

**CAMDEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CAUCUS MEETING
JULY 19, 2022 - 12:00 PM
6th FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
520 MARKET STREET, CAMDEN, NJ 08102**

Director Cappelli called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and the following Commissioners answered to their name:

PRESENT: AL DYER, MELINDA KANE, JEFFREY NASH, VIRGINIA BETTERIDGE, JONATHAN YOUNG, SR., EDWARD McDONNELL, LOUIS CAPPELLI, JR.

The Director said this meeting has been properly advertised in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Director Cappelli asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence to be followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Commissioner Betteridge.

The Director said we are pleased today to welcome our newest member, Ginny Betteridge, former Mayor of Runnemede and now Commissioner of Camden County. Ginny has a very distinguished career in public service and brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience that I know will be a tremendous asset to this Board and Camden County. Welcome aboard. Commissioner Betteridge said it is my pleasure to be a part of this distinguished panel and I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

The Director said at Thursday's meeting we will have five (5) Public Hearings on Bond Ordinances.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BOND ORDINANCE #1

Bond Ordinance amending a Bond Ordinance finally adopted August 19, 2021 by the County of Camden, New Jersey in order to provide for a change in the improvements authorized by such Ordinance.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BOND ORDINANCE #2

Bond Ordinance amending a Bond Ordinance finally adopted June 21, 2018 by the County of Camden, New Jersey in order to provide for a change in the improvements authorized by such Ordinance.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BOND ORDINANCE #3

Bond Ordinance further amending a Bond Ordinance finally adopted July 16, 2020, as amended by a Bond Ordinance finally adopted August 19, 2021 by the County of Camden, State of New Jersey, in order to provide for a further change in the improvements authorized by such Ordinances.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BOND ORDINANCE #4

Bond Ordinance further amending a Bond Ordinance finally adopted June 15, 2017, as amended by a Bond Ordinance finally adopted August 19, 2021 by the County of Camden, State of New Jersey, in order to provide for a further change in the improvements authorized by such Ordinance.

PUBLIC HEARING ON BOND ORDINANCE #5

Bond Ordinance further amending a Bond Ordinance finally adopted January 21, 2016, as amended by Bond Ordinances finally adopted October 19, 2017, September 17, 2018, October 17, 2019, June 18, 2020 and May 20, 2021 by the County of Camden, State of New Jersey, in order to provide for a further change in the improvements authorized by such Ordinances.

The Director then called upon each Commissioner individually to present his or her Resolutions.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Dyer

Commissioner Dyer read Resolutions 1 through 25 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Kane

Commissioner Kane read Resolutions 26 through 39 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Nash

Commissioner Nash read Resolutions 40 through 46 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Betteridge

Commissioner Betteridge read Resolutions 47 through 59 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Commissioner Betteridge introduced the following walk-on to the Agenda:

Resolution authorizing a Bond Substitution to provide financing for Board of Social Services Office Renovations, in the amount of \$3,300,000.00.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Young

Commissioner Young read Resolutions 60 through 69 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Deputy Director McDonnell

Deputy Director McDonnell read Resolutions 70 through 75 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Resolutions and discussion of proposed Resolutions by or on behalf of Commissioner Director Cappelli

Director Cappelli read Resolutions 76 through 98 into the record and they were approved to be placed on the Agenda for adoption.

Director Cappelli opened the meeting to the public for discussion of the Resolutions and/or any other matters.

Kristine Samms, 19 Dover Drive, Lindenwold. *I was born at Cooper Hospital. We are five generations of Camden County residents. I was a teacher in Clementon throughout the pandemic with disabled kids, so we were actually in the building during that time. It was a perilous dangerous time and I felt like the County was supporting educators at that time, so I want to thank you for that. My great grandmother was born in Gloucester City in 1896. As a child, as you can see in this photo from 1910, these are all the workers who worked at the Welsbach Gas Mantle Factory. She worked there from when she was 9 until 14. Of course, there were no child labor laws at that time. This photo is located very close to where the Covanta Incinerator is now and as you can imagine that is a big generational problem. I am here today to find out why Camden County would even consider bringing in more toxic waste to burn in South Camden and Gloucester City. I ask this because I am from 5 generations of Camden County residents who have been subject to the poisoning from industry at their jobs, and from the very soil and air and water. The Environmental Protection Agency cleanup of thorium contamination at the Welsbach Superfund site in Gloucester City and also South Camden affected 140 properties and removed more than 250 tons of radioactive waste. That was part of the \$5.1 billion settlement to clean up that site. My family has had health problems, particularly neurologic conditions, every generation, including me which I feel are from being from Gloucester City. The site's long-term cleanup is not even done*

