

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

October 24, 2023

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: Rebecca Hamilton, Al Miller, Jackie Gregory, Donna Culberson; David Culver, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant, members of the administration and members of the public.

Call to Order

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

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of October 17, 2023, as presented. The motion passed 4 to 0.

Presentation

a. Maryland Environmental Service

Dr. Charles Glass and Bill Venezky from Maryland Environmental Service gave an update of the Conowingo Dam dredging pilot project. They noted that the project was a multi-year program to perform an analysis on the dredged material from the Conowingo Dam to determine the level of pollution in the material and if the material has any commercial value. The material that was dredged showed little contamination and was within the guidelines from the Maryland Department of the Environment for metals and chemicals. In total 950 cubic yards of dredge material was removed in late 2020 and analyzed in October of 2021. The dredge material was taken to a local sand and gravel operation and was determined to have good value for use in concrete and asphalt production, fair value for fill, soil and other land applications and poor quality for use in bricks and pavers. The key findings were released in October 2022 and determined that the dredge material had potential for revenue generation and use in several areas. The findings also noted hesitation for use by MDOT and other agencies at this time because the material could not be guaranteed. MES noted that the next steps were to continue to evaluate the material with MDE, EPA and ACOE for use and if the material would qualify for TMDL credits and how much material would need to be removed to improve water quality.

Councilman Miller inquired what options may exist for the dredging, including use at Aberdeen Proving Grounds for bulkhead protection. Dr. Glass noted that MDE would oversee any future uses and MES was limited to the dredging pilot program. He also noted millions of yards of material are located behind the Conowingo Dam. Dr. Glass reviewed the TMDL and TDL credits for water quality. Councilman Miller also inquired if dredging is the preferred option and Dr. Glass noted it

may be, but still needs to be evaluated further for water quality issues. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired as to the arsenic levels being lower than typically found in this area and is that a positive sign and Dr. Glass noted that the low levels of arsenic and other metals and pollutants is good for reuse options of the dredge material. Councilman Miller opined that the materials have been building since the dam was built and needs to be remediated. President Gregory inquired as to the TMDL limits and the credits that could be achieved in using the dredge materials and Dr. Glass reviewed the credits and the scientific debate on what value to assign the dredge material. President Gregory also inquired as to the timing for the credit study to be done, permitting time for dredging and commercial interest for the material and Dr. Glass opined the MDE will determine the TMDL credits and timing of dredging if that becomes the preferred option. Dr. Glass also reviewed the use of the 950 cubic yards that were dredged at a local sod farm and how well plants grow in this material. Councilwoman Culberson discussed the issues with the policy decisions on dredging and Dr. Glass noted that MDE is the policy making and decision body for this issue. President Gregory also inquired as to the federal role in the projects and Dr. Glass noted the MDE is the lead, but the Federal Energy Commission also will review since it may affect the hydroelectric plant.

Councilman Miller also requested an update from MES on the various farm projects that utilize the waste material from the farm animals for energy. Dr. Glass noted several projects for the waste to energy program with the Department of Agriculture and the projects that MES have supervised. Councilman Miller also inquired about these programs at the landfills that currently burn the methane gas that is created and Dr. Glass reviewed the Mid Shore program that is reusing the methane gas this as well as the equipment that can run off of methane or natural gas.

b. Monthly Review of County Contracts

Director of Finance Shon McCollum noted that for September we had two contracts that exceeded the \$100,000 threshold, the first was for the Sheriff's Office for tactical gear, ammunition and uniforms and the second was for two skid steers for public works. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if the uniform contract was monthly or for the year and Director McCollum noted it was for the year. Councilwoman Culberson inquired if the skid steers were replacements for existing equipment or additional equipment needed for the operation and Director McCollum noted they were replacing existing units. Councilman Miller inquired as to the timing of the annual audit and Director McCollum noted it was nearing completion.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Culver noted the updated Council Manager report is in the packet. He noted that numerous event invitations are being received and please respond as soon as possible so we can respond on attendance. He reminded the Council of the MDOT annual visit on October 31. He also noted the MACo winter conference information has been sent and Upper Shore is also scheduling a meeting at the MACo conference.

Council Member Items

Councilwoman Hamilton noted she attended the Fellowship of Christian Athletes annual Field of Faith rally on October 18 at Elkton High School. She also attended the MACo symposium on the cannabis legislation in Maryland on October 19 as well as the dinner with the MACo president that same evening.

Councilman Miller noted that he attended the dinner with the MACo president and thanked all the people who contributed to the welcome basket for the president. He also attended the apple butter making festival at the farm museum and at the Elk Mills site. He also attended the Maryland 5 Star event and noted it was well organized and attended.

Councilwoman Culberson noted she also attended the Maryland 5 Star event and that it brings in many visitors to Cecil County. She also noted that Calvert Regional Park hosted a field hockey tournament at the same time that also brought in many visitors. She also attended the dinner with the MACo president. She also reviewed the intel numbers for the past week.

President Gregory noted she also attended the Maryland 5 Star and the number of visitors it brings, but encouraged our residents to also attend since it is a great event with a lot of local vendors and activities. She also noted she attended the dinner with the MACo president. She also noted that many Halloween events are taking place this weekend including the Charlestown parade on October 27, the Trunk or Treat event at Elkton High on October 28 and the Rising Sun Spooktacular on October 29.

President Gregory announced that no further items are on the October 24, 2023 Work Session agenda.

Adjournment

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilman Miller. Council President Gregory adjourned the work session at 5:18 pm.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, at 4:30 pm in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building. The session will also be livestreamed on the County Council's webpage at www.ccgov.org/council.

Approved:


Jackie Gregory, Council President


David M. Culver
Council Manager