

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2024-12
July 2, 2024

The County Council of Cecil County met in legislative session at the County Administration Building, 200 Chesapeake Blvd., Elk Room, Elkton, MD. The following members of the Council were present:

Jackie Gregory, Council President
Robert Meffley, Vice President
Rebecca Hamilton, Council Member
Al Miller, Council Member
Donna Culberson, Council Member

NOTE: The recording with transcription of this meeting is available on the County website at www.ccgov.org/council.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the County Council of Cecil County of July 2, 2024, was called to order by Council President Gregory at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Council Manager Culver called the roll and noted all five members were present.

OPENING PRAYER/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Pastor Robert Tucker of 5 Rivers Church in Elkton gave the opening prayer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Vice President Meffley, the Council moved to approve the agenda of July 2, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Council Manger Culver stated for the record:

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

A Bill to establish the Little Elk Creek Sanitary Subdistrict.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that the establishment of the Little Elk Creek Sanitary Subdistrict had been an ongoing project for 10 years to provide County sewer to Triumph Industrial Park. Director Overbay noted that Triumph Industrial Park has operated its own wastewater treatment plant and collection system, but under this agreement, the plant would be discontinued and a pump station 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.

Robert Hodge of North East spoke in favor of this bill and noted it would help attract business to Triumph Industrial Park.

Chris Giles from Harford County noted he is on the Triumph Board of Directors, and they support this bill.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 2, County Council, Section 206, Term of Office, of the Cecil County Charter to provide that the County Council shall be limited to serve no more than 3 consecutive 4-year terms. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition of this Resolution and believes that voters should have the right to choose how long someone remains on Council. He also presented a letter from the Cecil County Republican Central Committee on all of its positions on the Charter amendments.

Robert Hodge of North East spoke in opposition of this Resolution and noted the voters should decide how long someone is elected.

Sean Brimm of North East spoke in opposition of this Resolution and noted that the voters should decide how long someone remains in office.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 2, County Council, Section 207, Compensation of the Cecil County Charter to provide that the County Council shall receive as compensation \$35,000 per annum. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Megan McRay from the Chamber of Commerce spoke in favor of this Resolution and believes that this could help attract people to run for Council.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition of this Resolution and believes that Council is already fairly compensated for the amount of time that Council spends at meetings.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 2, County Council, Section 209, Vacancies, of the Cecil County Charter to provide that the vacancies in County Council shall be filled based on the vacating members party at the time of filing. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition to this Resolution and believes that elected officials should have the right to change parties after elections.

Sean Brimm of North East spoke in opposition to this Resolution and noted that the elected officials should have the right to change parties after elections.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 4, Executive, Section 404, Term of the County Executive, of the Cecil County Charter to provide that the Executive shall be limited to serve no more than 3 consecutive 4 year terms. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition of this Resolution and believes that voters should have the right to choose how long someone remains as County Executive.

Robert Hodge of North East spoke in opposition of this Resolution and noted the voters should decide how long someone should remain in office.

Sean Brimm of North East spoke in opposition of this Resolution and noted the voters should decide how long someone remains in office.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 24-2024 - Charter Amendment – Compensation – Executive

A Resolution amending Article 4, Executive, Section 406, Compensation of the County Executive to provide that the County Executive shall receive as compensation \$130,000 per annum and clarify benefits. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition of this Resolution and noted that, if it should move forward, it should be amended to not change the salary but should clarify the benefits for the County Executive.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 4, Executive, Section 407, Vacancy in the Office of County Executive, of the Cecil County Charter to provide that the vacancies in the Office of the County Executive shall be filled based on the vacating member party at the time of filing. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition to this Resolution and believes that elected officials should have the right to change parties after elections.

Sean Brimm of North East spoke in opposition to this Resolution and noted that the elected officials should have the right to change parties after elections.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 4, Executive, Section 412, Appointment and Removal of Department Heads and Others, County Executive, of the Cecil County Charter to provide that the Council shall have 2 consecutive Legislative Sessions to approve appointments of the Executive. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Sean Brimm of North East spoke in support of this Resolution and noted that this should help alleviate any anomalies in scheduling like the one that occurred this year with the primary elections.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition of this Resolution and believes no appointment should take longer than 30 days.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution amending Article 5, Budget and Finance, Section 516, Council review of contracts of the Cecil County Charter to clarify the review of County contracts by County Council. To require submission of this amendment to the legally qualified voters of Cecil County for their adoption or rejection, in accordance with Section 602 of the Charter of Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 4, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on July 2, 2024 and consideration on July 16, 2024.