yet. Here is another map I have of where all the environmental devastation is happening. Commissioner Nash said, you said that we are supporting toxic waste coming into the city. I am not familiar with that. What are you referring to? Ms. Samms said it is my understanding the Covanta incinerator only has about 10 years left of being operational. My understanding is that there are going to be new permits allowed for the incinerator to continue to work and also to ship in and burn pharmaceutical waste, industrial waste from different kinds of industries and that they haven't even met their obligations to upgrade with pollution control so far. It is my understanding because I am very interested in Gloucester City and the environmental devastation that has happened. As you can imagine, that is not a good place to do it. Commissioner Nash said this Board has not supported that. This Board has taken no action in support of the current permit applications that Covanta has made. Ms. Samms said that is great news. Thank you. There is no ethical or moral way that that the County can approve the expansion of the materials burned. Not only because South Camden and Gloucester City have historically been "zones of abandonment" and environmental devastation, but because the legacy of negative health outcomes in Camden County is current and would continue. This is why I am asking you to hear the voices of those directly impacted by this proposal in your decision. It is not abstract. It is happening in my body and those of my siblings. I strongly urge you to deny any proposed permits that might come up because people's lives are at stake. Gloucester City and South Camden have suffered enough. Thank you.

Commissioner Nash said I am told that everything you just said from your family being born in 1896 to the end was not recorded. If you can provide your notes to the Clerk, we will make them a part of this meeting. If I can just summarize, you are opposing any application that would include additional waste at the incinerator including what you are saying is toxic waste coming to the Covanta facility. *Ms. Samms said, not just toxic waste, any waste.* Director Cappelli said if there was an application of that nature by Covanta it would not come to us at all, correct? Commissioner Nash said there are two pending applications that Covanta has recently filed. One is to install a baghouse which is state of the art environmental equipment at the cost of \$60 million but attached to that is their request for liquid direct injection. That is the controversial request they are making. Those requests go to the DEP. *Ms. Samms asked if her comments would be a part of the written record.* Commissioner Nash said, yes.

Kate Delaney, 126 E. Palmer Avenue, Collingswood. *I have two questions. First, regarding Commissioner McDonnell's resolution regarding the American Rescue Plan Funds, how are those funds going to be utilized?* Deputy Director McDonnell said a determination has not been made for most of those funds. That is the second year of the ARP application from the federal government. We are looking at various options for the use of the money, but final determinations have not been made. One is, we are hoping to set up a better emergency response facility for responding to epidemics such as the COVID epidemic. We are also looking at applying some of these funds to the homeless population in Camden County.

The second item I want to bring up is related to what Kristine just said about Covanta and their permit request to burn liquid industrial waste. I actually saw a power point that was put out by a company that included in their next steps the permits they need to submit to DEP and they also listed the County as another permit source and they would need to put in an application for

