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Transcript of
Council Work Session with Talbot County NAACP

Date: Wednesday, July 29, 2015

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1 COUNTY COUNCIL OF TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Council Work Session

5

With Talbot County NAACP

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7

July 29, 2015; 4:00 p.m.

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Council Chambers, Easton, Maryland

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13 COUNCIL MEMBERS:

14 Corey W. Pack

15 Laura E. Price

16 Dirck K. Bartlett

17 Jennifer L. Williams

18

19

20 Reported by

21 Diane Houlihan

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1 TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

2

3 MR. PACK: Good afternoon, everyone. Can

4 you hear me? I want to thank everyone for

5 coming out.

6 This is a public work session between the

7 County Council and the representatives of NAACP

8 at their request.

9 We all have heard about the tragedy in

10 South Carolina that took place earlier this

11 summer. And that tragedy, those murders there

12 in the church there in South Carolina, has once

13 again raised the debate over flags,

14 Confederate flags, being flown in and over

15 governmental bodies.

16 The NAACP has approached this Council

17 regarding the Confederate -- the Talbot Boys

18 statue, which is placed on the court house

19 grounds, and asked for a work session with the

20 Council to talk about that statue and any

21 future designs or proposals that may be at

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1 hand.

2 So this is a work session with the NAACP

3 regarding the Talbot Boys statue here on the

4 court house grounds.

5 I'm going to turn it over to Richard

6 Potter, he's the president of the Talbot County

7 Chapter of the NAACP.

8 And Richard, if you wouldn't mind

9 introducing the members at the table for the

10 public and for Council.

11 MR. POTTER: Sure. Mrs. Rosalee Potter,

12 who is the first vice president of Talbot

13 County NAACP; Mr. Walter Black, who is the

14 second vice president for the Talbot County

15 branch; and Ms. JoAnn Asparagus.

16 MR. PACK: Just for the public so you

17 would know, we do have the Talbot Spy here with

18 us. We have given them permission to tape and

19 audio the proceedings. We do have a

20 transcriber who is also transcribing the

21 proceeding, as well as a member of the press

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1 from The Star Democrat. So just so you can be

2 aware that you may appear on tape in these

3 proceedings.

4 So while we're getting your video up, why

5 don't I go ahead and turn it over to Richard

6 for any opening remarks.

7 MR. POTTER: Sure. First let me thank

8 each of you for allowing us to speak to you

9 today on behalf of this issue, the matter that

10 has been having some growing conversation. We

11 do come in a collaborative spirit and willing

12 to work with all parties in order to bring

13 about the change and the unity that we all so

14 desire to seek in this county. Thank you.

15 MS. POTTER: I am glad this afternoon that

16 we are able to come to you and to speak to you

17 and to offer to you our opinions as to how we

18 see the Confederate statue on court house lawn.

19 We recognize that these are issues that we

20 have to deal with. And one way or the other, I

21 hope that we can come to a conclusion that

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1 helps everyone.

2 MR. BLACK: I don't have any comments at

3 this time.

4 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: Nor do I.

5 MR. POTTER: We had --

6 MR. PACK: Before, why don't I have

7 Council introduce themselves just in case

8 there's anyone who don't know members of the

9 Council. Ms. Price.

10 MS. PRICE: Laura Price, vice president,

11 Talbot County Council.

12 MS. WILLIAMS: Jennifer Williams, Talbot

13 County Council.

14 MR. BARTLETT: Dirck Bartlett, Talbot

15 County Council.

16 MR. PACK: We seem to have a technical

17 difficulty, Richard. So we all have the

18 Powerpoint presentation in front of us. So if

19 you just want to proceed with that, we'll

20 follow along with you.

21 MR. POTTER: Absolutely. The first or the

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1 second slide is a presentation outline. I will
2 be going over the historical perspective.
3 Ms. Rosalee Potter will then touch on the
4 position of the NAACP, followed by Mr. Walter
5 Black, who will give the recommendations from
6 the Council.
7 The third slide, the Civil War. I think
8 it's really important that we give some
9 perspective on the Civil War before going into
10 the actual statue. A common explanation is
11 that the Civil War was fought over the moral
12 issue of slavery. In fact, it was the
13 economics of slavery and the political control
14 of that system that was the central to the
15 conflict.
16 A key issue was state rights. The
17 southern states wanted to assert their
18 authority over the federal government so they
19 could abolish federal laws that they didn't
20 support, especially laws interfering with the
21 south's right to keep slaves and to take them

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1 wherever they wished.
2 Another factor was territorial expansion.
3 The south wished to take slavery into the
4 western territories, while the north was
5 committed to keeping them open to the white
6 labor alone.
7 Meanwhile the newly reformed Republican
8 party, whose members were strongly opposed to
9 the westward expansion of slavery into these
10 new states, was gaining prominence. The
11 election of the Republican Abraham Lincoln as
12 president in 1860 sealed the deal.
13 His victory without a single southern
14 electoral vote was a clear signal to the
15 southern states that they had lost all
16 influence.
17 Feeling excluded from the political
18 system, they turned to the only alternative
19 they believed was left to them, being
20 secession, a political decision that led
21 directly to that being the Civil War.

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1 MR. PACK: Richard, if you wouldn't mind,
2 if you click okay on that, you should be able
3 to get -- no. Down on the bottom. There you
4 go. Okay.
5 MS. WILLIAMS: I think you were right in
6 the first place.
7 SECRETARY: Hit the red X.
8 MR. PACK: The red. There we go.
9 MS. WILLIAMS: You had it right first.
10 MR. PACK: There we go, okay.
11 MR. POTTER: So we look at the Talbot Boys
12 statue, I think it's, again, it's important
13 that we define monuments and we look at the
14 purpose of monuments.
15 So according to Webster, a monument is a
16 lasting evidence, reminder, or example of
17 someone or something notable or great. The
18 purpose of erecting monuments is to memorialize
19 something or someone, thus bringing that thing
20 or that person to remembrance and honoring
21 their accomplishment.

