

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2026-06
March 17, 2026

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

Al Miller, Council President
Robert Meffley, Council 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.cecilcountymd.gov

CALL TO ORDER

The March 17, 2026 Legislative Session of the Cecil County Council was called to order by Council President Miller at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLIEGIANCE

President Miller led all those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPENING PRAYER/MOMENT OF SILENCE

President Miller requested a moment of silence regarding the passing of Cecil County Government employee Dave Palmer on March 16th, adding that Mr. Palmer is Council Executive Assistant Christine Palmer's father-in-law.

Pastor Richard Berry, Faith Southern Baptist Church, Elkton, Maryland offered the Opening Prayer

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On a motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton, the Council moved to approve the agenda of March 17, 2026. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made by Vice President Meffley, seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Legislative Session of March 3, 2026.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sean Brimm, North East, spoke of the need to proactively fund construction of schools.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Culberson provided Emergency Services Intel for the previous week, reporting 227 calls for service, 16 of which were mental health related; 44 domestic calls, 26 of which were physical; and 4 overdose calls, 1 of which resulted in a fatality.

Councilwoman Hamilton stated she attended the County Economic Development Commission meeting on March 4th, during which Mary Kane, President & CEO, Maryland Chamber of Commerce, provided an overview of the business climate in Maryland.

Councilwoman Hamilton advised Council that Ms. Kane reported Oregon's legislature recently passed a Constitutional amendment that prohibits the State from imposing new, mandatory programs or increased service levels on local governments without providing funding.

Councilwoman Hamilton stated that Ms. Kane commented on new Legislators who are reaching across the aisle, seeking ways to support businesses in Maryland.

Councilwoman Branch wished all in attendance a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Councilwoman Branch stated she attended the Decoy Book Store ribbon cutting event on March 14th at West Creek Village in North East and encouraged support of small businesses.

Councilwoman Branch reported that she and Councilwoman Hamilton have been attending Legislative Committee meetings through the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo).

Vice President Meffley reported that he serves on the Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) and commended the group for working through recent issues.

Vice President Meffley stated he participated in the Chesapeake City St. Patrick's Day parade on March 14th, adding that he dressed as a leprechaun for the event. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to interact with citizens during community events.

Vice President Meffley stated he participated in the Read Across America event at Holly Hall Elementary School on March 3rd, during which he read to 2nd and 4th grade students.

Vice President Meffley stated he attended the District 36 Night event in Annapolis on March 9th during which he spoke with delegations from several counties. He stated several bills that can affect Cecil County will be monitored over the next two weeks.

President Miller stated he attended the Noxious Weed Board meeting on March 10th, stating that the Roads Division will continue to spray weeds in a timely fashion. He added that, during the meeting, he heard numerous comments commending the County's Roads Division for snow and ice removal operations during recent winter storm events.

President Miller thanked the audience for attending the meeting.

President Miller stated he attended the Chesapeake City St. Patrick's Day parade on March 14th and expressed appreciation to the Town of Chesapeake City for hosting the well-attended event.

President Miller stated the Farm Bureau 94th Annual Banquet will be held on March 21st.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 08-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 08-2026 Appointment – Local Management Board – Betty Johnson, Rachel Wright, Suanne Blumberg, George Stanko and Stephen Yates

A Resolution to confirm the reappointments of Betty Johnson, Rachel Wright, Suanne Blumberg, George Stanko and Stephen Yates to the Local Management Board to terms which expire on April 1, 2031

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 17, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on April 7, 2026

Director of Finance Raymond Hamm, attending on behalf of Director of Administration Schneckenburger, stated that Administration supports the appointees, whose experiences include Law Enforcement, Cecil County Public Library and counseling services.

Resolution No. 09-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 09-2026 Appointment – Board of Library Trustees – Ravi Gupta

A Resolution to confirm the reappointment of Ravi Gupta to the Board of Library Trustees to a term that will expire on April 6, 2031

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 17, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on April 7, 2026

Director Hamm stated that Administration supports the reappointment of Dr. Gupta, a long-term employee of W.L. Gore.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if the Board of Library Trustees is responsible for recommending Library Board appointees to the County Executive. Director Hamm responded in the affirmative.

Resolution No. 10-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 10-2026 Supplemental Appropriation – Wastewater Enterprise Fund – Department of Public Works – Wastewater Services – Washington Street Force Main Repair

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2026 to move expenditure authority from the Wastewater Enterprise Fund to the Department of Public Works – Wastewater Services, in the amount of \$200,000 for expenses related to the emergency repair of the Washington Street Force Main.

