

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY

WORK SESSION MINUTES

September 16, 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: Rebecca Hamilton, Al Miller, Donna Culberson and Dawn Branch; Council Manager L. Michelle Henson; Council Assistant Christine Palmer; 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 four Council Members present which constitute a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Councilwoman Branch, seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council Work Session of September 9, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation

Fair Hill Nature Center Overview – Ms. Laura Hannan, Executive Director, Fair Hill Nature Center Fair Hill Nature Center (the Center) Executive Director Laura Hannan provided a video overview of the facility. She stated the Center conducts summer camps and also partners with Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) Science Programs. She stated that the Center provided programs for approximately 6,000 students from Maryland, with an additional 1,500 students from Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Director Hannan stated the Center is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that has operated since 1990. She noted the Center does not receive public funding, adding that all financial support comes from donations.

Director Hannan stated the Center is expanding and expressed her goal of the Center becoming known as a gateway to Cecil County by combining environmental education with economic development.

Councilwoman Branch commended the activities at the Center, stating her son participated in programs at the facility.

Councilwoman Culberson commended Director Hannan and her work at the Center.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the Center offered family memberships. Director Hannan answered in the affirmative, stating the Center provides a full membership program.

President Miller commended Director Hannan's work at the Center, noting that Nature Center staff members provide maintenance of the facility in addition to administration of programs.

Discussion ensued regarding planned expansion of the Center. Director Hannan expressed appreciation to Vice President Meffley for provision of plumbing services at the facility.

Director Hannan stated that the Center will participate in the Cecil Cares event on October 4th.

Review of Legislative Agenda, as amended

President Miller requested approval to amend the agenda by moving item d. New Business Cecil County Public School Budget Amendments #139 and #140 to the beginning of the Review of Legislative Agenda.

On a motion made by Councilwoman Hamilton, seconded by Councilwoman Branch, the Council moved to amend the Review of Legislative Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

d. Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #139

Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #140

Cecil County Public Schools (CCPS) Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Denise Sopa stated Budget Amendment #139 is the final submission for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25).

CFO Sopa reviewed restricted and unrestricted revenue which included donations from Leeds Elementary, Rising Sun Middle and Perryville High Schools for purchase of books, desks and chairs.

Councilwoman Culberson queried the activity listed under Non-Public School Programs. CFO Sopa stated that funds are released as each student enters or exits placement in the program.

CFO Sopa stated that certain items will carry over into Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) and will be identified as allocations from the FY25 fund balance.

Councilwoman Culberson queried the activity listed under FTE Salaries. CFO Sopa stated that the activity reflects staff hiring, transfers, changing of insurance coverage, etc., adding it did not reflect reduction in staff.

Councilwoman Culberson queried the status of Special Education Funding. CFO Sopa stated that CCPS budgeted an anticipated \$443,000 from the State of Maryland, which was not received.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted that the Year to Date expenses reflect \$5.5 million in available funds from the revised FY25 Budget of \$248 million. CFO Sopa noted that the \$5.5 million in available funds is reflected in the revenues vs. expenses report.

CFO Sopa stated that Budget Amendment #140 is the first budget amendment of FY26. She stated that the CCPS Fiscal Year ends on June 30th, noting that restricted fund revenues do not end with the current fiscal year.

CFO Sopa reviewed carryover funds associated with Federal and State grants.

Councilwoman Culberson questioned how Concentrated Poverty Funds are allocated. CFO Sopa stated Concentrated Poverty Funds are used for medical needs, after school programs and Social Workers' support and other services outside of normal school day instructional uses.

President Miller questioned the reduction of Blueprint Prekindergarten funds. CFO Sopa stated the FY25 Budget was developed using projected Blueprint funding from the State of Maryland, adding that the anticipated funding was subsequently reduced.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the actual operating cost per school was available. CFO Sopa stated that operating cost data, as required by Blueprint, will be provided collected and provided via spreadsheet.

Councilwoman Hamilton requested a roundtable discussion with the Board of Education at an upcoming Work Session.

a. Public Hearing

- 1) Resolution No. 55-2025 – Town of Elkton Annexation A2-2025 – 253 Maloney Road (Tax Map 033F, Parcel 1035) Waiver of 5-yr Rule

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger stated that Director of Land Use and Development Services (LUDS) Stephen O'Connor will attend the Public Hearing.

b. Introduction of Resolutions

- 1) Resolution No. 58-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Community Services – Community Partnerships Division

Administrator Schneckenburger stated that Director of Community Services David Trolio was successful in obtaining grant funding for the Department of Community Services.