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1 So let us examine that definition and
2 purpose as stated in relation to the Talbot
3 Boys statue.
4 As it stands before us today, we have
5 lasting evidence of men who fought to preserve
6 slavery, men who fought to keep individuals
7 like myself out of buildings like this.
8 It only tells one side of the story. The
9 Civil War has two sides, the Union and the
10 Confederate. As that statue stands, it's a
11 one-sided monument. I had to sit and ask
12 myself this question: Is that something that I
13 want to bring my niece and nephew up here to
14 see, a monument that demoralizes me and us as a
15 human being.
16 So I would ask that we look at the entire
17 story and build a monument that reflects that
18 of the whole story.
19 So the Talbot Boys statue, given the base
20 of the timeline, the base or the granite
21 monument was installed in July of 1914,

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1 followed by the statue that we see of the young
2 boy holding the Confederate flag being
3 installed in 1916, and then the statue being
4 dedicated in June 5th of 1916.
5 And doing the research, I found out that
6 on December 12, 1914, an article in the Easton
7 Star titled Shaft To Union Men, Hicks Post and
8 Sons of Veterans Will Erect Large Memorial in
9 Easton. The summation of this article gives
10 clear and concise information that the statue
11 known today as the Talbot Boys originated from
12 a joint effort, therefore causing the memorial
13 to pay homage to both the Union and Confederate
14 soldiers.
15 In that meeting, the article also talked
16 about a resolution being passed so that those
17 two entities could work to erect this monument.
18 Between 1914 and 1915, the idea of
19 erecting that statue in honor of both sides
20 changed. On one research, it said that the
21 Union did not have the funds to contribute to

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1 get the statue up, so therefore the Confederate
2 soldiers then erected the monument completely
3 to themselves.
4 And then another article stated that there
5 was more Confederate sympathizers here in
6 Talbot County at the time, thus allowing the
7 Confederate soldiers to win the debate. And
8 that's how they got the monument up.
9 But whether it be A or B, I still ask is
10 that fair, is that a true depiction of our
11 history when it comes to the Civil War.
12 Then another article dated February 27,
13 1915, gives us the idea that the veterans were
14 undecided, being that of the sons of the
15 veterans, were undecided as to who they should
16 place at the top of the statue, whether it
17 would be Franklin Buchanan or a stock model for
18 the monument.
19 After conducting further research, it was
20 discovered that the reasons for the change was
21 predominantly due to the sympathizers,

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1 therefore dedicating the statue on June 5th of
2 1916.
3 At this time, I'm going to turn it over to
4 the first vice president who will then go
5 through the position that the NAACP takes.
6 MS. POTTER: If you don't mind, I'll
7 stand.
8 MR. PACK: Sure.
9 MS. POTTER: The purpose that we are here
10 before you this afternoon is to report our
11 position as it relates to that of the Talbot
12 Boys statue. The statue is a Confederate
13 statue erected on public grounds of the Talbot
14 County Court House.
15 It is offensive to have its presence
16 there. It is also offensive to advocate for
17 the continuance of a reality that was abolished
18 in 1863, and it is equally offensive to allow
19 the continuance of a commemoration that
20 represents such impropriety.
21 The Confederate flag is not only

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1 offensive, but the very act the Confederates
2 chose to perform made their behavior an act of
3 treason. Is this reality something we want
4 memorialized on the court house grounds? You
5 decide.
6 This statue represents people who seized
7 arms against the United States government. And
8 because of this, it is imperative that the
9 symbols placed on the court house grounds
10 should be properly represented as a reminder of
11 nobility and not be that of representation or
12 misrepresentations of the Civil War.
13 Across from the Talbot Boys statue stands
14 the Frederick Douglass statue. Mr. Douglass
15 was an avid abolitionist who fought against the
16 inhumane treatment of people in the 1800s. He
17 fought against the appalling treatment back
18 then, and we are still fighting against it in
19 the year 2015. This should not be.
20 As a member of the Frederick Douglass
21 Honor Society at the time of the erection of

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1 the statue, I remember some obstacles we had to
2 cope with. When presenting our findings, the
3 Council said the statue should not be taller
4 than that of the Talbot Boys statue, that the
5 base of the statue was too big that we
6 presented. Obstacles were present, but then so
7 was perseverance.
8 The erection of the monument was
9 accomplished. And this undertaking can be
10 accomplished again with proper planning and
11 cooperative people.
12 The NAACP is willing to unite with anybody
13 to do right but with nobody to do wrong. We
14 stand as a united front to do all we can to
15 right a wrong.
16 President Pack, Councilman Bartlett,
17 Councilwoman Laura Price, Councilwoman Jennifer
18 Williams, and I don't see Mr. Callahan.
19 MR. PACK: He's out of town right now.
20 MS. POTTER: Thank you for your
21 consideration of our petition. We are

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1 requesting that you consider this appeal with
2 your hearts and not just your minds, that you
3 apply empathy and fairness when making your
4 decisions, and we hope that your aspirations
5 will be to do the right thing because the right
6 thing is the right thing to do.
7 At this time, our vice president,
8 Mr. Walter Black, will make the recommendation.
9 MR. BLACK: Thank you, Ms. Potter. There
10 is a saying that it goes something like this,
11 that there's no greater force than an idea
12 whose time has come and that it's never too
13 late to do the right thing, regardless of the
14 past wrong that might have been done.
15 So consistent with those thoughts, the
16 recommendation of the NAACP:
17 One, to remove the statue from the court
18 house lawn and place it in a more appropriate
19 setting.
20 And second, to commission a group of
21 Talbot County citizens who can reasonably

