

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
January 16, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Council Members: Vice President Dan Schneckenburger, Bob Meffley, George Patchell and Jackie Gregory; James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant, members of the press; and members of the public.

Absent: Council President Bowsbey

**OPEN SESSION – Elk Room**

**9:00 A.M.** –Vice President Schneckenburger called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and determined a quorum.

**NOTE:** Audio recording of this meeting is available on the County website [www.ccgov.org](http://www.ccgov.org).

**Approval of Minutes**

On a motion made by Councilwoman Gregory, seconded by Councilman Meffley, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of January 2, 2018, as presented. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0. Council President Bowsbey was absent.

**Chateau Bu-De Easement Donation**

Ann Carlson from the Maryland Environmental Trust and Katie Parks from the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy provided a presentation about the easements donation by the Chateau Bu-De.

Their organizations often partners in accepting environmental easements to protect acreage. Currently MET holds 43 conservation easements in Cecil County for a total of 6,866 acres. ESLC holds 16 conservation easements in Cecil County for a total of 3,685 acres.

The programs accepts donated easements in order to preserve scenic byways, agricultural, forest and water resources. Easements given by property owners are permanently in their programs. Property owners are provided federal tax deductions, state income tax credit and state property tax credit for a specified number of years.

They also noted that Chateau Bu-De is in close proximity to the new Bohemia River State Park. Council questions and comments ensued.

**Broadband Update**

David Black, GIS Coordinator, reported on the progress of the county's Broadband Committee. The committee is composed of Brian Miller, IT Director; Eric Sennstrom, Director, Land Use and Development Services; Lisa Saxton, Acting Finance Director; Chris Moyer, Director, Economic Development; and Mr. Black.

Mr. Black reviewed the history of broadband and the Council's task force recommendations. After the task force made their report, Scott Flanigan, Director of Public Works, was assigned to lead the

administration's broadband efforts. They discovered that businesses along Route 40 were currently being served with adequate broadband.

Mr. Black summarized the value of broadband to the community in more jobs, a better economy, and public safety concerns.

He also dispelled several myths about broadband that the residents may believe. These myths included the county's ability to force broadband vendors to connect to residents, limitation of franchise agreements, limits on connection to existing lines, and the differences between long distance, middle mile and last mile providers. Mr. Black also stated that Verizon has no plans to bring FIOS to Cecil County.

Mr. Black described the steps that the committee had taken to map the locations where broadband service is provided and identified eighty areas without services. The committee identified that the major problem of expanding broadband service to unserved areas is that it is not economically feasible for the vendors. He discussed the possible use of Wi-Fi in unserved areas that have flat geography but Wi-Fi must be connected to broadband fiber at the tower locations.

Mr. Black illustrated a model of expansion, the vendor estimates that the cost to serve nine houses in a rural area is \$33,900. The vendor is only willing to spend \$23,000, based on their business plan. There is shortage of \$10,900 that vendors ask the homeowners to pay.

The committee is developing a plan to fill broadband gaps by getting support from broadband providers. They suggest that the county government could fund the gap and ask residents to pay back over time.

Council questions and comments ensued.

#### **Legislative Request of Sheriff's Office regarding Community Correction**

Vice President Schneckenburger stated that Sheriff Scott Adams has requested support from the County Council of legislation to adjust language in the State Annotated Code to comply with the Justice Reinvestment Act. This local bill will change the old language of "Community Adult Rehabilitation" to new language of "Community Corrections Facility".

Council Members agreed by consensus to send a letter of support to Delegate Hornberger for the Cecil County Delegation.

#### **Review of Legislative Agenda**

Jason Allison, County Attorney, provided introductory comments on Resolution No.01-2018 Appointment- Human Services Agency – George Stanko, which will be introduced at tonight's session.

**Council Manager Report**

Mr. Massey updated Council Members about upcoming meetings and events.

**Council Member Comments**

Councilwoman Gregory attended Cecil Night in Annapolis and commented on the valuable opportunity to network with other legislators. She attended the Soil Conservation District Banquet and commented on the impressive background and achievements of James Yale, the Cooperator of the Year. She attended the Community Fire Company of Perryville banquet and commented on their invaluable contributions to the community. She stated that Steps to Recovery is sponsoring a showing of the film, Chasing the Dragon, at the Havre de Grace Library on January 24 at 5:30 pm.

Councilman Meffley attended the Economic Development Commission meeting and will speak more about the meeting at tonight's session. He also attended the Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast and commented on the inspiring speaker.

Councilman Patchell will provide his comments at tonight's session.

Vice President Schneckeburger attended the Economic Development Commission meeting and commented on the Town of North East adding twenty new businesses in 2017. He met with Jimmy Rhee, Special Secretary to the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs, and stated that there are grant opportunities that Cecil County should explore. He attended Cecil Night in Annapolis and commented on the good attendance. He also attended the Soil Conservation District banquet and Community Fire Company of Perryville banquet. He commented on the Big Elk Creek Bridge Replacement project and the long detour anticipated.

**Adjournment**

The Council work session was adjourned by Vice President Schneckeburger at 10:16 a.m.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 9 a.m.

Attest:  
  
James Massey  
Council Manager

Approved:  
  
Dan Schneckeburger, Vice President