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 17, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on April 7, 2026

Deputy Director of Finance Andrew Ondish stated that expenses incurred during the Washington Street Force Main rupture were classified under Emergency Procurement, stating this expense is separate from planned maintenance and repairs identified in the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Resolution No. 11-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 11-2026 Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – Department of Public Works – Roads Division – Snow Removal

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriations Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2026 to move expenditure authority from the General Fund Balance to the Department of Public Works – Roads Division, in the amount of \$750,000 for expenses related to the removal of snow and ice from County roadways.

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 17, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on April 7, 2026

Deputy Director Ondish stated that Resolution No. 11-2026 provides funding for unanticipated expenses resulting from the recent winter storm events.

Resolution No. 12-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 12-2026 Approval – Amendment – Purchasing Manual

A Resolution to approve amendments to the Purchasing Manual, herein renamed as the Procurement Manual, effective July 1, 2026

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 17, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on April 7, 2026

Director Hamm stated that revisions and updates to the Procurement Manual, which had not been updated since 2018, were presented during the earlier Work Session. He added that the Procurement Manual is utilized throughout Cecil County Government.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried the source used for determination of meal allowances. Director Hamm stated Federal guidelines for Baltimore, Washington D.C. and Philadelphia were used to establish a meal allowance of \$95 per day. He added that the allowance is not provided if an employee is attending a conference or other event at which meals are provided.

Councilwoman Branch commended Procurement's multi-step approval process.

Director Hamm stated that the County Budget is not a guideline, but the authority which governs County spending.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried the process for emergency purchases, such as an employee who must purchase a generator, the cost of which exceeds their purchasing card limit.

Deputy Director Ondish stated that staff will be educated regarding confirmation of purchase card limits prior to purchasing items.

Deputy Director Ondish stated that a purchasing card limit may be temporarily increased under specific circumstances, but will be returned to its original limit soon thereafter.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 06-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 06-2026 Appointment – Adult Public Guardianship Review Board – Mary Falkenstein

A Resolution to confirm the reappointment of Mary Falkenstein to the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board to a term which expires April 1, 2029.

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 3, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on March 17, 2026

Director Hamm stated that Administration supports the reappointment of Mary Falkenstein to the Adult Public Guardianship Review Board, adding that Ms. Falkenstein is trained in Psychology and serves as the Executive Director of the Bay Side Community Network.

President Miller requested a motion to approve Resolution No. 06-2026.

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to approve Resolution No. 06-2026, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

Roll Call Vote: Hamilton – Y, Culberson – Y, Branch – Y, Meffley – Y, Miller – Y

The motion was approved 5-0.

Resolution No. 07-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 07-2026 Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – State of Maryland – State Department of Assessments and Taxation

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 to move expenditure authority from the General Fund Balance to the State of Maryland – State Department of Assessments and Taxation in the amount of \$275,495 for the additional funds to correct an administrative discrepancy.

Introduced by Council President at the request of the County Executive

Introduced and ordered posted on March 3, 2026; and scheduled for consideration on March 17, 2026

Deputy Director Ondish stated Resolution No. 07-2026 provides for reconciliation of a billing error from the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT).

Councilwoman Culberson queried if the error occurred within SDAT. Deputy Director Ondish answered in the affirmative.

President Miller requested a motion to approve Resolution No. 07-2026.

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to approve Resolution No. 07-2026, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch.

Roll Call Vote: Hamilton – Y, Culberson – Y, Branch – Y, Meffley – Y, Miller – Y

The motion was approved 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #146

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #146, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

Roll Call Vote: Hamilton – Y, Culberson – Y, Branch – Y, Meffley – Y, Miller – Y

The motion was approved 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

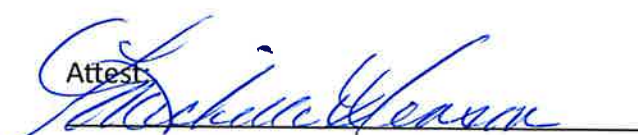
On a motion made by Councilwoman Branch, seconded by Councilwoman Culberson and approved by all present, President Miller adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Council President Miller announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building. The Legislative Session will be livestreamed on the County's webpage at www.cecilcountymd.gov The recording and transcription will be uploaded to the County's website as soon as possible.

Approved:


Al Miller, Council President

Attest:


L. Michelle Henson, Council Manager