

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

November 28, 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: Robert Meffley, Rebecca Hamilton, Al Miller, Donna Culberson, and Jackie Gregory; David Culver, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant, members of the administration and members of the public.

Call to Order

Council President Gregory 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 Hamilton, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of November 21, 2023, as presented. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Presentations

a. Christiana Care

Sarah Stowens, Manager, State Policy and Advocacy for Christina Care noted the leadership of Christiania Care for the Union Hospital campus including Amy Marston, Campus Executive Director and Joan Pirrung, Chief Nursing Officer. She also noted the new CMO will be Dr. Arsalan Shiekh and he will start in March. She noted that Christiania Care is focused on three campus updates that include physical improvements, enhanced programs and growing state relationships. This will be accomplished by using six goals during a five-year period and will include strengthening the core, end health care disparities, radically simple access to health care, accelerate growth and transformation, enable every caregiver to thrive and keep people healthy at home. For the physical improvements, Ms. Stowens noted the emergency department will add additional psychiatry beds and the campus is opening a new maternity unit in December. For the programs she noted peer support programs, Camp Scrubs for youth interested in the medical profession, Dispensary of Hope, Humana contract termination, Shepard Pratt strategic plan and partnership and the expansion of the Roundtrip program to get patients to doctors' visits.

President Gregory inquired how Camp Scrubs is being advertised with the students and Ms. Stowens noted that this program is a two-week camp for middle school age students, and they work with the schools and local organizations. President Gregory also inquired on the termination of the Humana contract and how this effects Medicare programs in Cecil County and Ms. Stowens noted that Christiania Care and Humana were unable to reach an agreement on the payment of certain procedures but noted other options are available for Medicare recipients that would like supplemental insurance. Councilwoman Culberson inquired if the Dispensary of Hope was available for walk in patients and Ms. Stowens noted that is not currently for walk in patients and that this program is for people who cannot afford medication or need reduce rates. She noted that

Christiana Care will assist them to make sure they leave the campus with the needed medication or will be able to get the medication at home.

Ms. Stowens also reviewed the state partnerships they are establishing in Maryland and they will work to strengthen and support the workforce, improve access to care and try to get the health system to be sustainable. She also noted Christiania Care is now a voting member on the legislative strategy group in Maryland and is working on HSCRC revenue reform for Maryland. Councilwoman Culberson noted several deficiencies in the current local health care system including the lack of primary care doctors, mental health issues and treatment and gynecology services. She also inquired as to the hospital at home program and how that would function. Ms. Stowens noted the Christiana Care is working on the deficiencies Councilwoman Culberson outlined. She also noted the hospital at home program is currently only available in Delaware, but they are working to bring that program to Maryland once they are able to meet the regulatory requirements. Councilwoman Culberson also asked about the Sheppard Pratt partnership and if they do admittance and Ms. Stowens noted it is only for consultation at this point in time. Councilwoman Culberson noted that she is glad to see Christiana Care partnering with organizations such as Voices of Hope and Ms. Stowens noted they will continue to grow these partnerships in Cecil County. Vice President Meffley inquired what other plans are available for supplemental Medicare insurance in this area if Humana is no longer available and Ms. Stowens noted she would get the exact information but companies like Alterwood, Aetna, Cigna, United Healthcare, and others do offer this insurance. President Gregory thanked Ms. Stowens for the update and requested that Christina Care keep them up to date on changes at the campus. Councilman Miller excused himself from the Work Session at 5:15 in order to attend another meeting.

b. Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

Brigitte Carty, Executive Director of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway (LSHG) noted that they, along with Christiana Care, support a healthy lifestyle that includes utilization of the many trails available in this area. She noted that the LSHG began in 1992, became a nonprofit in 1997 and in 2000 became a State Certified Heritage Area. She noted the Greenway currently consists of a 38-mile loop in Cecil and Harford County and they continue to look for linkages into other trail systems. She noted that greenways have a tremendous economic impact on the area and bring in tourist and creates business opportunities. She also noted that Maryland currently has 12 other heritage areas. She noted that they also work on the scenic byways programs and will assist other groups with grants and trail development. Director Carty noted that the majority of the LSHG funding does come from the State but they are always seeking new funding sources and grants. She noted they are currently working on several projects including the Octorara Trail, projects at the former Tome School site, Rogers Tavern and numerus trail upgrades. Director Carty noted that they are in the process of opening a new trail loop through Perry Point and the Perryville Community Park and working with Port Deposit on Marina Park upgrades. She also noted they are working on the two possible Susquehanna River crossings for bikes and pedestrians in Perryville, in cooperation with the Amtrack Bridge replacement projects, and Port Deposit. She also noted that this crossing would allow easier access to 9 major trail systems and 4 national trail routes. She also noted the LSHG stewardship programs, land preservation, conservation efforts and annual cleanup days for the Susquehanna River and along the trails. Finally, she reminded the Council of the quarterly meetings and encouraged everyone to attend for the roundtable discussions. Councilwoman Culberson inquired on the bike usage on the Hatem Bridge and Director Carty noted she would check with MDOT on the usage. Vice President Meffley inquired on the possibility of the

heritage area to be expanded to the Elk and Bohemia River and Director Carty hoped this could be done in the future and LSHG would assist in this effort.

c. Monthly Review of County Contracts

Tony Prattico, Deputy Director of Finance and Budget Manager reviewed the contracts over \$100,000 for the month of October. He noted that they had 6 contracts over this amount for October, with 5 of them for Public Works and 1 for Emergency Services. He noted the emergency service contract is for the service and maintenance of the ambulance and equipment. He noted the Public Works contracts were for asphalt overlay of roads and parking lots, bridge repairs, equipment purchases and stormwater projects. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if the Ecotone contract at Elk Neck was the total project cost or just for the design of the stormwater facilities and Deputy Director Prattico noted it was a design/build contract. Vice President Meffley inquired if Ecotone had other county contracts and Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that he did recall them having other contracts and that they do a substantial amount of construction in this area. Councilwoman Culberson inquired as to the road and bridge names instead of the bridge number that were being repaired and Deputy Director Prattico noted he would get the names, but Public Works and the contract identifies them by number.

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 to them as soon as possible so we can send notice on attendance. He also noted that the schedule for the MACo Winter Conference is in the packet for this Work Session. He also noted that no Work Sessions are currently being scheduled for December 12 and 26.

Council Member Items

Councilwoman Hamilton noted she hoped everyone had a safe thanksgiving holiday and encourage people to be careful while traveling during the upcoming holiday season.

Vice President Meffley noted he will be attending the Youth Empowerment Source (YES) Dinner on November 29 and also, he will be attending the North East Christmas Parade on December 2 and encouraged everybody to attend.

Councilwoman Culberson noted she will also be at the North East Parade and that the MACo Winter Conference will be from December 6 to 8 and that the program includes many interesting discussion topics.

President Gregory noted she volunteered at the North East VFW on Thanksgiving Day to serve dinners. The VFW also provided delivery of thanksgiving meals to those who were unable to attend in person. On November 25 she attended an event at Pop's Culture in Rising Sun and noted the program had several hundred youth participate in the sport program. She also will be attending the North East Christmas Parade and encouraged everybody to attend.

President Gregory announced that no further items are on the November 28, 2023 Work Session agenda.

Adjournment

Vice President Meffley made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson. Council President Gregory adjourned the work session at 5:48 pm.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, December 5, 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