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1 discuss the erection of a new statue that is
2 inclusive of the Union and Confederate soldiers
3 of the Civil War. Thank you.
4 MR. POTTER: Any questions?
5 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: Richard, just
6 briefly, if I can do a brief summary here. I
7 wanted to address the article that Councilman
8 Bartlett had in the paper where his position
9 was that we should not deny history.
10 And as you can see from this presentation,
11 that is not the intent. It is a matter of our
12 history. We know it all too well that that
13 occurred. And that is why it belongs in our
14 history. That's not something that we ever
15 want to forget.
16 The issue is how you preserve the history.
17 And we take issue with preserving on it public
18 grounds.
19 Secondly, the whole thrust of putting the
20 statue up, as Richard, Rose, and Walter have
21 made clear, was about conciliation. You do not

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1 conciliate when there's only one side. And
2 basically that is the point of the NAACP as
3 well, that conciliation means that we tell the
4 whole truth, we tell the facts.
5 Thirdly, in any conflict involving the
6 United States of America where arms were
7 necessary, which flag was hoisted at the end of
8 that conflict? Be it in victory or in defeat,
9 it was the United States of America. So thank
10 you.
11 MR. PACK: Thank you, Richard, for the
12 presentation. I don't have any immediate --
13 well, maybe just a few questions.
14 Do you have a place in mind, if the statue
15 was to be moved -- this is a ten-ton granite
16 statue. So it's something that's not easily
17 removed. It's going to be a significant cost
18 involved with it.
19 Have you weighed those parameters out as
20 far as the cost of removing the statue,
21 placement of the statue in another location?

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1 MR. POTTER: We have not.
2 MR. PACK: You have not.
3 MR. POTTER: We have not.
4 MS. POTTER: This is something the
5 commission would probably do.
6 MR. POTTER: If you commissioned the group
7 of people, that's something that they could
8 obviously do.
9 MR. PACK: Okay. The history of the
10 statue, and I did some research myself, there
11 were competing voices at that time in 1913
12 whether there should be a statue of both the --
13 both the Republicans and Democrats --
14 Confederates and the Union soldiers.
15 And as you said in your opening remarks,
16 those voices of the Confederacy won out. And
17 thus, we have the statue there.
18 There is a twin statue, if you didn't
19 know, also of the Talbot Boys statue in
20 Louisiana. There were two statues made. The
21 one in Louisiana was erected in 1915. This one

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1 was placed here in 1915, dedicated May of 1916.
2 I believe you said it was June, but I think it
3 was May of that next year. So there's another
4 statue similar to this one in Louisiana.
5 I know that there was a concentrated
6 effort some 50 years after the Civil War in the
7 early 1900s to go into the north and do
8 monuments of Confederate soldiers. I think in
9 Kentucky there's some 22 different monuments,
10 only two I believe are for the Union. The rest
11 are for Confederates.
12 Confederate soldiers in 1958 I believe,
13 the United States government recognized the
14 Confederate soldiers as veterans of war. So
15 there was no distinction between veteran
16 soldiers of the Confederacy and veteran
17 soldiers of the Union. They both were
18 considered by Congress to be veterans of war.
19 I do think that there's a strong
20 difference between hoisting a flag up of an
21 enemy. I never thought that any public

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1 capitol, whether it be in state or federal,
2 should ever put up a combatant's flag.
3 The history behind the flag in South
4 Carolina being placed there was after 1965 I
5 believe after President Johnson signed the
6 Civil Rights Act. Almost in defiance of that,
7 the Congress in South Carolina placed the flag
8 over top of the capitol. It was immediately
9 protested, it was immediately protested by
10 members of the community. And it was moved to
11 its current location until Governor Nikki Haley
12 courageously had it removed. And I certainly
13 salute her and appreciate her efforts in
14 getting that flag brought down. It should have
15 never been placed there to begin with.
16 So I do certainly take position that
17 Confederate flags should not be flown on any
18 governmental property.
19 The statue, I believe we need to maybe
20 look a little further into what it exactly is
21 saying about our history.

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1 Even in Annapolis, we have Justice Taney,
2 his statue up. If you know who Justice Tany
3 was, the justice who signed the Dred Scott
4 decision. And of course, we do know the
5 horrors of the Dred Scott decision and how that
6 case played out in history basically saying
7 that African Americans had no rights, they had
8 no position to be heard in court, and Mr. Scott
9 had no right to claim that he was free,
10 although he had ran away from his master and
11 was now in the state of Illinois, which was
12 free at the time.
13 But both Justice Taney and Justice
14 Thurgood Marshall, both those statues are in
15 place in Annapolis both depicting the history
16 of this country. Good, bad, and ugly, you know
17 there's a history to be told. And I know there
18 were some asking for Justice Taney statue to be
19 brought down. I believe the governor has
20 already spoken to that point that he's not
21 inclined to do that.

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1 So what -- and I do understand your
2 position, but when we're talking about the
3 history and how statues and you talk about
4 bringing your niece down, and I had my
5 granddaughter here just the other day on the
6 court house grounds looking at both statues.
7 And I wanted to get an upclose look for myself.
8 There are many people walk by that statue
9 for the last hundred years and probably never
10 notice the Talbot Boys statue at all, never
11 notice. I had to drive somebody over here last
12 week to actually show them where it was because
13 they didn't know where it was.
14 So again, the tragedy in South Carolina
15 and what that flag represented over a
16 governmental body, I don't think any reasonable
17 person, any reasonable person would say that
18 that flag should remain flying over top of a
19 governmental body.
20 Monuments to veterans, though, do they
21 have a place in society is my question to you.

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1 MR. POTTER: I think they have a place
2 when you're telling the entire story.
3 As we see that monument today, it's only
4 depicting one side of the story.
5 MR. PACK: With the Douglass statue, and
6 you know I was strong advocate for that statue,
7 myself and Delegate Jeannie Haddaway, Mayor
8 Willey. There was a combined effort, if you
9 remember, that got that statue erected here.
10 With the Douglass statue bringing your
11 niece and my granddaughter to the court house
12 grounds, would it be fair to tell both sides of
13 that story using both of those statues
14 symbolically?
15 MR. POTTER: When you look at Douglass and
16 Talbot Boys, to me that's comparing apples and
17 oranges.
18 MR. PACK: Oh, yes. I agree.
19 MR. POTTER: When we look at Douglass,
20 Douglass was an oratory, he was an educator.
21 So there's motivation there, there's

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1 perseverance there. Anybody can look at that
2 statue and glean that message from that statue.
3 Anybody can glean that positive message.
4 So monuments are supposed to inspire us
5 profoundly. Douglass does that.
6 Talbot Boys, I can't look at that. Those
7 are the same men that would have me enslaved
8 for sitting in this building today.
9 MS. PRICE: Maybe it's not telling two
10 sides of the story, but it's -- Frederick
11 Douglass is a continuance of you see where it
12 was and someone like him and where it went.
13 So not every monument necessarily is going
14 to be inspiring. Maybe some things have to
15 bring home the pain of what happened. But with
16 him right next door, you see what became and
17 how wonderful his life was and how many lives
18 that he touched.
19 So while it's maybe not two sides of the
20 same story, it is one story that has a
21 continuation, ending with a very inspiring

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1 individual.
2 MR. POTTER: I hear your point, but I
3 disagree.
4 Again, two sides of the Civil War, the
5 Union and the Confederates. I think we can all
6 agree that that statue represents the
7 Confederate side.
8 I think the documents that you have, the
9 Maryland Historical Trust, classifies that
10 monument as a Confederate monument.
11 So my question then becomes where is the
12 monument to the Union soldiers.
13 MR. PACK: Again, you know the history as
14 well I do.
15 MR. POTTER: I certainly do.
16 MR. PACK: That those voices were not
17 represented or they were --
18 MR. POTTER: But is that fair.
19 MR. PACK: Well, that's history. We're
20 just talking about history; good, bad, and
21 ugly. That's just the history of it. There

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1 were two competing voices at the time in 1913.
2 Those persons representing the Confederate side
3 for whatever reason took a vote or there were
4 more of them, whatever the case may be, you and
5 I weren't there in 1913. But we do know that
6 those voices of the Union side did not win out
7 and, therefore, there weren't statues of both
8 the Union and the Confederacy on the court
9 house grounds.
10 It would have been great if it was. And I
11 think we both would agree to have both sides
12 represented.
13 There were more Union soldiers in Talbot
14 County than there were Confederate soldiers.
15 MR. POTTER: Absolutely. And I think now
16 is the time to make the story right. I think
17 we're sitting here amongst an august body of
18 educated individuals.
19 So why wouldn't we make the story right?
20 MR. BARTLETT: I guess I'm a little more
21 perplexed than anything because I was president

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1 of the County Council when we unveiled the
2 Frederick Douglass statue. And I remember many
3 discussions and debates about the formation of
4 that statue and how it came to be. And believe
5 me, it was a difficult task to get
6 accomplished.
7 And I recall that that day that we
8 unveiled that statue was one of the most
9 remarkable historical days I believe and I
10 would argue in Talbot County history. And I
11 remember how everybody came together. Once the
12 statue was determined what it was going to be,
13 they pulled together, and in a unified and
14 beautiful mission we unveiled a significant
15 statue that everyone was proud of, even the
16 family, the slave-holding family of Frederick
17 Douglass was attending those events. A more
18 gracious and symbolic act you'll never see
19 again, somebody who could basically come
20 together.
21 I think we had a remarkable achievement

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1 and a beautiful day where the community was
2 energized, proud. And the term balance was
3 used at the time, that that statue was
4 balancing the Talbot Boys statue in many ways.
5 Not just symbolically, but even the consultant
6 who was working with the Frederick Douglass
7 Honor Society believed that the two statues
8 should relate to each other in terms of size.
9 And I would argue that that Frederick
10 Douglass statue has a much greater stature
11 because there's more bronze, it's a larger
12 figure, and the granite monument is smaller,
13 which was I think a smart thing to do by the
14 sculptor because it creates a very commanding
15 presence out on that lawn.
16 I gave a speech about the symbolic
17 connection between the Wye oak tree, which I
18 thought represented the slave-holding families,
19 the Wye Plantation. And there was this new
20 statue coming onto this green. And the
21 relationship between that tree and that statue

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1 going forward into the future, that that tree
2 would provide shade for the statue, that they
3 would be both sitting out there in the rain and
4 the sleet and the cold together.
5 In the end analysis, we all, whether you
6 are African American or not African American,
7 we all exist together in this community. And
8 my speech had to do with the future and how I
9 thought that this was a momentous occasion for
10 Talbot County, not that we would forget the
11 past. We certainly can't.
12 And in my discussions with people about
13 the Talbot Boys statue, you can see the pain
14 right on the surface. You don't have to get
15 very far into the discussion to understand the
16 aversion that some people have to the
17 Confederate flag.
18 And as Corey says, I agree with him, it
19 should never fly over a government property.
20 But even the fact that individuals choose to
21 fly that flag is offensive. And I believe we