the bag house filters that Commissioner Nash referenced as well as permission to burn this new kind of waste. It seems like two different sources of information there. They are saying they will need to go to the County to get permission for this, but I am hearing that you are saying you do not have a decision-making role in all of this, but I would very strenuously suggest you deny any permits as I think Kristine said, this is an aging facility, 31 years old and nationwide we are phasing out incinerators. This is the way we should be moving. Keeping them operational means keeping our air quality substandard. I don't want to continue to live in a county that is graded as an unhealthy place to live largely because of Covanta and what they are doing to our air. It is an impact obviously to the city, most adversely but does impact all of us in the County. Regarding the baghouse filters and them being expensive and state of the art equipment, that may be true but back in 2020 Covanta said they were going to install them if they got a microgrid. Clearly, we have a track record of bad faith promises made by this industry. I would love to hear you go on the record and say that you oppose new schemes by Covanta to stay operational and to continue poisoning the residents of this County and if you don't have a decision-making role than you can still make a stand. Commissioner Nash said I appreciate that. I think in a perfect world everything being equal we would oppose any waste at the Covanta facility. That is the easy thing to do. I agree that our air quality in South Jersey is some of the worst in the entire Country and we are actively working to address some of the issues. It is a complicated issue because Covanta has now actually submitted a permit for a \$60 million upgrade to that facility and that facility, if it is upgraded, would, even with liquid direct injection, I am not saying we would support it, but even with that, additional waste would go to the facility with the baghouse and the air quality emissions from the incinerator would be increased dramatically. We are not in the business to keep Covanta in business. That is only important because we have 35 municipalities plus 2 golf courses that are disposing of waste and while we don't have a legal responsibility to ensure that every one of those towns has a place to empty their trash at the end of the day, we do have a responsibility to work with the municipalities to ensure that the residents in those towns have a place to dispose of their trash at a reasonable cost. Ms. Delaney, what kind of car do you drive. *A small Yaris.* Is that an electric vehicle? *No, it's a subcompact.* I don't drive an electric vehicle either, I have a hybrid. The analogy I drive is every internal combustion engine on the road produces 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide a year. In a perfect world I would go out and buy an electric vehicle. I think you would probably do the same, but they are expensive. So we don't do that immediately. Hopefully one day we will all have electric vehicles and that 4.6 metric tons of carbon dioxide per vehicle would disappear and not be polluting our environment. Similarly, we have this issue with the towns which have to dispose of the trash at a reasonable cost. The towns cannot pay double what they are currently paying in taxes to dispose of the trash. So what they do is put out a bid every year for a place for trash to be disposed. The only vendor that has been active in the past several years is Covanta. Landfills in Pennsylvania, New York City and other opportunities to dispose of trash have not bid on any of the municipal trash facilities so Covanta is the only game in town. If they disappeared tomorrow, I would be happy on one hand because I would have my electric car, however I would be concerned because that electric car now costs me \$100,000 a year and I can't afford it. That is the same dilemma we are facing with the trash. What Camden County has done is two things. One, we are working with Tri-County Sustainability, headed by a wonderful community activist, Sean Moen. We are working with Tri-County Sustainability to try to find ways to address air quality issues in our community. Not only with Covanta but with cars which are the largest polluters in our community. Second, we are looking at other ways, innovative ways,

to work with our municipalities to dispose of trash without relying on Covanta. They are the only game in town right now. Our job is to try to find a way to empty the trash at a reasonable cost without using Covanta. If we can find that, that is the perfect solution, but it takes some innovation, contracts and time and effort. I would like to defer my time to Sean who is with us virtually to address some of these issues. Commissioner Nash asked Sean to introduce himself to the Commissioners and the public and give a very brief overview of what we are doing to address air quality issues in Camden County.

Mr. Moen introduced himself as the Executive Director of Tri-County Sustainability. He said we are a regional hub for 101 towns, 10 legislative districts and 1.2 million people in Camden, Burlington and Gloucester Counties. Last spring our organization partnered with the producers of the film *The Sacrifice Zone* which focused on the environmental issues with Covanta's trash incinerators. Nearly 220 residents and activists attended the screening. The timing was intentional as it coincided with the decision to move away from the proposed project to power the CCMUA's new microgrid with the WT from Covanta. We applaud the CCMUA's pivot to other viable solutions for contingency power. Last Thursday, our Environmental Justice Chair spoke at the DEP's Rule Making Session requesting that any application for public benefit exemptions submitted by Covanta be rejected. I will personally be making the same case at their meeting on July 28th. On a related note, we also do not think the State should exempt WTE incinerators from fees collected from regional greenhouse gas initiative. As business savvy environmentalists, we recognize the massive changes in the global waste management industry in recent years. Every week it seems like we see another one of our municipalities posting about delayed trash or recycling collection. We understand that we can't just shut off the incinerator today, but we can starve it. Speaking of air quality, when the American Lung Association Report came out giving our region failing grades, we wanted to know not only the what and the why but what can we do about it. Tri-County Sustainability put together a panel featuring the report's author from the American Lung Association, DEP and other environmental experts. The key contributors to poor air quality in South Jersey as have already been mentioned, are (1) our proximity to Philadelphia and their manufacturing operations, (2) mobile source emissions from all of the heavy-duty trucks and buses along the I-95 and Route 130 corridors and (3) industrial activity, including the incinerator. The good news is that there are a lot of things we can do to improve the air quality if we act collectively. This has become our organization's top priority. We spent the last 6 months gathering data, recruiting subject matter experts and building our preliminary strategy. It is a multiphased approach. How do we reduce mobile source emissions? Electrify all county and municipal trucks and school buses and build out the infrastructure to support it. Work with our largest employers including hospitals and Amazon to ensure that they electrify their fleets that enter Camden County. What about the incinerator? Again, starve it. We are going to work with the County Commissioners on a food waste reduction strategy. One of the only reasons that the incinerator has to burn at such high temperatures is because the food waste is wet, and they need to get it hot enough to dry. We are going to push on policy related to consumption patterns but also pursuing alternative commercial options for municipal and county level waste management that is much better environmentally. Getting back to the act collectively, I would like to thank Commissioner Nash on two fronts. First, based on his comments at a recent Tri-County meeting, DEP Commissioner Shawn LaTourette committed to the State of New Jersey pushing back on Pennsylvania related to the emissions impacting our regions from Philadelphia. Second, Jeff

