirements include increased teacher salaries, educational programs, and other increased resources for the school system. While Worcester County is considered a wealthy county it also has the lowest property tax rate in the state. This imbalance has led to a potential log jam between the county and the school board. Currently the state contributes about \$200 per pupil compared to thousands per pupil in other counties. The county council has asked if there is a way to delay the new funding requirements but that decision is up to the general assembly.

WICOMICO COUNTY:

Salisbury: The city council had a meeting this week where they discussed eligibility requirements for public office that would require candidates to have a



“domicile” in the town instead of an address. The city council was also faced with continued questions about the zoning and regulations for the recovery houses in the city. The city government is supposed to come up with more defined regulations in the next few months.

SOMERSET COUNTY:

Crisfield: Representatives from FEMA met with the Mayor and city council to discuss funding sources for flood mitigation and management. Some of the options discussed were federal and state funds.

MARYLAND: The general assembly is close to reaching crunch time for this year’s session. There have been nearly 3500 bills filed this session, an unprecedented number. Many bills are languishing without a hearing and many committee chairs are coming up with strategies to make quick work of the backlog of bills. One bill of note passed recently, a tax on paint aimed at funding the recycling of paint. Each can will be taxed.