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1 can all agree, any reasonable person can agree
2 that that flag should go away.
3 But my point is that that particular day I
4 thought Talbot County had gotten past the past
5 and that we were unveiling a new future for the
6 races in the community to work together and to
7 move forward together.
8 And what puzzles me is that maybe it just
9 wasn't as significant as I thought. The fact
10 that we're going to go back and fight the
11 Talbot Boys statue battle as if the Frederick
12 Douglass statue was never unveiled.
13 I consider that that Frederick Douglass
14 statue was the very thing that put in proper
15 perspective the Talbot Boys statue. If that
16 statue were just simply to disappear, the
17 average person who might come to visit the
18 court house may never know the tortured history
19 that this county had with respect to slavery.
20 My own ancestors were from outside of the
21 area. And they came here and they were

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1 considered heretics because they had released
2 their family slaves. In fact, of the two
3 people who voted for Abraham Lincoln, my
4 great-grandfather was one of them. You never
5 know, the ballot box is secret. That's the
6 legend in the family.
7 MR. PACK: That's the story, you're
8 sticking with it.
9 MR. BARTLETT: I mean he was hated by his
10 neighbors. And he hired people and paid them a
11 wage. The whole town of Unionville was formed
12 from him. He said I'll give everyone here land
13 as long as you help me build a church and a
14 school and everybody can live here. And they
15 have happily ever after for a lot of years.
16 And I get it, that it is a painful history
17 here in Talbot County, but I also get that I
18 thought we had resolved at least part of the
19 pain and that we could go forward.
20 I saw your interview with the Talbot Spy.
21 And it was as if everything that you said you

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1 never really talked about the Frederick
2 Douglass statue. And I'm thinking to myself
3 I'm in a parallel universe, I thought we had
4 done a lot of work. I grant you that the whole
5 process of getting a statue was very difficult
6 and very painful. But in the end analysis --
7 and it took compromise, believe me.
8 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: Exactly. And the
9 thing, Councilman Bartlett, is this: The issue
10 of the Talbot Boys statue was not brought up by
11 the African American community. That was
12 something brought up by the folks in Talbot
13 County. They were the ones who pitted the
14 statues against one another.
15 The focus, then, for the African American
16 community was to get the Frederick Douglass
17 statue, over ten years, that's how long it
18 took, erected.
19 MR. BARTLETT: Right.
20 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: So it's like apples
21 and oranges.

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1 MR. BARTLETT: But I've heard it said that
2 the Council was sizing the statue of Frederick
3 Douglass to be no larger than the other statue.
4 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: That is correct.
5 MR. BARTLETT: Right. But that wasn't our
6 idea. That was the idea of the consultants who
7 were working with the Frederick Douglass Honor
8 Society.
9 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: We have to
10 respectfully disagree with that analysis. That
11 is not correct. I don't know if that is what
12 happened at the end. But the issue of the size
13 of that statue, I think your records will
14 reflect, was initiated here, not --
15 MR. BARTLETT: The original group who was
16 going to build the statue wanted a larger
17 statue, they wanted a paved area with sign
18 boards and placards and things that would tell
19 you about the history of Frederick Douglass,
20 and it was a very large monument.
21 And I think the reality of it was we

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1 simply wanted to leave room for future things,
2 for the tree to grow, other things. They could
3 not exist together successfully --
4 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: Actually at the
5 risk --
6 MR. BARTLETT: -- and that's why we
7 switched gears from the original people who
8 were trying to get the Frederick Douglass
9 statue to the Frederick Douglass Honor Society.
10 And it was a compromise in the end.
11 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: All right. So the
12 issue here today, though, we're like mixing
13 apples and oranges. You agree at this point we
14 don't need to pit one statue against the other.
15 Philosophically we're raising a point
16 about whether that statue is properly placed
17 and if, whatever, if it depicts what actually
18 happened here.
19 What it says is that the Confederate
20 soldiers had more money. Okay. That's
21 basically what the message.

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1 MR. BARTLETT: But what puzzles me is that
2 you're suggesting we put up another monument
3 that depicts both Confederate and Union
4 soldiers on one monument.
5 If indeed the Confederate soldiers were
6 traitors, why would you erect another monument
7 to them?
8 MR. BLACK: Well, tear it down and just
9 put up the Union soldier.
10 MR. BARTLETT: But that's not your
11 recommendation.
12 MR. BLACK: Let's not dance around the
13 issue here. The issue here, the Civil War was
14 fought to maintain slavery.
15 Now, we can talk about the economics of
16 dollars and dime. We know that slavery fueled
17 the economic system of this country,
18 particularly in the south.
19 That statue is offensive. That statue
20 represents a group of persons.
21 And with all due respect, I'm a combat

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1 trained Army officer. Fortunately I never had
2 to go into combat. But I was trained to go in
3 and kill or be killed. And it was frightening
4 just to be in training, let alone going into
5 combat. So I understand the concern about
6 soldiers who died in combat. That's not what
7 we're talking about.
8 But the cause for which the Confederate
9 soldiers fought was to keep my ancestors in
10 bondage and the ancestors of a lot of folks in
11 here in bondage. And you, Mr. Bartlett, and
12 nobody else do not share that experience. And
13 it just -- it's carried over. We still see
14 signs of racism.
15 And although I don't know, because I
16 wasn't around at that time, contrary to what
17 some of my friends might think, the reason,
18 perhaps, the reason has some racist motivation
19 why that statue is up there and didn't include
20 the Union soldiers.
21 Give me one good reason why a statue would