Director Trolio stated the grant funds will be utilized, in part, for a Cecil County Health Department (CCHD) program which supports newborns and their families.

- 2) Resolution No. 59-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Community Service – Community Partnerships and Community Wellness Division

Director Trolio stated the grant funds will be utilized, in part, for a program to promote healthy diet and exercise for individuals with arthritis.

- 3) Resolution No. 60-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Community Services – Cecil Transit Division

Director Trolio stated the grants funds will be utilized, in part, to supplement funding for the County's micro transit, which provides access to health care and non-emergent transportation.

4) Resolution No. 61-20205 – Appointment – Commission on Veterans Affairs – John E. Dixon, III

Administrator Schneckenburger stated that Mr. Dixon applied to serve on the Commission on Veterans Affairs Board.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the Commission on Veterans Affairs had conducted meetings. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the affirmative.

Councilwoman Culberson stated the Commission has discussed compiling a list of available services for Veterans.

5) Resolution No. 62-2025 – Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Department of Land Use and Development Services – Department of Natural Resources Critical Area Commission for the Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays

Director O'Connor stated the grant funds will be utilized to hire a consultant to update the County's Critical Area Ordinance. He noted that the State of Maryland requires this update every 10 years.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the grant covered the entire expense of the consultant. Director O'Connor answered in the affirmative.

President Miller queried if LUDS had obtained a consultant. Director O'Connor stated that LUDS issued a request for bids for a consultant.

c. Consideration of Resolutions

1) Resolution No. 53-2025 – Approval – Enterprise Zone Expansion

Administrator Schneckenburger stated that Director of Economic Development Sandra Edwards was available to answer any questions from Council.

Councilwoman Hamilton requested a breakdown of industry types within the current Enterprise Zone.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted that distribution centers utilize less than 10% of the County's labor force. Director Edwards noted that the manufacturing sector utilizes 12% of the labor force, which is the highest percentage.

Discussion ensued regarding sizes and uses of current and proposed distribution centers.

Administrator Schneckenburger noted that the Town of Elkton requested the expansion of the County's Enterprise Zone to include properties on Belle Hill and Maloney Roads.

Discussion ensued regarding the property located adjacent to Belle Hill Road and its previous and current development plans.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the Town of Elkton reduced Real Property Tax rates within the Enterprise Zone. Director Edwards answered in the affirmative.

Councilwoman Hamilton, referring to a parcel on Maloney Road, questioned the planned use on the property. Director Edwards stated the planned use will be for warehousing.

2) Resolution No. 54-2025 – Budget Amendment – Capital Improvement Program – Improve Irishtown Road/ MD272 Intersection

Administrator Schneckenburger stated that the improvements to this intersection are needed in order to accommodate increased traffic as a result of the North East Middle and High School project as well as the construction of additional residences at the Chesapeake Bay Golf Club development. He added that the Planning Commission unanimously approved the improvement project.

Councilwoman Culberson queried if the VFW Memorial would be impacted by the project. Administrator Schneckenburger answered in the negative stating the project will focus on extension of turn lanes from MD272 to Irishtown Road and from Irishtown Road to MD272.

3) Resolution No. 56-2025 – Appointment – Board of Library Trustees – Berard D. DeMarinis and James Sweigard

Administrator Schneckenburger expressed support for the appointment.

4) Resolution No. 57-2025 – Appointment – Adult Public Guardianship Review Board – Nicole Vlamis and Nathaniel C. Bowen

Administrator Schneckenburger stated that Administration had no further comments.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Henson stated the report was included in the Council's meeting packet.

Council Member Items

Council deferred Council Member Items to the Legislative Session.

President Miller queried Council for a consensus regarding cancellation of the Work Sessions of October 14th and October 28th.

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to cancel the Work Sessions of October 14th and October 28th, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch and approved unanimously.

Adjournment

President Miller requested a motion to adjourn the Work Session.

Councilwoman Culberson made motion to adjourn the Work Session, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch.

President Miller adjourned the work session at 5:48 pm.

The next County Council Work Session will be held on Tuesday, September 23, 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:



L. Michelle Henson
Council Manager



Al Miller, Council President