engaged his peers from Gloucester and Burlington Counties to join us in the air quality effort. Why is that important? Scale. When we talk about procurement, instead of each individual municipality going out on their own trying to negotiate with vendors, we are talking about 101 towns in the region negotiating collectively to try to get better pricing on things like electric school buses, electric trucks and other public works emission free vehicles. There is also a big economic opportunity here. If we have all these school buses and municipal vehicles charged, at the end of the day we can sell that power back to the grid and PSE&G. It does even out over time. There is obviously a lot of work to be done. There is also a lot of funding from the federal government and the State. We can do this and will be communicating a lot more over the coming weeks. If you would like to help, email us at info@tsc.org and we are also easy to find on social media. Thank you very much for the time.

Commissioner Nash said, thank you Sean. You are very modest because what you have done to bring 101 communities together in the tri-county region is nothing short of remarkable and herculean. You do a great job. You are inspirational. My colleague Jon Young has done a remarkable job with the Sustainability Center and sustainability in Camden County and you were out there supporting Jon and his efforts at our Sustainability Day. Thank you for everything, Sean

Director Cappelli thanked Commissioner Nash for his leadership on these issues.

Aidan Demarco, Oaklyn. *I am here to ask you to oppose the Covanta liquid industrial based proposal. From my understanding, Covanta is the second largest emitter of lead among incinerators nationwide. It towers over schools, playgrounds and homes in Camden. I think that is absolutely disgusting. Its polluting our air.*

Seeing no other members of the public wishing to comment, the Director asked for a motion to close the public portion. Commissioner Betteridge made a motion with a second by Commissioner Nash. All Commissioners present voted aye.

CLOSED SESSION RESOLUTION

The Director read the following Resolution:

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners, County of Camden, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The public shall be excluded from discussion of the hereinafter-specified subject matter.
2. The general nature of the subject matter to be discussed:

A. **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Prohibition of Cannabis Use for Law Enforcement Officers

B. **PERSONNEL**

- Personnel Actions

It is anticipated at this time that the above subject matter will be made public when members of the Camden County Board of Commissioners have made final determination.

3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

The Director asked for a motion to adopt the Resolution and go into closed session to discuss the aforementioned matters. Commissioner Nash made a motion with a second by Commissioner Dyer at 12:39 p.m.

The Commissioners returned from closed session with a motion made by Deputy Director McDonnell and a second by Commissioner Dyer at 12:59 p.m.

The Director walked on the following two (2) Resolution which were discussed in closed session:

Resolution prohibiting off-duty cannabis use by Sworn Law Enforcement Officers.

Resolution authorizing the County of Camden to enter into negotiations with 800 Bridgecom, LLC for lease of satellite office space for the Board of Social Services

There being no further discussion, the Director asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Nash made a motion to adjourn with a second by Commissioner Dyer at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karyn Gilmore
Clerk of the Board