

BOARD OF GARRETT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

PUBLIC MEETING

Monday, May 4, 2026

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

IN ATTENDANCE

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

County Administrator Kevin G. Null

ADMINISTRATIVE SESSION

❖ **Board Appointment – Garrett County Agricultural Advisory Board**

Appointment – Burke Friend. This appointment will fulfill the unexpired term of Staci Carr and will end in December 2028.

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 appointment.

An official letter of appointment under the signature of Chairman Edwards will be sent to Ms. Friend outlining the terms of the appointment.

❖ **REAL PROPERTY EXEMPTION – Accident Community Housing Corporation**

Backbone Housing Inc. – Request for Fiscal Year 2027 County Property Tax Abatement granted under the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 9-313.

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved a real property tax exemption for Fiscal Year 2027 for the Backbone Housing Inc.

❖ Mr. Null reviewed a number of administrative and managerial matters under his authority and jurisdiction with the Board of County Commissioners.

CALL TO ORDER PUBLIC SESSION at 4:00 PM

PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Invocation by Commissioner Tichnell

PUBLIC SESSION

1. 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 4, 2026.
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 April 21, 2026.
3. **PROCLAMATIONS:**
 - Mental Health Month – May 2026
 - Children’s Mental Health Week – May 3-9, 2026
 - EMS Week – May 17-23, 2026

4. The Garrett County Department of Financial Services - Purchasing Division presented the following recommendations:

Bid #26-0402 – G-58 Sang Run Road Over Ginseng Run

One (1) Bid was received for this Bid: US Bridge (\$87,992.00).

After reviewing the Bids for compliance with administrative requirements and based on the feedback from the Department of Public Works – Roads Division, the Garrett County Department of Financial Services – Purchasing Division recommended awarding the Bid to US Bridge for \$87,992.00.

Bid #26-0312 – Elevator Control Upgrade

Two (2) Bids were received for this Bid: Eastern Elevator (\$253,897.38) and Keystone Elevator Group (\$240,000.00).

After reviewing the Bids for compliance with administrative requirements and based on the feedback from the Department of Public Works – Facilities & Maintenance Division, the Garrett County Department of Financial Services - Purchasing Division recommended awarding the Bid to Keystone Elevator Group for \$240,000.00.

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved both Bid Awards as recommended.

RFP #25-1029 – Advance Metering Infrastructure System

Three (3) Proposals were received for this Bid: Fortline Inc. (\$1,823,373.50), Core & Main (\$2,091,495.00) and Ferguson Waterworks (\$1,363,629.80).

A five (5) member selection committee reviewed and rated each proposal based on evaluation criteria contained in the AMI System RFP. Based on the overall evaluation summary, the Garrett County Department of Financial Services – Purchasing Division recommended awarding the Bid to Fortline Inc. for \$1,873,059.50.

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 RFP as recommended.

5. **Road Name Resolution:** Garrett County Department of Planning & Land Management – Siera Wigfield, GIS Specialist, requested approval of names for two new roads and removal of one road:

Road Name Resolution - Resolution RN26-1

Addition

- US 219/Geroge C. Edwards Highway
- Harvest Moon Drive

Deletion

- Seldom Scene Hollow Lane – Removed due to no longer serving as access to properties

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, adopted Resolution RN 26-1.

6. **SIDEWALKS IN CRELLIN - IMPROVEMENT PUBLIC OUTREACH REPORT** – Garrett County Department of Planning & Land Management – Siera Wigfield, GIS Specialist, provided an overview of a proposed Crellin Sidewalk Improvements and Transportation Alternative Funding Project process.

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Tichnell, which was seconded by Commissioner Savage, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, authorized submitting an application for funding for the project.

7. GARRETT COUNTY PROPERTY TAX RATE REDUCTION

After discussions with the Garrett County Department of Financial Services, Chairman Edwards requested the Board of County Commissioners consider the possibility of a property tax rate reduction. He noted that the Board of County Commissioners had lowered the Homestead Tax to 2% this year and stated that reducing the property tax rate would provide an additional tax relief for taxpayers.

Commissioner Savage stated that a tax reduction would benefit all residents. He expressed confidence in the County’s current financial position and recommended setting the tax rate at \$1.00, representing a 2 cents reduction from the current rate.

Commissioner Tichnell stated he supported a tax reduction that would benefit all residents and believed that lowering the property tax to \$1.00 would be a fiscally prudent decision.

Chairman Edwards stated that for several years, the Board discussed the uncertainty surrounding the impact of the *Maryland Blueprint for Excellence in Education* and its true effect on our community. Thanks to the diligent work of the staff, the Board of County Commissioners was able to have this informed discussion.

The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Savage, which was seconded by Commissioner Tichnell, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, approved reducing the Fiscal Year 2027 Garrett County Property Tax Rate from \$1.02 to \$1.00.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTARY: None

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ❖ The Board of Garrett County Commissioners announced that the next Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. at the Garrett County Courthouse.
- ❖ Presentation of the Garrett County Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating & Capital Budget will be on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, during the next public meeting. Final adoption is planned for June 1, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT: The Board of County Commissioners, on a motion by Commissioner Tichnell, which was seconded by Commissioner Savage, and made unanimous by Chairman Edwards, adjourned the Public Meeting at 4:33 P.M.

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS presented to the Board of County Commissioners on this date:

- ❖ Garrett County Department of Public Works – Roads Division
- ❖ Garrett County Department of Public Works – Utilities Division

Attest:

By Order of the Board,

KEVIN G. NULL
County Administrator

PAUL C. EDWARDS, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners