

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
March 5, 2019**

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, William Coutz, Al Miller, George Patchell and Jackie Gregory; James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant; members of the press; and members of the public.

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

9:00 A.M. –Council President Meffley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and determined a quorum.

NOTE: Audio and video recording with transcription of this meeting are available on the County website www.ccgov.org.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of February 26, 2019, as presented. Motion was approved unanimously.

General Fund Balance Policy

Lisa Saxton, Finance Director, introduced Joe Mason, Senior Vice President, and Jennifer Dierksen, First Vice President of Davenport & Company LLC.

Ms. Saxton stated that the County Executive is proposing to enhance the general fund balance policy through Resolution No. 17-2019. She stated that the legislation proposes to increase the emergency reserve fund from 7.5% to 10% of actual General Fund revenues, establish a budget stabilization reserve of 1% of actual General Fund revenues, and maintaining a Total Available Reserve; including emergency reserve, budget stabilization, and unassigned General Fund balance; of no less than two months of actual General Fund revenue for the then current year.

Ms. Dierksen stated that fund balance is important to indicate the financial resiliency of the County, which is most important to bond rating agencies. She stated that approval of this fund balance policy will bring Cecil County closer in competition with other counties.

Mr. Mason stated that the visiting bond rating agencies were impressed with the growth in Cecil County but commented that the 7.5% balance was low. They indicated that increasing the fund balance could result in a lower bond interest rate.

Council questions and comments ensued. Ms. Dierksen stated that a two year payback on bonds was standard. She also indicated that they will be going to the bond market later this year.

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy

Jim Bass, Coastal Resilience Specialist with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, provided an overview of the eastern shore's climate adaptation partnership and climate projections. He stated

that scientists predict that by 2050, the sea level will rise by 1.5-2 feet, temperatures will increase by 4-8 degrees and precipitation will increase by 10-20%. He stated that the ESLC had worked on preparations for sea level rises and nuisance flood plans. In 2019, he said that ESLC will be working on extreme precipitation events and showed maps of Charlestown and Locust Point, which will be affected by sea level rises. He is requesting the county's support for ESLC, formalizing regional collaboration, and participating in ESCAP activities. Council questions and comments ensued.

State Legislation Update

Mr. Massey provided an update of the current status of state legislation that the Council had taken a position. Vice President Gregory reviewed legislation that MACo had asked counties to take a position.

After discussion, the Council agreed to support HB 1020/SB 713 (counties to oversee 5G small cells in each jurisdiction; HB 976 Minimum wage to be established by each county; HB 921 Require MDE to set requirements for Water Quality Certificate for Exelon at Conowingo Dam; HB 672/SB 810 provides grants to house homeless veterans and survivors of domestic violence; HB 512 requires same gross space in school for learners of English as students with disabilities; SB 653 authorizes schools to establish innovative regional schools, HB 25/ SB 195 requires Prescription Drug Monitoring program to review data for misuse with dispensers; HB 397/SB 339 supports enhanced Next Generation 911; and HB 1102 provides mechanism for MHIC to suspend contractor license for non-payment to subcontractor. The Council agreed to oppose the following legislation; HB 654/SB 937 to allow industry to establish 5G small cell regulations; HB 792 to establish state standards for electrician license; HB 905 to establish state standards for low voltage electrician license; HB 766 to establish collective bargaining for community college employees; HB 1165/ SB 718 to prohibit government agents from requesting immigration or citizenship status; HB 479/ SB 424 requires non-certificated public school employees to be paid a minimum wage rate; and SB 363/ HB 565 requires all voters to use a ballot marking device.

Dr. Carl Roberts, Government Relations Committee Chair, stated that the HB 166 regarding raising the minimum wage continues to be considered by the legislature. The Senate and House are working out details for a compromise on this legislation.

Review of Legislative Agenda

A public hearing on Bill No. 2019-02 Approval- Agricultural Preservation District – Leon King, is scheduled for tonight's session. Steve O'Connor, Zoning Administrator, provided comments on the legislation. There were no Council questions or comments.

Council President Meffley stated that the public hearing on Bill No. Resolution No. 12-2019 Approval - Master Water and Sewer Plan 2018 has been postponed from March 5, 2019 to March 19, 2019 at 7pm because public notice had not been published.

Al Wein, Director of Administration, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 16-2019 2020 Cecil County Strategic Plan, which will be introduced at tonight's session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Al Wein, Director of Administration, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 17-2019 General Fund Balance Policy, which will be introduced at tonight's session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Rebecca Anderson, Budget Manager, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 18-2019 Budget Transfer and Appropriation – Road Maintenance- Snow Removal, which will be introduced at tonight's session. Ms. Anderson stated that if the funding is not used for snow removal, it can be used for road resurfacing. There were no Council questions or comments.

Al Wein, Director of Administration, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 19-2019 Road Abandonment – Portion of Nazarene Camp Road, Cecil County, which will be introduced at tonight's session. Eric Sennstrom, Director of Land Use and Development Services, provided further details and displayed a map of the area. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 14-2019 Appointment—Weed Control Advisory Board, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. There were no comments from the administration, and no questions or comments from Council Members.

Resolution No. 15-2019 Reappointment—Board of Parks and Recreation—Bernard Brown, III, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. There were no comments from the administration, and no questions or comments from Council Members.

Bill No. 2019-01 Budget Transfer – Capital Budget – Board of Education – Various School Capital Projects, will be considered for final approval at tonight's session. There were no comments from the administration, and no questions or comments from Council Members.

Under new business, Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #59 will be considered for approval at tonight's session.

Council Manager Report

Mr. Massey updated Council Members about upcoming meetings and events.

Council Member Items

Councilman Patchell will save his comments for tonight's session.

Councilman Miller attended the Farm Bureau meeting and commented on the ongoing situation between the Horst poultry CAFOs and Calvert Alliance. He will be attending the Farm Bureau banquet on March 16.

Councilman Coutz attended the District 36 reception in Annapolis. He participated in Principal for the Day at Elkton High School and commented that he was impressed on the school's operations. He attended the Cecil County 4-H Achievement Night and commented on the program that give youth so many positive activities.

Vice President Gregory attended the Ice Splash, sponsored by the Sons of the American Legion, and participated on Team Pine Grove to raise funds for the Boys and Girls Club. She attended memorial services for Mary Jo Jablonski and commented on her tremendous service to the community.

Council President Meffley commented on the many contributions of Mary Jo Jablonski to Elkton and the Cecil County community at large. He attended the District 36 reception in Annapolis. He thanked Jim Massey for taking his turn with Reading across America program at Holly Hall Elementary School. He attended the Farm Bureau meeting and expressed his appreciation for Councilman Miller's knowledge of the farming.

Adjournment

Councilman Coutz moved for adjournment, which was seconded by Vice president Gregory. Council President Meffley adjourned the meeting at 10:16 am.

Council President Meffley announced that the next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 9 am. (Note: Council work session of March 12 was cancelled)

Attest:


James Massey
Council Manager

Approved:


Robert Meffley,
Council President