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1 be up there depicting the Civil War and you put
2 the Confederate soldiers and not the Union
3 soldiers.
4 MS. PRICE: Maybe what you need to do is
5 have someone commission a Union soldier and
6 continue to tell both sides. But to take one
7 down and replace it with the Union side, again,
8 now you're still only telling one side of the
9 story --
10 MR. BLACK: Now, that's not what we said.
11 Our recommendation was to make it
12 inclusive of Union and Confederate soldiers.
13 And if we want to -- if we want to depict
14 history as it happened, we would have just
15 that, something that includes the Union and
16 Confederate soldiers of the Civil War.
17 Why not have a Civil War statue? That
18 would include everybody. And that should make
19 everybody happy.
20 I'm not happy, personally, I'm not happy
21 for any inclusion of the Confederacy, because

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1 what it did to me and my ancestry, it broke up
2 black families, black labor met. They married
3 each other because they did not know that they
4 were relatives.
5 My great-grandfather, Robert Gordy, was on
6 the plantation in Pittsville, Maryland.
7 Slavery. Look, why weren't other folks of
8 ethic backgrounds in slavery? Only black
9 people. Why? Because of the color of our
10 skin.
11 MR. BARTLETT: But your group recommends a
12 new statue that depicts both sides.
13 MR. BLACK: Sure.
14 MR. BARTLETT: Of the Civil War conflict.
15 MR. BLACK: That is correct.
16 MR. BARTLETT: And I don't understand
17 that.
18 MR. BLACK: I'm sorry. It shouldn't be
19 too hard for anyone to understand, sir, with
20 all due respect.
21 MR. BARTLETT: You already have a statue

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1 that depicts one side of the story --
2 MR. BLACK: No. Frederick Douglass, that
3 has nothing to do with that.
4 MR. BARTLETT: I'm not talking about
5 Frederick Douglass. I'm talking about the
6 Talbot Boys. It already represents the
7 Confederate side.
8 MR. BLACK: Would you be agreeable that we
9 put another statue reflecting the Union?
10 MR. BARTLETT: Well, I would think that
11 would be the message you would have. But what
12 I'm hearing is you want to eliminate the
13 Confederate statue and replace it with a joint
14 Union Confederate statue. And that to me I
15 don't understand that.
16 MR. BLACK: Would you be --
17 MR. BARTLETT: That's my question.
18 MR. BLACK: -- a Union monument over
19 there?
20 MR. BARTLETT: Possibly. But the
21 Confederate monument would be still there in

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1 that scenario.
2 MS. PRICE: Plus there are issues with --
3 MR. BARTLETT: And would that be
4 acceptable to the NAACP?
5 MR. PACK: That's part of their
6 recommendation point two, is a new statue
7 inclusive of Union and Confederate soldiers.
8 MS. PRICE: Why wouldn't you just --
9 MR. BARTLETT: I suppose I get that, but
10 we've already got the Confederate box checked.
11 If you have to have that represented, it's
12 already there.
13 MR. PACK: So why re-commission a whole
14 new statue is what he's saying.
15 MS. PRICE: Right. I mean because there
16 are issues with the way it's built, it's
17 fragile. Moving it, you could end up
18 destroying it. You have to find a home. Some
19 of the suggestions for where it can go, I know
20 they're not interested.
21 So I mean you have to kind of figure out

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1 first off if there would be a place for it that
2 would be appropriate. Because I don't think
3 that you should just scrap it because it is
4 part of history, whether people -- obviously
5 nobody likes it, but it needs to go somewhere.
6 But maybe the easier answer is to at least
7 have conversations of is there a spot to do its
8 opposite on the grounds and leave that one
9 there because it's history. Again, it's heavy,
10 it's hard, it's expensive to move, it's
11 fragile. I don't think it's solid.
12 MR. PACK: It's in very good shape for
13 100-year old statue.
14 MS. PRICE: Right. But it's not like this
15 solid thing.
16 One of the things that we got from Brian
17 Moore was that if you were to put bodily weight
18 on it, it could crumple it. So I mean you
19 don't want to destroy it. I mean maybe you do.
20 But what I'm saying is if people -- nobody
21 has said destroy it. Everybody has said move

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1 it some place.
2 Well, you have to, of course, figure out
3 the feasibility of that and whether or not it
4 would be still in one piece if you were to do
5 that. But maybe the conversation needs to be
6 just have a conversation about potentially
7 putting up a Union one nearby.
8 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: Well, don't you
9 think that what is being suggested is that
10 you -- we could debate this back and forth.
11 There's 50,000 alternatives.
12 Just appoint a commission to explore the
13 possibilities of what can be done, what is
14 economically feasible or what it would cost to
15 do X, Y, and Z. And then we can all revisit
16 the point.
17 But we don't have a concrete plan. We
18 thought let's do this, let's do that, or what
19 if.
20 Well, why don't you do that. Consider
21 appointing a commission to explore this entire

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1 issue, recognizing that something needs to be
2 done.
3 The Congressman Bartlett -- Congressman --
4
5 MR. BARTLETT: All in good time.
6 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: Talks about
7 conciliation. It is very true. I think
8 everybody in this room was probably present at
9 that Frederick Douglass ceremony. It was very
10 moving because it brought the community
11 together.
12 It still did not address the employment in
13 Talbot County. There are so many other visible
14 signs of disparities in this community that we
15 need not broach that.
16 MR. BARTLETT: I agree.
17 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: This is just an
18 effort, again, in terms of putting together our
19 community so as -- Judge Home actually said
20 this to me some time ago. We can't control
21 what goes in Washington but we can control what

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1 goes on in your community.
2 MR. BARTLETT: I agree.
3 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: And if we can agree
4 that we need to acknowledge in some way that an
5 injustice was done when that statue was put
6 there or whatever way you choose to frame that
7 and decide how we're going to address it,
8 that's what we're asking. We can't just, over
9 it.
10 MR. BARTLETT: My only -- I don't
11 necessarily disagree with you, but my thought
12 is that the monuments that are out there, and
13 this was the genesis of my article to the
14 paper, that it tells the story of Talbot County
15 as the good and the bad, as Corey said and as I
16 said in that article.
17 And the triumph of Frederick Douglass is a
18 wonderful story that a slave could rise to the
19 heights of fame and respect that that man rose
20 to from being -- starting out where he started
21 out. And to me, and combining with the work we

