

BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday, May 20, 2025

Meeting was also Live Streamed at <http://www.garrettcountymd.gov/live>

IN ATTENDANCE

Chairman Paul C. Edwards
Commissioner Ryan S. Savage
Commissioner S. Larry Tichnell

Executive Assistant Carol A. Riley-Alexander

CALL TO ORDER OF PUBLIC SESSION at 4:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MOMENT OF SILENCE – A moment of silence was given in honor of Samuel Grant, former Director of the Garrett County Department of Emergency Management, who tragically passed away due to health issues.

PUBLIC SESSION

1. Chairman Edwards indicated there was one (1) deletion to the Public Meeting. The proclamation honoring the Garrett County Postal Workers was postponed. The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved the Public Meeting Agenda for May 20, 2025.
2. The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Tichnell, which was seconded by Commissioner Savage, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved the Public Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2025.
3. **PROCLAMATIONS:** Poppy Day - Day 23, 2025
Water Safety Month – May 2025
Garrett County Head Start – 60th Anniversary
4. **PRESENTATION: Garrett County Government Fiscal Year 2026 Operating & Capital Budget Presentation**

Scott Weeks, Director, along with Garrett County Department of Financial Services staff, provided a presentation on the Garrett County Government Fiscal Year 2026 Operating & Capital Budget. A copy of the presentation is attached to these Public Meeting Minutes.

This presentation included historical financial information on prior approved budgets, as well as projections for future fiscal years. The Board of County Commissioners expressed their individual remarks and perspectives on the budget and financial outlook for upcoming fiscal years.

Chairman Edwards emphasized that the proposed budget fully meets agency funding requests without the necessitation of a tax increase. Notably, it was also recommended in the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget a reduction in the real property tax rate from 1.056 to 1.02. This proposed decrease to the real property tax rate is remarkable, as it was achieved without compromising services or financial stability. He further highlighted that Garrett County is one of the few counties in the state able to achieve this, crediting the strong fiscal management and stewardship of Mr. Weeks and his staff.

The Board of County Commissioners will accept comments on the proposed budget over the next two (2) weeks. Comments can be submitted via e-mail to: comments@garrettcountymd.gov

Final adoption of this Fiscal Year 2026 Budget is scheduled for June 2, 2025.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

- ❖ Questions from the audience were taken and answered by the Board of County Commissioners concerning the proposed budget process including education, the *Maryland Blueprint for Excellence in Education*, child wealth per pupil, assessments, contingencies, county services, and staffing for fire services and sheriff's department.
- ❖ Question on funding organizations with budget cuts by the federal government - Chairman Edwards stated that there cannot be a reasonable expectation that the citizens of Garrett County would be able to backfill all the federal government cuts. He stated that the County could potentially assist organizations, if a need arises, on a temporary basis.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ❖ The Board of Garrett County Commissioners announced that the next Public Meeting will be held on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. at the Garrett County Courthouse.
- ❖ Adoption of the Garrett County Government Fiscal Year 2026 Operating & Capital Budget will be on Monday, June 2, 2025 during the next public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, adjourned the Public Meeting at 6:03 P.M.

Attest:

KEVIN G. NULL
County Administrator

By Order of the Board,

PAUL C. EDWARDS, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners