

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES**

August 5, 2025

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

4:30 P.M.

NOTE: The recording and transcription of this meeting are available on the County website at www.ccgov.org/council.

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, Rebecca Hamilton, Al Miller, Donna Culberson and Dawn Branch; L. Michelle Henson, Council Manager; Christine Palmer, Council Assistant, members of County Administration and members of the public.

Call to Order

President Miller called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm and announced that there were five Council Members present which constitute a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilwoman Branch, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Work Session of July 15, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Legislative Agenda

a. Public Hearing

1. Bill No. 2025-08 – Bond Authorization – General Obligation Project Bonds

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted that Bill No. 2025-08, which was introduced on July 1, 2025, provides the authority to borrow funds for Capital Improvement Projects.

Director of Finance Raymond Hamm noted that the County's current bond ratings are AA1 (Moody's) and AA+ (S&P). He stated that the bonds associated with Bill No. 2025-08 will be marketed in the fall of 2025 with guidance from the County's financial advisor, Davenport Financial, the County's bond counsel, McGuire Woods.

Director Hamm stated the County currently has \$208 million in General Obligation Bonds prior to the planned issuance of \$53 million pursuant to Bill No. 2025-08, resulting in a total of \$23 million in annual debt service.

Director Hamm stated Bill No. 2025-08 will be presented for Council's consideration on August 19th; followed by drafting of legal documents in September; and presentation of the tax-exempt bonds on October 31st for sale on November 19th.

Director Hamm notified Council of plans to reactivate the Capital Improvement Plan Advisory Committee to monitor status of Capital Improvement Projects and associated funding.

b. Introduction of Bills

1. Bill No. 2025-09 – Amendment – Cecil County Code Chapter A385 – Purchase of Development Rights Program and Fund

Director Schneckenburger stated Bill No. 2025-09 is the sum of internal discussions regarding preservation of farmland that could be impacted by State-supported installation of solar arrays.

Director of Land Use and Development Services (LUDS) Stephen O'Connor provided an overview of the County's Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program in addition to a review of the Renewable Energy Certainty Act (RECA) and its impacts on local zoning authority regarding placement of solar arrays. A copy of Director O'Connor's presentation was placed in the record of the minutes.

Director O'Connor stated Bill No. 2025-09 established the requirement of developers of solar arrays to pay Fees in Lieu to the County's PDR program fund when a proposed site is located within defined preservation areas. He added the proposed fee is based upon the top 25th percentile of the appraisals completed by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF).

Councilwoman Hamilton queried the difference between designated Open Space and Agriculture Preservation Areas.

Director O'Connor stated that designated areas such as Open Space are typically identified during the planning stage of development.

Director O'Connor advised Council that the Public Service Commission (PSC) is empowered to regulate utility facilities via the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity Permit (CPCN) process. He stated the County previously had 90 days to comment on a CPCN application, noting the window was now reduced to 30 days, adding that the PSC now has regulatory authority over smaller arrays while local zoning authority has been reduced.

GIS Manager David Black presented an overview of current and proposed solar array installations and areas of Delmarva Power circuits that are restricted and cannot accept additional power, such as residential, roof-top arrays.

President Miller expressed concerns regarding impact of solar array placement on Class 1 soils.

Councilwoman Culberson questioned if data exists regarding long-term impacts of solar arrays on soils and groundwater, and asked if there are potential issues associated with restoration upon removal of the arrays.

Discussion ensued regarding height limitations on solar arrays, placement of arrays on large roofs such as the Amazon and Ikea facilities, and placement on agricultural land with active animal populations.

Discussion continued regarding buffer yard requirements.

Director Schneckenburger, using an example of a 5mw array on a 30-acre parcel which was appraised at \$10,000 per acre, stated Bill No. 2025-09 would require a Payment in Lieu fee of \$300,000 which would be placed in the PDR program.

c. Introduction of Resolutions

1. Resolution No. 49-2025 – Appointment – Board of Appeals – Mark Saunders, Donald Harmer, Jr., Norman Anderson and Jennifer Callaghan

Director Schneckenburger stated Resolution No. 49-2025 provides for the reappointments of Mark Saunders and Norman Anderson and appointments of Donald Harmer and Jennifer Callaghan to the Board of Appeals.

d. Consideration of Resolutions

1. Resolution No. 48-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Sheriff's Office – Warrant Apprehension

Director Schneckenburger stated Resolution No. 48-2025 recognizes grant funds for the Sheriff's Office for overtime and fringe benefits.

e. New Business

1. Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #137

President Miller advised Council that the Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) Budget Amendment #137 has been rescheduled to the August 19th Work Session, at which time CCPS Administration will also provide an update regarding CCPS Small Capital Investment Projects.

On a motion made by Councilwoman Hamilton and seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, the Council moved to approve amendment of the August 5, 2025 Work Session agenda to recognize the removal and rescheduling of Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #137.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Henson stated the Council Manager Report was included in the meeting packet.

Council Member Items

Council deferred Council Member Items to the Legislative Session at 7:00 p.m.

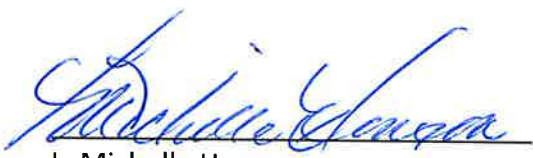
Adjournment

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to adjourn the Work Session meeting, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch. President Miller adjourned the work session at 5:46 p.m.

The next County Council Work Session will be held on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 4:30 pm in the Elk Room of the County Administrative Building. The session will be livestreamed on the County Council's webpage at www.ccgov.org/council.

Approved:


Al Miller, Council President


L. Michelle Henson
Council Manager