COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES

January 14, 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 (virtually), Rebecca Hamilton, Al Miller and Donna Culberson; David Culver, 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 three Council Members present, one absent and one virtually, 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 January 7, 2025, as presented. The motion passed 3 to 0 with 1 absent and 1 virtual.

Presentation

a. FY24 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)

Acting Director of Finance Andrews Ondish gave an overview of the FY24 ACFR. He noted that the audit was completed and sent to the State by the extension date of December 31, 2024. He thanked all the members of the Department of Finance for meeting this date and that completing the audit was a team effort. He also noted that the auditors, SBC found that the audit did not reveal any irregularities and was in compliance with the applicable regulations.

b. Fund Balance

Acting Director of Finance Andrew Ondish noted that the General Fund is the primary operating fund of the County. It accounts for all financial resources of the County except those resources required to be accounted for in another fund. The general tax revenues of the County, as well as other resources received and not designated for a specified purpose, are accounted for in the General Fund. He noted the fund balance as noted in the FY24 ACFR is $132,916,987.00. He noted that once you take into account the non-spendable and restricted funds, the unassigned Fund Balance is $38,556,655.00. Acting Director Ondish noted that based on the FY24 audit and the various bills and resolutions that have been enacted since the beginning of FY25, including the loan to the Board of Education for the North East Middle and High School project, the unaudited fund balance is $132,916,987.00 and unobligated fund balance is $36,812,642.00.

Councilwoman Hamilton inquired on the difference in the FY24 audit and the FY25 numbers used in the presentation and Acting Director Ondish noted it was rounding differences that was used during the creating of the presentation. President Miller inquired on the IT fund shown in the Fund Balance and Acting Director Ondish noted that fund will be changed in the Proposed FY26 Budget to account for IT purchases. President Miller also inquired on the tax credit that is shown and Acting Director Ondish noted unless another tax credit is proposed in the FY26 Budget, then that line item will also be removed from the Fund Balance. President Miller also inquired on the Budget Stabilization exceeding the limit of the policy without Council approval and Acting Director Ondish noted this will be examined and discussed further with Council. Councilwoman Culberson inquired on the future changes to the IT budget and Acting Director Ondish clarified the ISF fund and noted it will be proposed to be changed in the FY26 Budget request. Acting Director Ondish also reviewed the specific assigned and committed funds and the resolutions that have been passed during FY25 and how that effects the fund balance. Councilwoman Culberson inquired on the BOE lockbox and its status and Acting Director Ondish noted that the FY25 Budget noted that it was partially used and also noted the proposed FY26 Budget could change or eliminate this fund depending on the amount of BOE funding needed. Councilwoman Culberson also inquired on the North East Middle and Hight School repayment from the State on the loan to the BOE and Acting Director Ondish noted that conversations are ongoing with the State and that any repayment of the loan will go to the Fund Balance when received. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired on the difference in the FY24 budget and FY24 actuals in the presentation and ACFR and Acting Director Ondish noted that the actual is the correct numbers. Councilwoman Hamilton noted that the tax credits and reduction in tax rates has helped many citizens while also maintaining a very healthy fund balance. President Miller, Councilwoman Culberson and Councilwoman Hamilton all thanked the Finance Department on the presentation.

c. Monthly Review of County Contracts (section 516)

Budget Director Tony Prattico reviewed the contracts for November. He noted eight contracts met the Charter threshold, however Council Manager Culver noted that there were actually 10 contracts on the report. Budget Director Prattico noted that was correct and noted five were for Public Works, three for Community Services and one each for the Sheriff's Office and IT. For Public Works the contracts included sidewalk improvements, sanitary sewer engineering and construction of Paramedic 4 and the Public Safety Training Center. For IT, the contract was for the Microsoft Office licenses and for the Sheriff's Office the contract was for 10 new in car cameras. For Community Serves the contacts were for replacement buses, our share of the Harford Transit Route to Great Wolf Lodge and to provide trauma services.

Councilwoman Hamilton inquired on the transit route from Harford and Acting Director of Finance Andres Ondish noted this was our portion of the grant with Harford to serve to the Great Wolf Lodge area for employees and visitors. Councilwoman Hamilton also inquire on how many feet of sidewalks will be constructed and Budget Director Prattico noted he will inquire with Public Works and report back to Council.

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

Council Member Items

Councilwoman Culberson reviewed the intel numbers for the previous week and noted that Cecil County did have two overdose deaths. She also noted she was not able toe attend the Young Farmers breakfast this year because of the change of date but thanked them for all they do for Cecil County.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted the General Assembly began last week and that the MACO Legislative Sessions will begin on January 15. She noted that anyone who has a concern with any legislation being introduced by the General Assembly may contact Councilmembers to discuss and potentially take a position. She also noted she will be working with the Chambers Government Relations Committee on legislative issues. She also noted HB0037, which is a proposed constitutional amendment, to give everyone a right to organize and collective bargaining.

President Miller noted he attended Cecil Night in Annapolis on January 9 and it was well attended. He also attended the Young Farmers Breakfast on January 13. He also did a presentation on government with Rising Sun Boy Scouts on January 13.

Vice President Meffley thanked the Department of Finance on the presentation at this meeting. He also encouraged everybody to take the flu shot or boosters during this time of year.

It was also noted that the Citizens Input Meeting for the FY26 Budget with County Executive Office will be on January 16, 2026 in the Elk Room at 6:00 pm.

Adjournment
Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton. Council President Miller adjourned the work session at 5:31 pm.

The next County Council Work Session will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 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

Al Miller
Council President

David M. Culver
Council Manager