

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
June 1, 2021

The County Council of Cecil County met in work session in an online virtual meeting because of the current health crisis and based on the Governor's orders to avoid public meetings. Council Members and presenters participated in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building while the public observed the meeting by connecting online at www.ccgov.org/council and selecting "livestream".

The following members of the Council were present:

Robert Meffley, Council President
Jackie Gregory, Vice President
William H. Coutz, Council Member
Al Miller, Council Member
George Patchell, Council Member

NOTE: The video and audio recording with transcription of this meeting is available on the County website at www.ccgov.org.

Call to Order

The meeting of the County Council of Cecil County of June 1, 2021 was called to order by Council President Meffley at 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call of Council Members

Council President Meffley asked for a roll call of attending Council Members. The Council Manager called the roll and recorded the following Council Members in attendance:

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Present, Miller-Present, Patchell- Present, Gregory-Present, Meffley-Present.

Council President Meffley announced that there were five Council Members present at the time of roll call, which constitute a quorum.

Suspension of Rules

Councilman Coutz made a motion to suspend the rules to allow Council Members to meet together in the Elk Room with presenters that were prescheduled; and provide the public with access to observe the Council's public business by livestreaming the meetings because of the current health crisis and the Governor's order to avoid public meetings. The motion was seconded by Vice President Gregory.

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y

The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

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 May 25, 2021, as presented. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

On a motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council closed session of May 25, 2021, as presented.

Roll Call Vote:

Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y.

The motion was approved unanimously.

FY 2022 Budget Deliberation

Council President Meffley asked Council Members if they have new budget amendments. There were no additional amendments suggested.

The Council discussed Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2021-06 regarding the consultant under the Director of Administration. Lawrence Scott, County Attorney, explained that this position was being considered as a dual role of handling constituent issues and government relations. Council discussion ensued. Councilman Miller was concerned that this position should be someone with familiarity of Cecil County. Vice President Gregory stated that she felt that this position was not needed and suggested a software program could manage constituent services. She also stated that our delegation has been effective at communicating with the County. Councilman Patchell stated the importance of timely responses to constituent comments.

The Council discussed Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2021-05, regarding the relocation of toll booth on I-95. Mr. Scott stated that this effort has been supported by Congressman Harris and Jim Ports from the Department of Transportation. Council discussion ensued. Councilman Miller voiced concern that there is no documentation of the State's willingness to fund the project. Vice President Gregory stated that this would be a one-time opportunity to move the tolls. Councilman Coutz expressed concern that the project is speculative. Councilman Patchell stated that this may be the only opportunity that the County has to be successful in moving the toll plaza.

Review of Legislative Agenda

There are three public hearings regarding bond sales and refinancing, including Bill No. 2021-07 Bond Authorization – General Obligation Bonds; Bill No. 2021-08 Bond Authorization- General Obligation Refunding Bonds; and Resolution No. 25-2021 Authorization – Refunding of Bonds of 2021. Lawrence Scott, County Attorney, commented on two amendments to change the date of the sunset clause to June 30, 2022; and to provide a report to the Council of the bond transactions within 60 days. The Bond Counsel also added language that specified that the Council's review of the bond sales would have no effect on the transactions. Mr. Scott stated that any savings of refinancing bonds would come back through the legislative process for Council approval. Vice President Gregory suggested that the administration could provide the bond sale figures to Council at the following scheduled work session. Councilman Coutz stated that the Council should review the bond bids prior to their final sale. Council President Meffley requested that the Council should

be given a list of current bonds that will be considered for refinancing prior to the sale. Councilman Miller was disappointed with the administration's language in the amendments.

There are three public hearings regarding the use of school construction funds leftover from completed projects to be transferred to the new North East Middle School capital project, including Bill No. 2021-09 Transfer of Appropriations-Board of Education Capital Budget- FY 2022 to FY 2021; Bill No. 2021-10 Transfer of Appropriations-Board of Education Capital Budget- North East Middle School; and Bill No. 2021-11 Transfer of Appropriations-Board of Education Capital Budget-Chesapeake City Elementary School. James Appel, Finance Director, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 29-2021 Appointment—Property Tax Assessment Appeal Board- Dale K. DeWeese, will be introduced at tonight's session. Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 27-2021 Appointment- Department of Social Services Board-Robert F. McKnight, Sr., will be considered for approval at tonight's session. There were no administration comments. Council President Meffley commented on Mayor McKnight's significant contributions to Cecil County community.

Resolution No. 28-2021 Supplemental Appropriation- Grant Funds-Rental Assistance, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Dave Trolio, Community Services Director, provided comments. Vice President Gregory expressed her concern that landlords should be made aware of this program.

Bill No. 2021-04 Lease and Purchase – Vehicles and Equipment, will be considered for final approval at tonight's session. James Appel, Finance Director, provided comments. Council President Meffley clarified that the vehicle replacement policy is dependent on the mileage, age, and degree of wear of the vehicle.

Bill No. 2021-05 Capital Improvement Program – FY 2022-2026, will be considered for final approval at tonight's session. Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2021-05, regarding the relocation of the toll booth on I-95, was reviewed. Lawrence Scott, County Attorney, provided comments. Councilman Coutz clarified that a traffic study is included in a NEPA study.

Bill No. 2021-06 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance – FY 2022, will be considered for final approval at tonight's session. Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2021-06, regarding the consultant under the Director of Administration, was reviewed. James Appel, Finance Director, provided comments.

Resolution No. 23-2021 Adoption of Real Property and Personal Property Tax – FY 2022, will be considered for final approval at tonight's session. Mr. Appel stated that the tax rate will be reduced.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Massey announced that mobile vaccination clinics will be held throughout the county this week. He also stated that Cecil County Government received grant funds to support nonprofit organizations affected by COVID.

Council Member Items

Council Members agreed to hold their comments in order to continue with the agenda items.

Adjournment

Councilman Coutz moved to adjourn the work session, which was seconded by Vice President Gregory. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 5:41 pm.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 4:30 pm as a virtual meeting because of the current health crisis. The session will be livestreamed on the County Council's webpage. Members of the public who do not have broadband access should contact the Council Office for instructions to be connected via telephone. Limited seating will be available on a first come basis. Attendees must wear masks and observe social distancing.

Council President Meffley announced that the Elk Room will be open for Council sessions beginning on June 15, 2021. Council sessions will continue to be livestreamed for the public in real time as well as video recorded and uploaded to the Council webpage.


James Massey
Council Manager

Approved:


Robert Meffley, Council President