

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES**

June 2, 2026

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

4:30 P.M.

NOTE: The recording and transcription of this meeting are available on the County website at www.cecilcountymd.gov

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, Al Miller, Rebecca Hamilton, Donna Culberson and Dawn Branch; Council Manager L. Michelle Henson; Council Executive Assistant Christine Palmer; members of the Administration and members of the public.

Call to Order

President Miller called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and announced that there were five Council Members present which constitute a quorum.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Vice President Meffley and seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council Work Session of March 24, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion

Final Deliberation FY2027 Budget

President Miller queried Council for final comments regarding the Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Budget. Councilwoman Culberson, referring to Bill No. 2026-02, Amendment No. 1, stated that the request for a 4% cap regarding proposed salary adjustments pursuant to an internal salary study was based upon the lack of supporting data to justify the increases. Councilwoman Culberson read a copy of Amendment No. 1 synopsis into the record of the minutes. She advised employees that she is not against increased salaries and reiterated that her decision is based upon lack of data to justify the proposed increases. Councilwoman Culberson requested utilizing an independent contractor to conduct a salary study, adding that as a Council member she is required to justify her decisions. Councilwoman Culberson expressed concerns regarding the proposed salary increases, citing an instance of a 25% increase, reiterating her request for documentation.

Councilwoman Branch expressed opposition to Amendment No. 1, stating that increases in employee wages are necessary. She stated that minimum wage is \$15 per hour, adding that if that salary is increased to \$20 per hour the employee will be making about \$40,000 per year.

Councilwoman Culberson reiterated her request for backup data, stating she has a responsibility to taxpayers.

Vice President Meffley stated that he owns a business, adding that if he does not pay his employees well they will leave. He stated Cecil County recently lost an employee to Harford County, adding that a Harford County Council member expressed support for conducting an in-house salary study.

Vice President Meffley stated that the team which conducted the salary study talked with Department Directors, adding that an outside contractor would not know individual employees nor the specifics of their job.

Vice President Meffley expressed opposition to Amendment No. 1.

President Miller expressed opposition to Amendment No. 1. He stated that Human Resources (HR) Director Sally Dulin, HR Deputy Director Dawn Struble and Finance Deputy Director Andrew Ondish conducted the wage study and saved the County over \$100,000.

Councilwoman Culberson reiterated her request for supporting documentation.

Councilwoman Branch stated the proposed 4% cap is less than the average of the proposed increases.

Councilwoman Culberson stated that employees will receive a 2.5% step increase on their date of hire anniversary.

Deputy Director Ondish stated that step increases were included in proposed salary adjustment, adding that there will be no additional step increases, adding that the information was provided to Council at the beginning of FY27 Budget presentations.

Review of Legislative Agenda

Introduction of Resolutions

Resolution No. 26-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 26-2026 Appointment Local Management Board – Laura Hannan

Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated that Resolution No. 26-2026 provides for the appointment of Laura Hannan to the Local Management Board.

Councilwoman Hamilton queried if Ms. Hannan was a new appointment. Director of Administration Schneckenburger answered in the affirmative.

Consideration of Resolutions

Resolution No. 18-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 18-2026 Adoption Real Property and Personal Property Tax Rates – Fiscal Year 2027

Director of Administration Schneckenburger requested Council's approval of Resolution No. 18-2026 which reduces current tax rates.

Resolution No. 24-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 24-2026 Appointment – Commission on Aging – Matthew Lowder

Director of Administration Schneckenburger requested Council's support for Resolution No. 24-2026 which provides for the reappointment of Matthew Lowder to the Commission on Aging.

Resolution No. 25-2026

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Resolution No. 25-2026 Appointment – Board of Electricians – Paul Palmer

Director of Administration Schneckenburger requested Council's support for Resolution No. 25-2026 which provides for the reappointment of Paul Palmer to the Board of Electricians.

Councilwoman Culberson queried if applications other than Mr. Palmer's were received. Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated he did not know if applications other than Mr. Palmer's were received.

Call for Final Reading of Bills

Bill No. 2026-01

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Bill No. 2026-01 Capital Improvement Program FY2027-2031

Director of Administration Schneckenburger Bill No. 2026-01 provides for the 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as required by the County Charter.