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke in opposition of this Resolution and believes these sections are still applicable.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Vice President Meffley, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the legislative session of June 18, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sean Brimm of North East spoke on the Charter amendments and the budget hearing.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Culberson thanked everybody for attending and reviewed the intel numbers for the past week. She noted that this was another week with no drug overdose deaths and again thanked the different agencies working in the community that helps people overcome addiction.

Councilman Miller thanked everybody for attending and hopes everyone has a safe July 4th holiday. He also congratulated all the graduating students. He noted on July 16 Secretary Joshua Kurtz from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources will be at the Tea Barn at Fair Hill to discuss possible future events at Fair Hill and encouraged everybody to attend. He also noted July 19 to the 27 will be the Annual Cecil County Fair and encouraged everybody to attend.

Vice President Meffley thanked everybody for coming to the meeting. He noted he attended the Earleville Citizen Association Meeting and discussed issues with permits and the Earleville Post Office. He also attended the retirement celebration for Corporal Don Alexander on June 28. He noted the Farm Museum is breaking ground for the construction of the new bathroom and kitchen facility. He also noted that he typically spends up to four hours a day on Council issues and assisting constituents on various issues and attending meetings.

Councilwoman Hamilton also thanked those who attended. She noted she attended the celebration for Morgan Miller being named the new Maryland State Librarian on June 28. She also wished everybody a Happy Independence Day.

President Gregory thanked everybody for attending. She also attended Corporal Don Alexander's retirement ceremony and also Lt. Ford of the Elkton Police Department retirement celebration. She noted the Salute to Veterans Celebration is on July 3rd at the North East Park. She also noted the North East Fireman Company carnival is ongoing and encourage everybody to attend. She also noted that Council has complied with all Open Meeting Act requirements and outlined the enhancements done for this year's budget hearing including live streaming, closed captioning, advanced sign ups as well as sign up at the door and the additional accommodations for everybody to attend.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution to approve a two (2) year agreement between the County and Schneider Electric to manage the Decarbonization Project which includes maximizing energy and utility efficiency, and a plan for compliance with the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2020; giving the public high-profile advances in sustainable energy and technology for healthier environments for citizens and employees; updating neglected, aging facilities and systems; and modernizing technology and improving maintenance efficiency. The total value of the contract is not to exceed four (4) million dollars and is being funded by the VLT Fund, which is already approved by the Council.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on July 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on July 16, 2024.

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 to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 60%. He also noted the County has used some funds for various projects, but this two-year program will replace the Administrative Building HVAC and assist in the reporting on the emissions reduction.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of John Gainey to the Police Accountability Board, completing the term of Stephen Miller, which will expire on December 31, 2025.

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 that Mr. Gainey will undergo the required training in September. Vice President Meffley inquired on the number of applicants for the PAB and Director Overbay noted they continuously post for volunteers for this Board.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on July 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on July 16, 2024.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution to confirm the reappointment by the County Executive of Chad Johnston to the Planning Commission to a three-year term expiring July 21, 2026 and the appointment of Bryan Dugger to the Planning Commission, replacing Wyatt Wallace, to a three year term expiring July 16, 2027

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted Mr. Johnston is a reappointment and Mr. Dugger is a new appointment and both are well qualified candidates. He also thanked Wyatt Wallce for his many years of service.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on July 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on July 16, 2024.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

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

A Resolution to confirm the reappointment by the County Executive of Kristin Ortt to the Board of License Commissioners to a three-year term that will expire on June 30, 2027.

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

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on July 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on July 16, 2024.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 28-2024 - Appointment – Board of Library Trustees – Erin Dymowski and Jennifer Adams

A Resolution to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of Erin Dymowski to the Board of Library Trustees, completing the term of Tanya Area, which will expire on February 14, 2027, and to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of Jennifer Adams to the Board of Library Trustees, replacing Steven Pearson, to a five-year term that will expire on February 28, 2029.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 18, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on July 2, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted the process for these appointments and believes they are both well qualified. He also thanked Steve Person for his years of service.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 28-2024, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

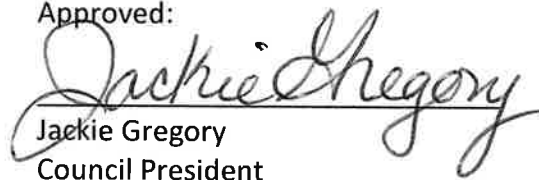
Roll call vote: Hamilton – Y, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y
The motion was approved 5 to 0.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Councilman Miller, seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, President Gregory adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm.

Council President Gregory announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building. The legislative session will be livestreamed at the county's webpage at www.ccgov.org/council. The recording and transcription will be uploaded to the county's website as soon as possible.

Approved:


Jackie Gregory
Council President

Attest:


David M. Culver
Council Manager