

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2024-21
December 17, 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:

Al Miller, Council President
Robert Meffley, Vice President
Rebecca Hamilton, Council Member
Donna Culberson, Council Member
Dawn Branch, 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 December 17, 2024, was called to order by Council President Miller at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

OPENING PRAYER/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Pastor Sean Hurm of Cherry Hill Church in Elkton gave the opening prayer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion made by Vice President Meffley, seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, the Council moved to approve the agenda of December 17, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Councilwoman Hamilton, seconded by Vice President Meffley, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the legislative session of December 3, 2024. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sean Brimm of North East spoke on the Ethics Commission and open meetings.
Christine Sharp of Elkton spoke on strategic goals and reporting.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Culberson noted the intel numbers for the previous week. She noted that no overdose deaths occurred during this period and out of 54 weeks this year 28 had no overdose deaths. This is a credit to the various organizations. She also noted she attended the Sheriff's Office Banquet and congratulated both the Deputy and Corrections Officers of the Year.

Councilwoman Hamilton thanked everybody for attending. She noted she attended the MACO Conference. The State budget deficit, energy policy, housing and the Blueprint were the topics of several meetings. She also wished everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Councilwoman Branch also attended the MACO Conference and noted that the State budget and mandates were heavily discussed. She also attended the Cecil County Board of Education Support Staff Person of the Year award on December 16. She also attendee the Public Works luncheon and thanked the Leeds Elementary and Elkton High School choirs for performing at the Administrative Building.

Vice President Meffley noted he also attended the MACO Conference and noted he attended several seminars. He also noted the Upper Shore Regional Council Meeting was held at the conference as well as the Rural County Delegation Meeting and the Clean Chesapeake Coalition

Meeting. He also attended the Sheriff's Office Banquet and congratulated the deputies and correctional officers for the great event.

President Miller noted he attended the MACO Conference and thanked the staff at MACO for such an informative conference. He also attended the Sheriff's Office Banquet and congratulated the deputies and correctional officers

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Bill No. 2024-24 - Expedited Legislation - Public Safety Pension Plan – Amendment 10 – Deferred Retirement Option Plan

A Bill to approve the 10th amendment to the Cecil County Pension Plan for Public Service Employees to provide for changes to the Deferred Retirement Option Plan.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024, with a Public Hearing scheduled for January 21, 2025 and scheduled for consideration on January 21, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted the DROP program will add flexibility for the Sheriff's Office to work with employees who reached retirement time and would like to be retainers. He noted that employee must have 25 years of service to enter into the program and must retire within 5 years of entering the program. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if this will be funded by the existing pension plan and Director Schneckenburger noted the pension fund will be able to cover the costs. Vice President Meffley noted most Counties have this program and this should be helpful for the Sheriff's Office to retain and recruit employees.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 60-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Office of Economic Development – MARBIDCO – Agriculture Microgrant Program.

A resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 in order to provide a total of \$39,000 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund, Office of Economic Development in order to record the cost share grant awarded from the Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) for the purpose of matching funds towards the Agriculture Microgrant program in Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted this grant, along with the grant in Resolution 61-2024 will help fund the microgrant program in Cecil County. President Miller noted this is a great program and hopes it will continue into the future.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 61-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Office of Economic Development – Upper Shore Regional Council – Agricultural Microgrant Program

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$40,000.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund, Office of Economic Development, in order to record the grant awarded from the Upper Shore Regional Council, for the purpose of an Agriculture Microgrant Program in Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted this is an additional \$40,000 for the microgrant program and that \$1,000 of this will go towards marketing.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 62-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grants – Economic Development – Supplement Marketing Costs

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 in order to provide a total of \$126,018 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund- Office of Economic Development, to record the grant awarded from the Maryland Department of Commerce, for the purpose of allowing the County to supplement marketing costs and to increase the effect and impact of marketing activities beyond the ability of local funds

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted this grant will be used for tourism marketing and economic development.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 63-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Department of Information Technology – State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$212,152 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund, Department of Information Technology awarded from the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) for the purpose of cybersecurity software purchases, in the total amount of \$212,152

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted this is the second grant received to assist the IT Department in the implementation of the cybersecurity software needed to be in compliance with the applicable State and federal regulations.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 64 -2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Community Services – Opioid Affected Youth Initiative Grant

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$741,981.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund – Fund 198, Department 536 to record a 3-year, Federal grant awarded from the United States Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Grant to provide trauma therapy services for children and their caregivers, bereavement support, parenting classes, substance use prevention activities and administrative support.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Deputy Director of Finance Andrew Ondish noted this is a multi-year grant to provide youth services for children and caregivers. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if this will be added to the FY26 Budget and Deputy Director Ondish noted it would show up in subsequent budgets.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 65-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Motor Vehicle Fund – Cecil Transit

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide \$623,279.00, of which \$273,000.00 is carryover funding and \$350,279.00 is an additional funding request, in expenditure authority for the Motor Vehicle Fund 750 for Transit Busses, Vans & Equipment within the Motor Vehicle Fund.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Deputy Director of Finance Andrew Ondish noted this amendment is correcting an error in the carryover funds from the FY24 to FY25 budget for the purchase of four new vehicles, three small busses and one utility vehicle, for Cecil Transit.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 66-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Community Services – Cecil Transit Division – American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$2,314,256.00 to the Community Services Grants Fund – Department of Community Services, Fund 109, Department 52 to record an ARPA Grant awarded from the Federal Transit Administration through the Maryland Transit Administration to provide operational support.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Deputy Director of Finance Andrew Ondish noted this is the ARPA funding that is being moved into this year budget.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 67-2024 - Grant Application – Community Development Block Grant – Recovery Housing Program – Voices of Hope, Inc.

