

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2022-07
March 22, 2022

The County Council of Cecil County met in emergency 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
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 March 22, 2022, was called to order by Council President Meffley at 7:00 p.m. Council President Meffley led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

RECONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Massey stated for the record:

Resolution No. 09-2022 Supplemental Appropriation and Budget Transfer – Debt Service - Salaries and Fringe Benefits

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, in order to provide an additional \$2,815,266 to the General Fund-Salaries and Fringe Benefits Allocation. The Resolution will reduce the General Funds' Inter-Operating Transfer to the Debt Service Fund, due to lower interest expense in FY2022 as a result of the refinancing of the County's debt. This decrease in the inter-operating transfer will provide the increase to the Salaries and Fringe Benefits Allocation.

The Resolution was introduced and posted on February 15, 2022 and scheduled for approval on March 15, 2022.

Council President Meffley stated that the Council had voted 2 to 2 at the legislative session on March 15, 2022. Since that time, additional information has been provided by the administration regarding this proposal. He expressed his thanks to the administration for answering questions on the 2021 bond refinancing, COVID grant and American Rescue Plan Act to clarify the funding source for this legislation.

Councilman Coutz made a motion to rescind Council actions taken on March 15, 2022 so that the Council can reconsider this legislation. Councilman Miller seconded the motion.

Council President Meffley asked Council Manager Massey to call the roll call vote for the motion.

Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Culberson-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y
The motion was carried unanimously.

Each Council Members made a statement regarding issues related to Resolution No. 09-2022.

Councilman Miller explained his original objection to the legislation. He stated that he attempted to table the Bill for consideration until the next legislation session. He stated that the County Executive's press release, which was posted on the county's website, included false statements. He stated his support to pay county employees and keep the County moving.

Councilman Coutz stated that Council Members were accused of defunding the police and explained that the proposed legislation had no effects on law enforcement's salaries and fringes. He stated that he continues to have serious concerns on the use of the bond fund savings, COVID grant and ARPA grants. He stated that this situation should never happen again, and that the process should be transparent. He said that law enforcement and county employees should not be used as pawns in a political game. He stated that the Sheriff's Office will lose an entire patrol in the next month and that this loss of staff is not sustainable. He stated that the administration should renegotiate the union contract to increase the salaries because public safety is the first responsibility of County officials. He stated that the County Executive's accusation that the Council defunded the police is a false statement.

Vice President Gregory stated that the Executive and Council President had agreed on supporting a salary increases on November 4, 2021. She reread the Executive's press release and stated that the proposal implemented phase 3 of the salary study, the 6% COLA, the Sheriff's Office bonuses, additional funding for the State's Attorney's staff, and raising salaries of the dispatchers. She explained that union members in the Sheriff's Office already received a comparable package. She stated that the administration provided information on the amount each department received and the number of employees receiving the increase, which had been requested by the Council.

Councilwoman Culberson stated that the Council had received information about the proposed increase in salaries and fringes already. She said that the administration had provided an itemized list of the amounts of increases by departments and number of employees.

Council President Meffley stated that he had agreed with the Executive to fund \$1M to the Sheriff's Office for salary increases, but he objected to the administration determining the allocation to Sheriff's Office employees instead of allowing the Sheriff to allocate. He agreed that the employees should receive a salary increase but the funding had not been approved when it was given. He suggested that officials should call him directly rather than issue a press release. He said that it was a lesson learned.

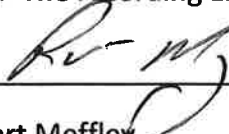
Council President Meffley asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 09-2022. A motion was made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, to approve Resolution No. 09-2022.

Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Culberson-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y
The motion was carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, Council President Meffley adjourned the meeting at 7:21 p.m.

Council President Meffley announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, 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.



Robert Meffley
Council President

Attest:



James Massey
Council Manager