

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY

WORK SESSION MINUTES

March 11, 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 the 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 Hamilton, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of March 4, 2025, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentations

a. Youth Empowerment Source

Ms. Olivia Gonzalez and Mr. Anthony Travisano, members of Youth Empowerment Source (YES) introduced themselves to the Council. Mr. Travisano stated the purpose of their appearance was to provide a synopsis of the Community Anti Drug Coalitions of America Conference held in January, 2025 in National Harbor. Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Travisano provided an overview of conference activities, which included sessions regarding substance abuse and mental health.

Councilwoman Branch congratulated Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Travisano for their leadership and efforts that have resulted in increased participation in YES programs.

Councilwoman Culberson queried Ms. Gonzalez and Mr. Travisano regarding their biggest takeaways from the conference. Ms. Gonzalez answered that the growth of the Drug Free Cecil program provided an improved perspective. Mr. Travisano stated he recognized that Cecil County's YES program is the model for youth-based coalitions.

Council President Miller commended YES, stating the program reaches across the country.

Council Vice President Meffley queried the recruitment process. Mr. Travisano stated individual school clubs choose leaders from within their group, subsequently inviting them to the annual conference.

b. Bainbridge Development Corporation and Town of Port Deposit – SB477/HB1184 Port Deposit Historic Park – Size & Scope

Dr. Carl Roberts, Ms. Toni Sprenkle, representing the Bainbridge Development Corporation (BDC) and Ms. Vicky Rinkerman, Town Administrator, Port Deposit, introduced themselves to the Council. Dr. Roberts stated the purpose of their appearance was to request the Council's support for SB477/HB1184 Port Deposit Historic Park – Size & Scope (the Bill). He noted that Councilwoman Culberson expressed opposition to the Bill.

Dr. Roberts stated the Bill decreases the Port Deposit State Historical Park from the proposed acres, resulting in a return of \$40 million to the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources. He added that the BDC is specifically requesting approximately 12 acres for the Port Deposit Historic Park (the Park) with no additional funding.

Discussion ensued regarding the historic significance of the Snow Hill residential area which will become the Port Deposit State Historical Park.

Councilwoman Culberson expressed concerns regarding potential costs to area residents. Ms. Rinkerman stated the Park will be developed through public-private partnerships, which will not fiscally impact area residents.

Councilwoman Branch questioned if the park is supported by area residents. Ms. Rinkerman answered in the affirmative.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the requested acreage was sufficient for the Park. Ms. Rinkerman answered in the affirmative, stating maps from the 1800's indicate the residential area was approximately 8 acres.

President Miller expressed support for the Park and queried the Council for a consensus to draft a letter of support for HB1184/SB477. Vice President Meffley, Councilwoman Hamilton

and Councilwoman Branch concurred with drafting a letter of support for the Bill. Councilwoman Culberson expressed opposition to drafting a letter of support for the Bill.

Monthly Review of County Contracts (Section 515)

Deputy Director of Finance Andrew Ondish presented reports for January, 2025 and February, 2025 regarding contracts representing \$100,000 or more in expenses. Discussion ensued regarding expenses associated with the contracts.

Council Manager Report

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

Legislative Update

President Miller stated SB931/HB1036 was detrimental to Eastern Shore Farmers.

President Miller expressed concerns regarding proposed increases to business to business taxes.

Council Member Items

Councilwoman Branch announced the Cecil County Public Schools Board of Education meeting will commence at 5:30 p.m. on March 12, 2025.

Councilwoman Hamilton stated she had no items to present.

Councilwoman Culberson stated Emergency Services received a total of 217 calls, 10 of which were mental health related, 36 domestic calls and 6 overdose calls. She noted that none of the overdose calls resulted in deaths.

Councilwoman Culberson echoed President Miller's comments regarding the proposed business to business tax.

Vice President Meffley stated the Rotary Club will conduct a food drive in front of the Redner's Grocery store in Elkton at 10:00 a.m. on March 12, 2025. He stated collected food will be taken to Sheila's Pantry for distribution.

Vice President Meffley announced that Ms. Dale Kearns is now the State Representative for the Rotary Club.

Vice President Meffley announced that the Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) is in need of buses to transport children from Cecilton to the facility in Elkton.

President Miller announced that he participated in a noxious weed discussion at the Central Landfill. He expressed appreciation that County Executive Streight attended the event. He stated the importance of assisting farmers in keeping weeds from the fields as well as from roadside areas.

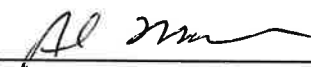
President Miller state he and Mrs. Miller participated in a Read Across America event at Conowingo Elementary School.

Adjournment

Councilwoman Branch made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson. President Miller adjourned the work session at 6:09 p.m.

The next County Council Work Session will be held on Tuesday, March 18, 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



Council Manager