COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES

MARCH 18, 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 County 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 Branch, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of March 11, 2025, as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Review of Legislative Agenda

a. New Business
   1. Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #133

Ms. Denise Sopa, Cecil County Board of Education, presented an overview of Budget Amendment #133, a copy of which was placed in the record of the minutes. Ms. Sopra noted that Budget Amendment #133 was for $649,239. She reviewed the restricted local, state and federal revenues as well as the unrestricted revenue along with the grants and donations made to the various schools. Ms. Sopa reviewed unrestricted revenue regarding small capital projects in the amount of $1.7 million.
Councilwoman Culberson queried if funds originated in Fund Balance and were moved to Capital Projects to fund projects. Ms. Sopa answered in the affirmative, stating that Capital Projects are funded via the Operating Budget, which is subsequently funded via County reimbursement in the form of a Budget Amendment.
Councilwoman Culberson questioned if any of the items were previously included in the current budget. Ms. Sopa stated that the items associated with Budget Amendment #133 were previously requested for FY25 and denied.
Councilwoman Hamilton, referring to journal entries 250059 and 250125, queried why certain journal entries did not appear on the overview of Restricted and Unrestricted Revenues listed on pages 1 and 2. Ms. Sopa stated the entries do not appear on the fund overview as their balances were zero.
Ms. Sopa stated that page 7 of the presentation provided an overview of the current and (2) previous Fiscal Years.
Councilwoman Culberson queried line item 70000 – Exec Dir for Elementary. Ms. Sopa stated that the line item was previously utilized for after school activity stipends. She stated the funds are used for buses which transport 5th graders to attend elementary to middle school transition events.
Councilwoman Culberson questioned the amounts listed for Math supplies. Ms. Sopa stated that grant funds were used for Math supplies, resulting in lower requested amounts.
Vice President Meffley queried when Federal Grants for field trips and tutoring for immigrant students are received. Ms. Sopa answered that Federal Grant funds are received annually.

b. Introduction of Resolutions
   1. Resolution No. 20-2025 - Supplemental Appropriation - Grant Funds – Community Services – Community Development Block Grant – Recovery Housing Program – Voices of Hope, Inc.

David Trolio, Director of Community Services, stated Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding in the amount of $514,180 was received to acquire a residence on behalf of Voices of Hope, Inc. to establish a recovery home for women and children.
Administrator Schneckenburger stated Director Trolio applied for the grant approximately 2 months ago.
Councilwoman Culberson commended Director Trolio regarding his efforts to obtain grants.

President Miller commended Director Trolio and Voices of Hope, Inc. regarding their teamwork.

2. Resolution No. 21-2025 – Approval – Sixth Amendment of Lease Agreement – Multiple Year Contract - Amedisys

Andrew Onish, Deputy Director of Finance, and Ken Jackson, Fleet Manager, provided an overview of Resolution No. 21-2025. Deputy Director Ondish stated Amedisys currently leases office space a suites 124 and 134, adding that the sixth amendment provided a (3) year renewal with (2) (1) year extensions. Administrator Dan Schneckenburger noted that Amedisys leased the suites for approximately (17) years.
Councilwoman Culberson stated the previous amendment dates appeared to be out of order. Deputy Director Ondish stated that there were originally (2) Lease agreements which expired at different times. He stated the previous Director of Finance combined the Leases into (1) agreement in 2017. Deputy Director Ondish stated he will provide copies of all prior amendments for clarification.
Councilwoman Culberson questioned if the County Executive executes the Lease. Deputy Director Ondish stated that the Director of Administration executes the Lease, adding that he will provide the internal policy.
Deputy Director Ondish stated the current Lease expires on June 30, 2025, adding the intent was to provide the Tenant ample notice of either continuation or termination.
Vice President Meffley queried if the leased spaces were inspected. Deputy Director Ondish stated leased spaces are inspected in the event of Tenant change.
Vice President Meffley queried if the County had any liability exposure associated with leased premises. Deputy Director Ondish stated any legal issues would be litigated by the County Attorney, adding that the Tenant is required to maintain liability insurance.
Administrator Schneckenburger added that the Tenant has been a good Lessee for many years.
Councilwoman Culberson questioned if the liability insurance requirement is called out in writing. Fleet Manager Jackson stated the liability insurance requirement is called out in the original Lease.
Deputy Director Ondish stated he will provide all documents associated with the Lease Agreement.
Finance Director Mr. Raymond Hamm stated that a master roster of all Lease agreements will be prepared and provided to Council.
President Miller expressed appreciation for proactively addressing the Lease amendment.
Councilwoman Branch commended Councilwoman Culberson for reviewing Resolution No. 21-2025.

3. Resolution No. 22-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – Department of Finance – Transdev Non-Contract PO – Budget Amendment

Ken Jackson, Fleet Manager, stated that $453,156 was requested to provide funding for the purchase of (5) dump trucks and fleet maintenance expenses. He stated that Fleet Management requested $1.2 million in FY24, which was subsequently reduced to $700,000. Fleet Manager Jackson stated that the Solid Waste Division has the highest expense for equipment maintenance, adding that the requested funds will take Fleet Management to the end of the current Fiscal Year.
Councilwoman Hamilton, referring to invoices associated with non-contract labor and parts, asked i the invoices were related to maintenance. Fleet Manager Jackson answered in the affirmative, stating that maintenance costs increase in winter months due to wear and tear on vehicles and equipment.
Councilwoman Hamilton questioned if maintenance costs are expected to be reduced upon acquiring of new vehicles. Fleet Manager Jackson answered in the affirmative, adding his department's intent to maintain costs for equipment utilized at the Central Landfill facility.
Councilwoman Hamilton questioned if replacement vehicles will be identified in FY26. Fleet Manager Jackson answered in the affirmative, stating Fleet Management has a replacement cycle.
Discussion ensued regarding delivery timeframes for new vehicles.
Councilwoman Hamilton noted maintenance costs averaged $91,000 per month and asked if the requested funds were based on a higher anticipated average. Deputy Director Ondish answered in the affirmative.
Councilwoman Branch requested a fund balance report. Deputy Director Onish stated he will provide a Fiscal Report for the 2nd Quarter of FY25 on March 28, 2025.
Councilwoman Culberson queried if the Enterprise Fund Balance was recorded separately from General Fund Balance. Deputy Director Onish stated the Enterprise Fund does not carry a balance.
President Miller questioned the process of disposal of retired vehicles. Fleet Manager Jackson statec the vehicles are disposed of at auction.

4. Resolution No. 23-2025 - Appointment – Local Management Board – Mary Bolt, Joshua Lewis, John Ness, and Rachel Wright

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted that the requested appointments staffed the Local Management Board, adding that Ms. Wright's appointment filled the current vacancy.
Councilwoman Hamilton questioned if nominations were based upon the nominees' roles within the County. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the negative.
Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the Local Management Board had the ability to vote to issue grant funding to itself. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the negative, stating that funding that passes through the Local Management Board is directed to non-profits.
Director Trolio stated the majority of the members of the Local Management Board have served for many years. He stated the Board consists of many diverse members. He provided an overview of the grant process, adding that the Board is not in a position to vote to fund itself.

5. Resolution No. 24-2025 – Approval – Franchise Agreement – Talkie Communications (IPTV Cable Franchise)

David Black, GIS Manager, Broadband Manager, stated the Franchise Agreement (the Agreement) was similar to agreements previously executed in 2022 between the County and Armstrong, as well as Breezeline, and the Comcast renewal, which is due in 2027. Manager Black stated all Franchise Agreements are non-exclusive, meaning that under the Agreement, a franchisee can operate in all areas of the county. He stated that the Agreement provides service to unincorporated areas of the county.
Vice President Meffley questioned the areas of coverage under the Agreement. Manager Black stated Talkie Communications (Talkie) has installed infrastructure south of Elkton and Chesapeake City, with plans to install infrastructure from Route 40 north to Pennsylvania and east to the Delaware line.
Vice President Meffley questioned if Talkie can provide service in areas currently served by Comcast. Manager Black answered in the affirmative, reiterating that the Agreement is non-exclusive, and that a franchisee can operate in all areas of the county.
Manager Black noted that other companies will be able to utilize infrastructure placed by Talkie.
Councilwoman Branch questioned why Talkie would serve unincorporated areas of the county and not towns. Manager Black stated Talkie would be required to enter a separate franchise agreement with a town in order to operate within its municipal limits.
Manager Black stated that the Agreement provides for the installation of Talkie's infrastructure within County-owned rights of way, adding that the County will collect 5% of Talkie's gross revenues.
Vice President Meffley queried if the Agreement will provide County residents with a choice of cable television providers. Manager Black answered in the affirmative.
President Miller stated his anticipation of reliable service in Cecil County's northern areas.
Manager Black, referring to the County's "Difficult to Serve" Program in which residents whose homes are located a long distance from the road can apply to receive assistance with installing infrastructure.
Administrator Schneckenburger expressed support for additional providers in order to offer choice.
Councilwoman Branch expressed support for competition and potentially lower costs.
Councilwoman Culberson questioned if the service covered television service, not internet service. Manager Black answered in the affirmative.
Councilwoman Hamilton, referring to Talkie's receipt of a $10 million grant in 2022, questioned if the grant permitted installation of infrastructure. Manager Black answered in the affirmative.
Councilwoman Hamilton questioned term of the Agreement. Manager Black stated the Agreement term is 10 years.
Councilwoman Branch and President Miller expressed appreciation to Manager Black for his presentation.

c. Consideration of Resolutions

1. Resolution No. 17-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – Donation – Department of Parks and Recreation – Facilities Maintenance Account.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger stated that Resolution No. 17-2025 followed receipt of the donation from W.L. Gore approximately one month ago.

2. Resolution No. 18-2025 Appointment – Adult Public Guardianship Review Board – Lisa Beeman, E. Sean Poltrack, Erin Bird, Stacy Kortas, and Mary Falkenstein

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger stated that Resolution No. 18-2025 brought the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board to full membership.
Councilwoman Hamilton confirmed that the terms had previously expired however the members continued to meet and serve. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the affirmative, stating while most board and commission members continue to serve until replaced or reappointed, the current members continued their service.

3. Resolution No. 19-2025 – Appointment – Department of Social Services Board – Glenn Jensen, Berkeley Orr, and Abigail Hooper

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger stated that Resolution No. 19-2025 brought the Department of Social Services Board to full membership.
Councilwoman Hamilton confirmed that the appointees were all new appointments. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the affirmative.

Council Manager Report
Council Manager L. Michelle Henson stated the Council Manager Report was included in Council's meeting packet.

State Legislative Update

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger stated his expectation of increased taxes in order to offset the State budget deficit.
Councilwoman Hamilton queried the status of the "business to business" tax. Administrator Schneckenburger stated this tax may not move forward.
Councilwoman Hamilton questioned if sales taxes may be increased. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the affirmative.
Discussion ensued regarding anticipated impacts to businesses resulting from current tariffs imposed by the Federal government.
President Miller questioned the status of the Enterprise Zone. Administrator Schneckenburger stated that the status of the Enterprise Zone remained unknown.
Councilwoman Culberson questioned the status of the Blue Print. Administrator Schneckenburger stated that the status of the Blue Print remained unknown.

Council Member Items
Council members deferred comments to the Legislative Session of March 18, 2025.

Adjournment
Councilwoman Branch made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson. President Miller adjourned the work session at 5:56 pm.

The next County Council Work Session will be held on Tuesday, April 1, 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

L. Michelle Henson
Council Manager