

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2021-18
September 21, 2021

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:

Robert Meffley, Council President
Jackie Gregory, Vice President
William H. Coutz, Council Member
Councilman Al Miller, Member
George Patchell, 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 September 21, 2021 was called to order by Council President Meffley at 7:00 p.m. Council President Meffley led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Council paused for a moment of silence in memory of Maryland State Police Trooper First Class Alec Elijah Cohen who succumbed to a medical related illness yesterday.

OPENING PRAYER

Council Member Miller introduced Pastor Andy Parrett, Sr. from Dogwood Church in Elkton, who led the opening prayer.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, the Council moved to approve the legislative agenda of September 21, 2021. Motion was approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATIONS/ CERTIFICATES

The Council presented a proclamation for Library Card Sign-Up Month was presented to Morgan Miller, Library Director.

PUBLIC HEARING

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Bill No. 2021-12 Residential Noise Ordinance

An Act to add new Chapter 250, Noise in Residential Areas, of the Code of Cecil County; to prohibit certain noises in certain areas during specified hours; to establish certain exceptions to this prohibition; to establish fines for violating this prohibition; and generally relating to noise.

The Bill was introduced on August 17, 2021, advertised on September 8, 2021 and September 15, 2021, and scheduled for public hearing on September 21, 2021.

James Massey, Council Manager, commented on the legislation. The administration had no comments. Councilman Coutz clarified that the daytime restrictions were removed and the fines were revised to be \$50, \$100, and \$300 by amendment.

Council President Meffley opened the public hearing for public comments.

Ron McNeill, Elkton, commented that his legislation should address businesses that play loud music, which can be heard in a residential zone. He also stated that the nighttime restrictions of 11pm to 6am should be revised to 9pm to 6am.

Russ Johnson, Elkton, stated that there was no mention on how a person could appeal the fine.

Gordon Spear, Elkton, commented that the legislation should include a decibel reading limit to record the noise level. He stated that the Sheriff's Office indicates that they are too busy with other calls to respond to a noise complaint.

Cindy Hurt, Chesapeake City, commented that the nighttime restrictions should begin at 10pm to be consistent with state regulations. She also stated that there are too many problems using decibel meters to measure noise.

Council President Meffley concluded the public hearing and announced that Bill No. 2021-12 will be considered for approval at the next legislative session on October 5, 2021.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the legislative session of September 7, 2021. Motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Heather Lyons, North East, commented in support of raising backyard chickens on 20,000 sf parcel.

Brittany Weygard, Elkton, commented in support of backyard chickens.

Christopher Abernethy, Chesapeake City, commented in opposition to school mask mandate.

Joe McDevitt, Elkton, comments in support of raising backyard chickens.

Pat Lyons, North East, commented in support of backyard chickens.

Barb Cox, North East, president of Whitaker Woods, commented in support of backyard chickens.

Matthew Beers, Elkton, commented on opposition to the Redistricting Commission legislation.

Becca McCuna, Perryville, commented in support of backyard chickens.

Tim Karschtner, North East, spoke in opposition of residential chickens.

Bob Gorman, Elkton, commented in support of backyard chickens.

Christina Perez, North East, commented in support of backyard chickens.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Vice President Gregory thanked the audience for attending and providing comments. She encouraged the public to participate in Cecil Cares Day on October 2 and the Maryland 5 Star event on October 14-17. She attended the Lincoln Day Dinner, Fall in the Park, and the Elkton Fallfest. She stated that public comment time restriction should be based on number of speakers. She also suggested bringing back Citizens Corner.

Councilman Coutz thanked the audience for attending and providing comments. He participated in the River Sweep in Port Deposit that included cleaning the shoreline and planting trees. He attended the Plant your Promise tree planting at Brantwood Park, sponsored by YES and DrugfreeCecil. He attended the Singerly Fire Company Banquet where Frank Muller was inducted into the Harford/Cecil Firemen's Hall of Fame and Maryland State Firemen's Hall of Fame.

Councilman Patchell thanked the audience for attending and read a letter that he was resigning as Council Member and his last day in office will be Sunday, October 17.