Bill No. 2026-02

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Bill No. 2026-02 Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance – FY2027

Director of Administration Schneckenburger requested Council's approval of Bill No. 2026-02, subject to amendments.

Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2026-02 – Cap – Proposed Salary Adjustment

Councilwoman Branch, noting that Amendment No. 1 was previously discussed, requested that Council discuss Amendment No. 2 and Amendment No. 3 at this point.

Amendment No. 2 to Bill No. 2026-02 – Orphans’ Court Salary Adjustment

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Amendment No. 2 to Bill No. 2026-02 – Orphans’ Court Salary Adjustment

Councilwoman Culberson queried if the proposed decrease in the Orphans’ Court would be returned to the General Fund. Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated that the decrease would be returned to the General Fund if it were not utilized as proposed in Amendment No. 3.

Amendment No. 3 to Bill No. 2026-02 – Initiation of Feasibility Study – Mill Lane

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Amendment No. 3 to Bill No. 2026-02 – Initiation of Feasibility Study – Mill Lane

Vice President Meffley stated he requested funding to initiate a feasibility study regarding replacement of the Mill Lane bridge, which was damaged during a hurricane several years ago, resulting in closure of that portion of Mill Lane. He stated that the recent temporary closure of the bridge at Glebe Road exacerbated the issue residents face regarding detours. He added that emergency response is also affected by the closure of the Mill Lane bridge.

Vice President Meffley stated that a feasibility study will determine if replacement of the Mill Lane bridge and reopening of the road is warranted.

Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated that Administration supports initiation of the feasibility study, adding that if Amendment No. 3 is approved then the allocations listed on Amendment No. 3, which include the salary savings from the Orphans’ Court, will be utilized to initiate the feasibility study.

Councilwoman Culberson queried if the departments from which the funds will be drawn are aware of and support the decreases in their budgets. Director Schneckenburger answered in the affirmative.

Bill No. 2026-03 Authorization of Lease Purchase Equipment Financing

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Bill No. 2026-03 Authorization of Lease Purchase Equipment Financing

Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated that Bill No. 2026-03 is an annual Bill that permits the County to lease / purchase equipment.

Councilwoman Culberson queried if Bill No. 2026-03 provides replacement or addition of equipment. Deputy Director Ondish stated that equipment is replaced on a rolling schedule.

Bill No. 2026-04 Taxation – Tax Credit – Senior Citizens and Veterans

Council Manager Henson stated for the record:

Bill No. 2026-04 Taxation – Tax Credit – Senior Citizens and Veterans

Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated that Bill No. 2026-04 expands tax credit eligibility for senior citizens and Veterans.

Vice President Meffley stated he has received positive feedback from Veterans regarding the tax credit program.

Councilwoman Branch expressed support for Bill No. 2026-04, stating that it reduces residency requirements from 10 to 7 years.

Director of Administration Schneckenburger stated that County Executive Streight will travel throughout the County to provide public information regarding the tax credit program.

New Business

President Miller stated that he will request Council approval to move the June 16, 2026 Work Session and Legislative Session to the Elkton Municipal Building, 100 Railroad Avenue, Elkton, pursuant to Early Voting, which will be conducted at the County Administration Building during the time period June 11-18, 2026.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Henson advised Council that on March 28th, the Town of Charlestown hosted the “MD250th” kickoff event, coordinated by Director of the Office of Tourism Sandy Turner. She stated the event included Revolution-era reenactments, readings from Council, and readings of a Letter to the Future by County Executive Streight and a Letter to the Past, read by Mr. Ray Jefferson. She stated that Councilwoman Hamilton requested coordination of a few of the presentations at upcoming Council sessions, adding that a reenactor was scheduled during the Legislative Session at 7:00 pm.

Council Member Items

Vice President Meffley thanked those in the audience for attending the meeting and asked the attendees to come to future meetings.

Adjournment

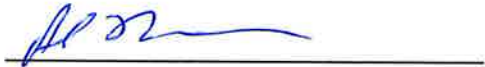
President Miller requested a motion to adjourn the Work Session.
Councilwoman Culberson made motion to adjourn the Work Session, which was seconded by Councilwoman Branch.
President Miller adjourned the work session at 5:02 pm.

President Miller announced that the next Work Session will be held on Tuesday, June 9, 2026 at 4:30 pm.

Approved:



L. Michelle Henson
Council Manager



Al Miller, Council President