

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2021-01
January 5, 2021

The County Council of Cecil County met in legislative session in an online virtual meeting because of the current health crisis and based on the Governor's orders to avoid public meetings. Council Members, presenters and members of the public participated in this meeting by going online to www.ccgov.org/council and selecting "livestream".

The following members of the Council were present:

Robert Meffley, Council President
Al Miller, Council Member
Jackie Gregory, Vice President
William H. Coutz, Council Member
George Patchell, Council Member

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the County Council of Cecil County of January 5, 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.

ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council President Meffley asked for a roll call of attending Council Members. The Council Manager called the roll and recorded the following Council Members in attendance:

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Present, Miller-Present, Patchell-Present, Gregory-Present, Meffley-Present.

Council President Meffley announced that there were five Council Members present, which constitute a quorum.

SUSPENSION OF RULES

Councilman Coutz made a motion to suspend the rules to allow Council Members who are connected to participate and vote in this legislative session, because of the current health crisis and orders by the Governor to avoid public meetings. The motion was seconded by Vice President Gregory.

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y
The motion was approved unanimously.

OPENING PRAYER

Councilman Miller introduced Pastor John Groth from Ebenezer United Methodist Church in Rising Sun, 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 January 5, 2021. Motion was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Councilman Miller, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the legislative session of December 15, 2020. Motion was approved unanimously.

On motion made by Vice President Gregory, seconded by Councilman Coutz, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the special legislative session of December 22, 2020. Motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Katherine Johnston, Elkton, commented on the need to open public schools.

Joyce Bowlsbey, Elkton, commented on the fiscal note for MARBIDCO resolutions.

Jeanne Minner, Town of Elkton, commented that she was available for questions on Resolution No. 67-2020.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Vice President Gregory thanked the audience for attending and wished everyone a Happy New Year. She commended Youth Empowerment Source (YES) for receiving a federal grant to support their drug-free programs. She commented on the start of COVID vaccinations and advised the public to go to the State website for more information. She also commented that those who are struggling with paying utilities bills should contact the Office of Home Energy for assistance.

Councilman Coutz wished everyone a Happy New Year and hoped that they had a pleasant holiday. He reported on calls for emergency services and stated that mental health calls have surged. He stated that the overdose total for 2020 was 522, which is 14% reduction from last year. He stated that there have been 44 fatal overdoses in 2020.

Councilman Patchell welcomed the audience and wishes them a Happy New Year.

Councilman Miller stated that he celebrated Christmas with his wife and was blessed to have his 93 year old parents. He stated that he was working with the Health Department to find a large facility for COVID testing.

Council President Meffley stated that many residents are struggling with utility costs and that he had helped them contact the home energy program for assistance. He also stated the he caught the COVID virus over the holidays.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 01-2021: Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Tourism – Winter Lights Cecil Nights

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 in order to provide a total of \$5,000 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund- Office of Economic Development – Tourism to record the grant awarded from the Upper Shore Regional Council for the purpose of a “Winter Lights-Cecil Nights” Marketing Campaign in Cecil County.

Sandra Turner, Tourism Director, provided introductory comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Introduced, read first time, order posted and scheduled for consideration on January 19, 2021.

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 02-2021: Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – MARBIDCO – Micro Ag Grant Program

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, in order to provide a total of \$14,000 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund- Office of Economic Development to record the cost share grant awarded from the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) for the purpose of matching funds towards the Micro Ag-Grant program in Cecil County.

James Appel, Finance Director, provided introductory comments. Steve Overbay, Economic Development Director, and Maureen O’Shea, Ag-Business Coordinator, provided additional explanation. Council questions and comments ensued.

Introduced, read first time, order posted and scheduled for consideration on January 19, 2021.

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 03-2021: Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Upper Shore Regional Council – Micro Ag Grant Program

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021 in order to provide a total of \$16,000 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund- Office of Economic Development to record the grant awarded from the Upper Shore Regional Council for the purpose of a Micro Ag-Grant program in Cecil County.

Maureen O’Shea, Ag-Business Coordinator, provided comments. Council questions and comments ensued.

Introduced, read first time, order posted and scheduled for consideration on January 19, 2021.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 66-2020 Appointment—Department of Social Services Board – Dianne Fox

A Resolution to confirm the appointment of Dianne Fox to the Department of Social Services Board for three (3) year term to expire June 30, 2023.

The Resolution was introduced on December 15, 2020 and scheduled for consideration on January 5, 2021.

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

Councilman Coutz made a motion to approve Resolution No. 66-2020, which was seconded by Council President Meffley.

Roll call vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y

The motion was approved unanimously.

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 67-2020 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.

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

Vice President Gregory made a motion to table Resolution No. 67-2020, which was seconded by Councilman Coutz.

Roll call vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y

The motion to table Resolution No. 67-2020 was approved unanimously.

Council Members discussed when the Council could move back to the Elk Room for regular sessions. Council President Meffley stated that the Governor has limited group meetings to ten persons. After discussion, the Council by consensus agreed to wait for the Governor to increase the number of persons permitted in an indoor gathering.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, Council President Meffley adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

The next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., which is planned as a virtual meeting because of the current health crisis. The session will be livestreamed on the

County Council’s webpage. Members of the public who do not have broadband access should contact the Council Office for instructions to be connected via telephone.

Approved:

Attest:


James Massey
Council Manager


Robert Meffley
Council President