Councilman Miller thanked the audience for attending. He attended CASA Casino Night to benefit foster children. He also attended the Singerly Fire Company banquet in honor of Frank Muller who he praised for his work with the Emergency Medical program and youth. He stated that he was preparing to attend the Farm Bureau's convention.

Council President Meffley attended the Lincoln Day Dinner. He presented a proclamation for National Recovery Week to the Health Department's Behavior Council. He attended the Plant a Tree Promise program at Brantwood Park. He stated that the Elkton Rotary Club is proposing to donate equipment to Brantwood Park. He is working with the fire companies to establish a tower to be used in training volunteers. He said that he is looking into concerns about opportunities for students to enroll in virtual classroom instruction.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Bill No. 2021-14 Public Schools – Bus Safety - Cameras

An Act to amend the Code of Cecil County, Chapter 101 Schools, to add Section 101-3 School Bus Safety Cameras in order to authorize the use of school bus monitoring cameras on school buses in Cecil County; to authorize certain enforcement and to provide that certain violations are a civil penalty; to provide for the use of fines; and generally relating to enforcement of traffic laws in Cecil County.

The administration provided their comments during the work session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Introduced, read first time, and order posted on September 21, 2021. The Bill will be scheduled for public hearing on October 19, 2021.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 54-2021 Approval – Agreement – Cecil County Fraternal Order of Police

A Resolution to approve the collective bargaining agreement between Cecil County and the Sheriff of Cecil County and the Cecil County Lodge 2, Fraternal Order of Police, Inc., to be effective July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2025.

Lawrence Scott, County Attorney, provided introductory comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 47-2021 Approval - Annexation - Town of Elkton – Belle Hill Road et al - Zoning Designation

A Resolution to approve the request from the Town of Elkton that the zoning of the property, located on Belle Hill Road, Swallow Drive, and Elkton Road; also known as the Preston and Laetitia Ayars Property, which is being annexed into the Town, be changed from High Density Residential (RM) to the Town's Highway Interchange Commercial (C-3) zone.

The Resolution was introduced and posted on August 3, 2021 and public hearing held and concluded on September 7, 2021.

Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, read a letter from County Executive Hornberger requesting that the Council delay consideration until the State Highway Administration provides a response regarding the proposed break in access at MD 279.

There were no Council questions or comments.

Vice President Gregory made a motion to table consideration for two weeks pending the letter from SHA. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Councilman Coutz made a motion to approve Resolution No. 47-2021, which was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-N, Meffley-Y

The motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 1. Vice President Gregory was opposed.

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 52-2021 Appointment – Redistricting Commission -2021

A Resolution to appoint members and chair to the Redistricting Commission for 2021 to develop and present a councilmanic redistricting based on the 2020 Census by November 15, 2021.

The administration had no comments. Vice President Gregory stated that she will vote against this legislation because the Council appointed Carl Roberts as chair of the commission and stated that there was a lack of discussion over naming the chair. Council President Meffley stated that the Republican and Democratic Central Committees had submitted nominees that included current members of the central committee. When the Council discovered this, the Council requested additional nominees to replace the nominees who were central committee members. He also stated that four Council Members supported Dr. Roberts to chair the committee.

Council Member Coutz made a motion to approve Resolution No. 52-2021, which was seconded by Council Member Miller.

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-N, Meffley-Y

The motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 1. Vice President Gregory was opposed.

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 53-2021 Appointment—Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board- Paul Drummond

A Resolution to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of Paul Drummond to the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board, for a five year term to expire on August 1, 2026.

There were no administration comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Councilman Coutz made a motion to approve Resolution No. 53-2021, which was seconded by Vice President Gregory.

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y

The motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

NEW BUSINESS

Cecil County Public Schools – Budget Amendment #90

Councilman Coutz made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #90, in the amount of \$18,664,974 for July/August 2021, which was seconded by Vice President Gregory. The Council unanimously approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Vice President Gregory, seconded by Councilman Coutz, Council President Meffley adjourned the meeting at 8:14 p.m.

Council President Meffley announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building. The public may attend and participate. The legislative session will continue to be livestreamed in real time 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.

Attest:


James Massey
Council Manager

Approved:


Robert Meffley
Council President