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1 did on the library, trying to create a place
2 where people could study his life, could learn
3 about him in the very county where he grew up,
4 that was the real message of Frederick
5 Douglass, was by learning, you could pull
6 yourselves up and achieve things in life.
7 And if you look at the disparities that
8 exist in our society, and we see it all every
9 day, and I agree with you they are right here,
10 in essence that message is the answer. It's
11 why we did that connection to the library. We
12 thought through those things --
13 MR. BLACK: -- connection --
14 MR. BARTLETT: This is the proper answer
15 to the past. An educated person can achieve
16 things in life, and that was the essential
17 message of Frederick Douglass.
18 MR. BLACK: With all due respect,
19 Mr. Bartlett, I was on the initial committee.
20 I was cochairman and so was Ms. Murray,
21 Mr. Chase back there or was back there,

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1 Mrs. Lowery. We were on the initial committee.
2 The initial committee was formed by the
3 Historical Society of Talbot County.
4 MR. BARTLETT: Yup.
5 MR. BLACK: Joan Hoag and I served as
6 cochairperson of that committee. That was the
7 beginning of it.
8 Now, and there were no discussion. There
9 was no agreement that Frederick Douglass statue
10 should go on the court house lawn because he
11 learned how to read. He didn't become famous
12 because he learned how to read. He became
13 famous because what he did in life.
14 Now, we do understand that the fact that
15 he learned how to read helped to facilitate his
16 monumental accomplishments to include having
17 been the first black recorder of deeds in the
18 District of Columbia. I think one, Mr. Lincoln
19 commissioned him to be the head of one of the
20 other countries.
21 MR. PACK: Ambassador to Haiti.

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1 MR. BLACK: Ambassador to Haiti.
2 MR. PACK: Publisher, ambassador to Haiti,
3 author.
4 MR. BLACK: And the court house lawn, we
5 insisted that the court house lawn was the most
6 appropriate place for Frederick Douglass statue
7 because he was the most high celebrity in this
8 country, probably next to Mr. Lincoln himself,
9 during that era. That was the reason.
10 And of course, we had those voices who
11 said well, let's put his statue in front of the
12 library. And our rebuttal was well, look,
13 Mr. Lincoln, again, didn't become famous
14 because he learned how to read, let's do the
15 right thing and put a famous man not out there
16 on the highway, not at Thompson Park. These
17 were suggestions and so forth. And we did the
18 right thing.
19 But with all due respect to Mr. Douglass,
20 Mr. Douglass's statue is not a substitute for
21 doing the right thing with regard to the Civil

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1 War with regard to recognizing the Union
2 soldiers.
3 Now, the way to do that that we have made
4 the recommendation that erection of a new
5 statue that is inclusive of the Union and
6 Confederate soldiers of the Civil War.
7 If I understood you correctly, sir, you
8 have an idea about well, let's put another
9 statue and leave the present statue. Okay.
10 Well, these are things can be talked about.
11 But the option of doing nothing is not an
12 option. That's not an option.
13 MR. BARTLETT: And that's my puzzlement
14 because I don't believe we've done nothing. I
15 was president of the County Council when we
16 unveiled a significant statue on the court
17 house grounds, and it is a national symbolic
18 statue that people come from all over the
19 country to see, to learn about Frederick
20 Douglass, and it is a major, major event and
21 was a major event when it was unveiled in 2011.

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1 It was historic.
2 And when you combine that with the history
3 here of the area of the hill and the other
4 significant historical events, the Union
5 soldiers from Unionville who fought on the
6 Union side, you have so many stories that you
7 can tell here in Talbot County that are
8 absolutely amazing and remarkable.
9 And so each one of these things, each one
10 of these pieces of the puzzle, the Union
11 soldiers in Unionville, the Talbot Boys statue,
12 the Frederick Douglass statue, the Hill, all
13 woven together is the story of a remarkable
14 time period, painful as it was for many people
15 and painful as it still is for many people.
16 But eliminating statues, and this was not
17 my most important point, but eliminating
18 statues doesn't change the history. It doesn't
19 change the history that we all went through.
20 And so I think these monuments actually help
21 tell the story.

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1 MS. POTTER: We keep talking about
2 Mr. Douglass. It's far from the issue.
3 I think -- and I hear you saying you gave
4 us Frederick Douglass, maybe we should be
5 satisfied.
6 MR. BARTLETT: I didn't give you Frederick
7 Douglass.
8 MS. POTTER: -- to move on because that is
9 not the history that we're here to discuss
10 today.
11 We're here to talk about the Talbot Boys
12 statue, not Mr. Douglass. We just need to move
13 on from that.
14 And really, it disturbs me, Dirck, to hear
15 you say some of these things.
16 MR. POTTER: I think you don't understand
17 that, is because your perception is I gave you
18 Frederick Douglass.
19 MR. BARTLETT: I never said that.
20 MR. POTTER: Well, the inference that
21 you're suggesting is what is coming out.

