

Board of County Commissioners' Meeting

Thursday, January 21, 1971

Present: George R. Aud, President
 J. Wilmer Bowles, Commissioner
 J. S. Guy, Jr., Commissioner
 B. Harris Sterling, Director of Finance
 W. Stanley Donaldson, Consultant
 Robert E. Wigginton, County Attorney
 Paul R. Raley, Administrative Officer
 Helen M. Bailey (Mrs.), Admin. Asst. (Recording)

The meeting was called to order at 1:40 p.m. for the purpose of considering the appointment of an emergency committee for seeking out additional sources of revenue which will increase county income sufficiently well to obviate the necessity for raising the tax rate on real estate. Among the items discussed were:

CATV - tax on gross receipts, assessment of permanent tower equipment and other real property.

Franchising and licensing.

Steuart Oil - Reassessment on improvements made (estimated between \$2 and \$3 million this year.)

Consider real vs. personal property.

Determine:

No. of people paying income tax in county
 No. of people paying real estate tax
 No. of people contributing to income of County
 Use of Ext. Service facilities at University of Maryland in projecting sources

Tax on soft drinks and utilities.

Slot machines -- county-owned and -operated.

County tax and tag for all registered autos, etc., in St. Mary's. (Find out how this is imposed and handled.)

Coordinate activity of this Committee with the Committee to Study County Government.

Code vs. Charter Government.

Cigarette and Gas Tax.

4.5% Amusement Tax.

It was then unanimously agreed, rather than discuss tax possibilities at random, that the appointment of a citizens committee to research additional avenues for potential income should take priority; and that this group of citizens would be advised of the County's need to develop both short- and long-range plans for presentation to the Legislative Delegation. Commissioner Bowles stated that if we can provide St. Mary's County with some financial relief in time for this current budget preparation and adoption, we could then move into an additional long-range program in time for the next session of the Maryland General Assembly. Mr. Bowles stated that the subject should be studied in depth, both by a Citizens Committee and the County Commissioners prior to presentation to the Legislative Delegation; and that public support in this endeavor would be very important.

The following persons were selected to comprise the membership of a Task Force to Study New Sources of Revenue:

Mr. George R. Sparling, Temporary Chairman
 Sen. J. Frank Raley
 Mrs. Helen Paradis
 Mrs. Beth McCoy
 Mr. Henry J. Kanowicz
 Mr. John L. Madel, Jr.
 John Slade, Esquire
 Mr. Bradford Reeves
 Mr. Robert Goldsmith
 Mr. Norman Ray
 Mr. Theodore Newkirk
 Mr. Charles Purcell
 Mr. Lionel Somerville
 Mr. John L. Koegel
 Mr. Edgar G. Smith
 Mr. William Elmer Combs
 Mr. Chauncey W. Karstens
 Mr. James C. Dobry

Maryland Route 5 from Ridge to Scotland

Commissioner Bowles emphasized that he also felt it was very important for the County to express its concern for the immediate completion of the reconstruction of Route 5 from Ridge to Scotland so that the Point Lookout Park could be advantageously utilized for its intended purposes -- that of attracting citizens to it for recreational use. Mr. Bowles commented that the State Roads

Commission had this reconstruction listed as a priority for completion as early as 1966 and that it has steadily been reduced in priority -- the date now being set in fiscal 1976. Mr. Bowles stated that two or three hundred people come down and never return to St. Mary's every year because of this road, which does damage to their trailers, their boats and other equipment. When they arrive at Point Lookout, there is no space or place in the Park or Camp for them to stay.

Mr. Bowles requested that the Board of County Commissioners address a letter to the Governor, David H. Fisher of the SRC, Sen. Harry Hughes (Secretary-Designate of the Department of Transportation), Spencer Ellis and the members of the Legislative Delegation requesting their assistance in this regard. It was unanimously agreed that a draft letter would be submitted for approval at the next regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners. The assistance of the Economic Development Committee will also be requested.

In addition, Commissioner J. Wilmer Bowles introduced the subject of potential land use in the vicinity of the Technical Center and the Fair Grounds, for municipal type development. Mr. Bowles proposed that a master plan should be prepared in three phases -- to cover the 5-year, 10-year, and 20-year projection. The Board and Officers present concurred.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Approved,



George R. Aud
President