A Resolution to authorize the Cecil County Department of Community Services, Housing and Community Development Division, to apply for funding not to exceed \$521,180.00 from the Maryland Community Development Block Grant – Recovery Housing Program through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development to acquire property on behalf of the proposed subrecipient, Voices of Hope, Inc. Grant funds will support property acquisition, closing costs, appraisal and inspection, minor renovations and administrative support.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024, with a Public Hearing scheduled for January 7, 2025 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025

Deputy Director of Finance Andrew Ondish noted this resolution is seeking permission to apply for a CDBG grant to purchase and renovate property for a women and children shelter that will be operated by Voices of Hope. Councilwoman Culberson inquired if Voices of Hope would be responsible for the property and Deputy Director Ondish noted they would and that the agreement with them would list the conditions for operation.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 68-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Sheriff's Office – Medication Supported Recovery Project

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$320,000.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund, Sheriff's Office in order to record the grant awarded from the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention for the purpose of Medication Supported Recovery.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted this grant is for the medication program at the Detention Center.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 69-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Sheriff’s Office – MOUD in Detention Centers

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$ 689,975.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund, Sheriff’s Office in order to record the grant awarded from the Cecil County Health Department, LBHA, State Opioid Response IV.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 17, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 7, 2025.

Director of Administration Dan Schneckenburger noted this grant is to fund program to help those with addiction at the Detention Center get treatment. Vice President Meffley inquired if this is just for treatment and not medication and Director Schneckenburger noted that is correct.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 56-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Sheriff Office- Warrant Apprehension

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$25,000.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund – Sheriff’s Office - to record the grant awarded from the Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP) for the purpose Overtime, in the amount of \$21,400.00 and the purchase of a 2 SWAT Ballistic Shield, in the total amount of \$3,600.00

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 3, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on December 17, 2024.

No additional comments were offered.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Resolution 56-2024, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

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

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 57-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Department of Information Technology – State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in order to provide a total of \$73,664.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund – Department of Information Technology - awarded from the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (MDEM) for the purpose of cybersecurity software purchases, in the total amount of \$73,664.00

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 3, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on December 17, 2024.

No additional comments were offered.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Resolution 57-2024, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

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

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 58-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – Department of Economic Development - Economic Development Study

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in amount totaling \$100,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance to the Department of Economic Development. This additional appropriation is needed to fund a study on Economic Development.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 3, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on December 17, 2024.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted that she supports the study but feels that the scope of work should be developed and reviewed prior to the allocation of funding.

Vice President Meffley made a motion to approve Resolution 58-2024, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – N, Culberson – Y, Branch – Y, Meffley – Y, Miller - Y
The motion was approved 4 to 1.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 59-2024 – Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – Department of Information Technology - Development of a new County Website

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, in the amount totaling \$50,000 from the General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance to the Department of Information Technology to develop a new County website.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on December 3, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on December 17, 2024.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted that she supports the upgrade to website, but feels that the scope of work should be developed and reviewed prior to the allocation of funding

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to approve Resolution 59-2024, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch.

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

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #128

President Miller noted that the Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #128 is for \$512,543.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to lift from the table and approve Budget Amendment #128 in the amount of \$512,543. The motion was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

b. Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #129

President Miller noted that the Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #129 is for \$1,275,342.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to lift from the table and approve Budget Amendment #129 in the amount of \$1,275,342. The motion was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

The motion was approved unanimously.

- c. Rezoning File: 2024-01 APPLICANT: Robert J. Hodge. REQUEST: To Rezone 7.07 acres from Suburban Transition District (ST) to Heavy- Industrial District (M2) PROPERTY LOCATION: SE/S Side Pulaski Highway, West of North East, North East, MD, 21901. Election District: 5, Tax Map: 31A, Parcel: 863. PROPERTY OWNER: Robert J. Hodge. PRESENTLY ZONED: Suburban Transition Residential District (ST). PROPOSED ZONING: Heavy - Industrial District (M2).

Council Manager Culver read the rezoning application in the record.

Councilwoman Branch noted that she reviewed the records and that due to the circumstances when this property was rezoned to an ST that she believes that it was a mistake and that she would be supporting the request to rezone this property from ST to M2.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted that based on the Staff Report, Findings of Fact and the presumption that the Comprehensive Plan was correct when this property was zoned ST instead of M1 or M2, that she would not be able to support this request.

Vice President Meffley noted he reviewed the file and visited the site and does believe that the residential ST zoning is appropriate for this parcel and that a mistake was made during the Comprehensive Rezoning and would support the application.

President Miller noted that the Council does rely on the Planning Board recommendations, and they did not make one in this case. He noted he agreed with Vice President Meffley that a mistake was made on this parcel during the last Comprehensive rezoning, and he also supported this application.

Councilwoman Culberson noted she concurs with Staff Report and Finding of Fact and that no mistake was made for this parcel during the last Comprehensive Rezoning.

Vice President Meffley made a motion to approve Rezoning File 2024-01, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – N, Culberson – N, Branch – Y, Meffley – Y, Miller - Y
The motion was approved 3 to 2.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #130

President Miller noted that the Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #130 is for \$308,466.

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #130 in the amount of \$308,466. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

The motion was approved unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton, President Miller adjourned the meeting at 7:49 pm.

Council President Miller announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 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:



Al Miller
Council President

Attest:



David M. Culver
Council Manager