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1 MR. BARTLETT: I said it was a
2 collaborative effort that clearly took ten
3 years and was a major accomplishment. It was
4 the most significant event in Talbot County
5 history.
6 MR. PACK: Richard, let me --
7 MR. BARTLETT: -- I said. Now, I don't
8 know how you put me in the category of I gave
9 you X. I didn't.
10 MR. POTTER: It's the (inaudible) messages
11 that you're putting out there.
12 MR. BARTLETT: Okay.
13 MR. PACK: Let me go to your second point
14 in your recommendation. I think there's
15 probably more common ground with that, a
16 commission or group that would discuss the
17 possibility of erecting a new statue for both
18 Union and Confederate.
19 Again, as you and I both stated, the
20 history back in 1913, that was what a group
21 wanted, they wanted both the Union and

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1 Confederate.
2 MR. POTTER: Absolutely.
3 MR. PACK: Recognized on the court house
4 grounds.
5 So perhaps that's a starting point.
6 As I think Dirck alluded to, if you
7 already have a Confederate statue up there, why
8 go through the cost of removing it, it's
9 already there.
10 The second step would be, of your point,
11 would be to look at a statue recognizing those
12 Union soldiers.
13 As Mr. Black pointed out, Mr. Douglass had
14 a lot of great attributes. He wasn't a
15 soldier, though. He fought a different fight,
16 but he didn't put on a uniform and fight as a
17 soldier.
18 There are many other people in an
19 abolitionist cause. William Lloyd Garrison,
20 who a lot of people forget about, and I'm sorry
21 to say a lot of American Americans don't even

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1 know the history of William Lloyd Garrison and
2 what he did to further the fight against
3 slavery and the fight of abolitionists around
4 this country. And if it had not been for
5 William Lloyd Garrison, you may not have had
6 Douglass rise to the heights that he rose to.
7 Garrison was a publisher and so was
8 Douglass. Garrison was an abolitionist and
9 Douglass treated Garrison as a mentor, if you
10 go back and look at the history of it.
11 So I agree with Mr. Black, Mr. Douglass's
12 role was different than the soldier's role. So
13 perhaps that's a starting point of this
14 discussion that took place in 1913 that we can
15 pick it up now in 1915 and see if there's --
16 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: 2015.
17 MR. PACK: What did I say? 2015 and 2016
18 and see if there's a way to do this.
19 So let's start with that discussion. As
20 you said before, we can bat this thing back and
21 forth. Mr. Douglass has his place in history.

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1 It's cemented. No one can argue that point
2 what he's done.
3 In recognizing Union soldiers, those 334,
4 I believe from my notes, 34 Union soldiers that
5 fought bravely here in Talbot County. Perhaps
6 it's time to do that as a governmental body and
7 publicly recognize them.
8 So we can start the discussion from that
9 point and move it forward if that's agreeable
10 to you.
11 MR. POTTER: Yes.
12 MR. PACK: And to your group. Not asking
13 for a decision tonight.
14 MS. ASPARAGUS-MURRAY: We are not.
15 MR. PACK: We're not making any decision
16 tonight. We just wanted to get things moving
17 down a course of action.
18 I will say, I'm looking over your
19 shoulder, Richard, and I see Bishop Joe behind
20 you. And I will say that he met with me along
21 with Rabbi Hyman and we're trying to put

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1 together a community work session, if you
2 would, around this topic and other topics
3 dealing with race and relationships. So I
4 wanted to note that (inaudible) was taking a
5 role also in furthering this discussion. I'm
6 glad to see that the bishop is here with us.
7 And I understand Rabbi Hyman is out of
8 the country, Bishop. He's out of the country
9 at this time or else he would be here as well.
10 MS. POTTER: Excuse me. Inside your
11 packet there's a letter of support for the
12 NAACP from Rabbi Hyman.
13 MR. PACK: From Rabbi Hyman?
14 MS. POTTER: Yes.
15 MR. PACK: He met with me and Bishop Joel
16 about three weeks.
17 SPEAKER: Yes.
18 MR. PACK: We sat down and met. So we're
19 trying to get another larger work session, if
20 you would, at this point where the whole public
21 can come and take part in it. So it wasn't

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1 just between Council and NAACP, but for the
2 public at large. So I want to recognize he and
3 the bishop and the rabbi for their role that
4 they're taking in putting that together. And
5 more will be coming about once we get a firm
6 date.
7 Bishop, I believe we were looking at
8 sometime in September?
9 SPEAKER: I don't have my schedule. I
10 think it's September 9th that we've spoken of.
11 I will also be addressing the Council in
12 September regarding the conversation on race,
13 which (inaudible) has been planning since
14 December.
15 MR. PACK: Thank you. We look forward to
16 that as well.
17 SPEAKER: Sure.
18 MR. PACK: So if there's no further
19 comment, we do have a second work session. I
20 see they're assembling in the hallway.
21 Richard, I give you the floor for the

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1 closing comments, sir.
2 MR. POTTER: Just let me thank you all for
3 your willingness to hear our side today. I do
4 appreciate that. And we're very generous of
5 that as well. So thank you.
6 MR. BLACK: Thank you.
7 MR. PACK: Thank you very much.
8 (Meeting concluded at: 4:55 p.m.)
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1 STATE OF MARYLAND
2 I, Diane Houlihan, a Notary Public in and
3 for the State of Maryland, County of Anne Arundel,
4 do hereby certify that the within named, Talbot
5 County Council Audio, personally appeared before me
6 at the time and place herein set according to law,
7 was interrogated by counsel.

8 I further certify that the examination was
9 recorded stenographically by me and then transcribed
10 from my stenographic notes to the within printed
11 matter by means of computer-assisted transcription
12 in a true and accurate manner.

13 I further certify that the stipulations
14 contained herein were entered into by counsel in my
15 presence.

16 I further certify that I am not of counsel
17 to any of the parties, not an employee of counsel,
18 nor related to any of the parties, nor in any way
19 interested in the outcome of this action.

20 AS WITNESS my hand Notarial Seal this 3rd
21 day of August 2015, at Easton, MD.



A handwritten signature of Diane Houlihan in cursive script.

Diane Houlihan
Notary Public

My commission expires September 16, 2017

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