

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

July 16, 2024

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; Christine Palmer, 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 five Council Members present which constitute a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Vice President Meffley, seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of July 2, 2024, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Legislative Agenda

a. Introduction of Resolutions

1. Resolution 33-2024 – Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – Volunteer Fire Service – Vehicle Replacement Program – Community Fire Company of Rising Sun and Singerly Fire Company of Elkton

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that these funds were appropriated in FY23, but because of the lead time, the vehicles are now being received. He noted this would provide partial funding for a new fire truck for Rising Sun and a new ambulance for Singerly.

2. Resolution 34-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Community Services – Aging and Disabilities Division – Long Term Care and Dementia Care Navigation Program Grant

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted this grant is for Community Services and will help provide funding for staffing and support services to families in need of assistance for the care of individuals with dementia.

3. Resolution 35-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Office of Economic Development – Maryland Department of Commerce Grant and Maryland 5 Star Partial Matching Grant

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted this is a matching grant to assist in the promotion of the 5 Star Event and thanked the Maryland Department of Commerce and the 5 Star organization for the funding. He noted the total for the grant will be \$100,000 with \$50,000 coming from the Maryland Department of Commerce with matching funds of \$25,000 from 5-Star and the \$25,000 from Cecil County Office of Economic Development. Councilman Miller noted it is important to advertise this event and do additional promotion but also noted he hopes the Fair Hill Races will be added as an event in the future. Director Overbay concurred and noted that 5 Star is an active partner in the promotion and advertising of this event. Councilwoman Hamilton confirmed the breakdown of funding and inquired where the \$25,000 matching funds from Cecil County is coming from. Director Overbay noted that the matching funds from the County were in the FY25 Budget for Economic Development as part of the Tourism Office. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired on who would be directing the advertising and promotion and Director Overbay noted Sandy Turner from the Cecil County Tourism Office along with the 5 Star organizers will be working together on the advertising and promotion for this event.

b. Consideration of Resolutions

1. Resolution 20-2024 - Charter Amendment – Term of Office – County Council

President Gregory thanked the Charter Review Commission and noted the next several proposed amendments reflect these recommendations from the Commission. This amendment would limit

council members from serving more than 3 consecutive terms starting in 2028. Councilman Miller also thanked the Charter Review Commission and noted the voters will decide if these become part of the Charter. Vice President Meffley noted he is not in favor of this amendment since 3 terms may not be enough. President Gregory also noted that issues are always changing, and the voters need to have a choice and everybody needs to work together to keep elections safe.

2. Resolution 21-2024 - Charter Amendment – Compensation – County Council

President Gregory noted this amendment would increase the compensation of Council starting in December of 2028 to \$35,000 from \$25,000. Councilman Miller noted that again, this is a good issue for voters to decide. Vice President Meffley noted that additional compensation may get more people interested and that as a Councilmember you are always working on issues and with constituents. President Gregory also noted the MACO Salary Survey, which is available online, and that it compares the compensation of elected, appointed and other employees of County government.

3. Resolution 22-2024 - Charter Amendment – Vacancies – County Council

President Gregory noted this amendment would clarify how vacancies on County Council would be filled based on the party affiliation of the person vacating the office at the time of election for office. Councilman Miller noted he does not believe this amendment is needed.

4. Resolution 23-2024 – Charter Amendment - Term of the County Executive – Executive

President Gregory noted this amendment would also place a three consecutive term limit of the County Executive. Vice President Meffley inquired on term limits of County Executives in other counties and Council Manager Culver noted if term limits are set it is typically set at two. Councilwoman Hamilton noted that if term limits are set it can create “lame duck” government.

5. Resolution 24-2024 - Charter Amendment – Compensation – Executive

President Gregory noted this amendment would increase the compensation of the County Executive starting in December of 2028 from \$98,000 to \$130,000 and to clarify benefits. Vice President Meffley noted that the increase in compensation may get additional people interested in running for this office. Councilman Miller noted this is also an issue that the voters should decide.

6. Resolution 25-2024 - Charter Amendment – Vacancy in the Office of County Executive – Executive

President Gregory noted this amendment would clarify how a vacancy in the Office of the County Executive would be filled based on the party affiliation of the person vacating the office at the time of election.

7. Resolution 26-2024 - Charter Amendment – Appointment and Removal of Department Heads and Others – Executive

President Gregory noted this amendment would clarify the time for Council to confirm appointments based on Legislative Sessions not number of days. She noted this is to clarify ambiguity in the Charter and noted examples of when this becomes an issue, such as when Council Meetings are cancelled or postponed due to weather or other issues. She noted she did have an amendment to make this 30 days after formal introduction of appointment. Councilwoman Hamilton noted she thinks the amendment helps clarify the issue. Councilwoman Culberson asked for clarification of the language and Council Manager Culver noted how this section would read. Vice President Meffley agreed with the amendment.

8. Resolution 27-2024 - Charter Amendment – Council review of contracts – Budget and Finance

President Gregory noted this amendment would correct an error in the Charter on the Council review of contracts based on other changes made to the previous amendment. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if Council had other options to clean up language in the Charter other than this

procedure and Council Manager Culver noted this is the only method outlined for Charter amendments.

9. Resolution 29-2024 – Resolution 29-2024 - Approval – Schneider Electric Multi-Year Contract

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted this is being funded as part of the Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) Grant. The approved three-year VLT program set aside funds for facility enhancements to help comply with the State's Climate Solution Now Act of 2020 that mandates local governments reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 60%. The County has used some funds for tinting the windows and changing light fixtures, but this two-year program will replace the Administrative Building HVAC and assist in the reporting on the emissions reduction. Councilman Miller inquired on the use of the first year of the VLT facility funding and Director Overbay noted those improvements were mostly done in house by staff. Vice President Meffley inquired on other grants to perform these improvements and Director Overbay noted at this time only the VLT funds are being utilized.

10. Resolution 30-2024 - Appointment—Police Accountability Board – John Gainey

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that Stephen Miller is resigning as Chairman of the Police Accountability Board and Mr. Gainey will be the new chair. He noted Mr. Gainey's background and that he is highly qualified. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if Mr. Gainey would serve as Chair of the PAB and on the ACC and Director Overbay noted he would.

11. Resolution 31-2024 - Appointment—Planning Commission – Chad Johnston and Bryan Dugger

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted Mr. Johnston is a reappointment and Mr. Dugger is a new appointment and both are well qualified candidates. Councilwoman Culberson inquired how long Mr. Johnston has been on the Planning Board and Director of Land Use Stephen O'Connor noted it has been around eleven years. Councilman Miller noted Wyatt Wallace has been on the Planning Board for many years and did a great job. Director Overbay also noted the many years of service of Mr. Wallace. Councilwoman Hamilton noted Mr. Wallace was Chair and inquired who would succeed him. Director O'Connor noted the Planning Board will vote on the Chair and Vice Chair at the August meeting.

12. Resolution 32-2024 - Appointment—Board of License Commissioners – Kristin Ortt

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted Ms. Ortt is a reappointment and has been an excellent Board member.

c. Call for Final Reading of Bills

1. Bill 2024-13 - Establishment of the Little Elk Creek Sanitary Subdistrict

Director of Administration Steve Overbay outlined the establishment of the Little Elk Creek Sanitary Subdistrict and noted Triumph Industrial Park has operated its own wastewater treatment plant and collection system, but under the terms of the agreement, the plant would be discontinued and a pump station that is currently being constructed would take the wastewater to the North East Plant. The current and future users of the wastewater system in Triumph would pay a Benefit Assessment on any cost not covered by the Maryland Department of the Environment grant over 30 years. Vice President Meffley inquired on the procedure to decommission the lagoon and who oversees this operation. Director of Public Works Scott Flanigan noted the lagoon was pumped out and the sludge was removed. He noted that the Maryland Department of the Environment oversees the operation and approves the backfilling of the site. He also noted this should be completed within the month.

Presentation

1. East Elkton Traffic Circulation and Safety Plan - Bill Swiatek from WILMAPCO

Director of Land Use Stephen O'Conner introduced Bill Swiatek from WILMAPCO. Mr. Swiatek noted this study began in 2023 as a joint effort between the Town of Elkton, Cecil County,

Maryland Department of Transportation and WILMAPCO. He noted that Wallace Montgomery was selected as the consultant. The study area was defined as Delancy Road, Muddy Lane and Belle Hille Road and the general area between Interstate 95 and US Route 40. He noted the goals of the study were to understand and document existing traffic movements, evaluate road realignments, look for land use conflicts, recommend improvement to road safety and for walking and cycling connectivity. He noted the Steering Committee also included the Elkton Chamber of Commerce, the Cecil County Schools, Elkton Alliance, East Coast Greenways, Amtrak, Maryland State Police, Singerly Fire Company, Town of Elkton, Cecil County, WILMAPCO and MDOT. He noted the planning process included studying the existing conditions, visioning, draft recommendations and final recommendations. He noted the study used two general surveys, three public workshops, youth engagement at the local schools, transportation justice outreach and creating a project website. Mr. Swiatek noted the general outreach programs, and the school survey were successful and 78% of the participants were satisfied with the concerns the plan addressed. He noted that the youth survey revealed that they are concerned with how to move around in this area and that the youth wanted more interconnection with neighborhoods, better walkways and more cycling options. Mr. Swiatek also outlined the 2-, 5- and 10-year proposed improvements and noted they will need to study the long-term costs, especially for improvements at the Muddy Lane railroad underpass and the additional road changes on Delancey and Route 40. He noted that comments on the draft study will be accepted until July 29.

Vice President Meffley inquired if the study examined the flooding issues along Muddy Lane and Mr. Swiatek noted this would need to be studied as part of any improvements. Councilman Miller inquired on the costs for improvements to the Muddy Lane railroad underpass and Mr. Swiatek noted that this was not part of the study. Councilman Miller also noted that the youth survey showed the need for walkways and cycling paths. Councilwoman Hamilton noted she represents this district and thanked WILMAPCO for facilitating this study and that improvements are needed, especially along Muddy Lane and Delancy Road and looks forward to assisting in implementing the study results.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Culver noted the updated Council Manager report is in the packet.

Council Member Items

Councilmembers deferred comments to the Legislative Session of July 16.

Adjournment

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilman Miller. Council President Gregory adjourned the work session at 5:28 pm.

The next County Council Work Session will be held on Tuesday, July 23 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.ccgove.org/council.



David M. Culver
Council Manager

Approved:

Jackie Gregory, Council President