

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
June 18, 2019

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, William Coutz, Al Miller, George Patchell and Jackie Gregory; James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant, John Downs, Council Attorney; members of the press; and members of the public.

Absent: Councilman Miller

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

9:00 A.M. –Council President Meffley called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and determined a quorum.

NOTE: Audio and video recording with transcription of this meeting are available on the County website www.ccgov.org.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Vice President Gregory, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of June 11, 2019, as presented.

Motion was approved unanimously.

Cashless Tolling on Hatem Bridge

John O’Neill, Acting Executive Director, Maryland Transportation Authority, stated that cashless tolling will be implemented at the Hatem Bridge in October 2019. He stated that this change will have no effect on the current Hatem A and B EZ-Pass, which will continue to be offered at \$20 annually. The public can obtain a Hatem Bridge transponder at no cost and with no monthly fee.

Cash will no longer be accepted at the Hatem Bridge, but there will be three cash service centers in Perryville, I-95, and Elkton where cash will be accepted. The toll plaza will be removed and toll gantries installed that will read EZ-Pass transponders and record license plates of vehicles. Toll gantries will be located at the Harford County side of Hatem Bridge. He commented that the Hatem EZ-Pass program was not intended for use by trucks with multiple axles. MDTA is looking at options for automobiles pulling a boat trailer.

Advantages of removing the toll plaza include allowing traffic to maintain their speed, reduction of traffic accidents, increased safety for toll employees, reduction in gas emissions to the environment, and the elimination of traffic backups at the toll plaza.

He stated that the video toll rates will be increased because of the added cost of overhead, which includes processing photos of the license plates, determining driver contact information, and processing invoices for payment.

MDTA has held two open houses to inform the public about the coming changes.

Mr. O'Neill stated that toll collectors have been rotating between Hatem and Tyding Bridges. After the toll plaza is removed, these employees will be permanently stationed at the Tydings Bridge facility.

Council questions and comments ensued. Councilman Patchell clarified that vehicles with boats on trailers will be charged \$11.40 with a Hatem EZ-Pass instead of \$16 in cash. When asked about moving the toll plaza on I-95, Mr. O'Neill stated that there is a study of possible relocation. He also stated that Maryland's EZ-Pass is accepted in the northeast as well as in Virginia and North Carolina.

Census Counting Committee

Council Manager Massey reported that Audra Harrison, Maryland Census Director, has requested that the County Council form a Census Counting Committee with other county groups and organizations to raise awareness of the importance of participating in the 2020 Census. The Census Bureau can provide promotional materials to be shared with partners. There is also a brief training program for partners so that they can have resources to answer residents' questions. He reported that the county loses \$1,800 for each person who is not counted in the Census, which amounts to \$18,000 per person annually in federal funding. She reported that National Census Day is April 1, 2020. Shee stated that residents will be encouraged to complete their Census online or by calling a toll free number. Otherwise, the Census form will be mailed to them.

Review of Legislative Agenda

A public hearing will be held tonight for Rezoning Case #2019-01 as requested by York Building Products Co., Inc. Eric Sennstrom, Director of Land Use and Development Services, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

A public hearing will be held tonight for Rezoning Case #2019-02 as requested by York Building Products Co., Inc. Eric Sennstrom, Director of Land Use and Development Services, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Jason Allison, County Attorney, providing introductory comments on Bill No. 2019-08: Roads-Cecil County-Repeal of State Public Law-Purchasing Manual, which will be introduced at tonight's session. Council questions and comments ensued. Councilman Coutz asked for clarification on the text, "upon request of the County Executive" on page 2, line 25 of the legislation. Mr. Allison stated that it was the same text as in the Code of Cecil County. John Downs, Council Attorney, stated his concern that the text implied that all amendments to the purchasing manual must be initiated by the County Executive. Mr. Allison stated that the Council could change the existing text in the Code by legislation.

There were no introductory comments on Resolution No. 36-2019: Appointment – Human Services Board – Joshua M. Lewis and Mary Way Bolt, which will be introduced at tonight's session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Rebecca Anderson, Budget Manager, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 37-2019: Supplemental Appropriation – Volunteer Fire Service – Vehicle Replacement Program, which will be introduced at tonight’s session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Scott Flanigan, Public Works Director, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 38-2019: Supplementary Appropriation – Wastewater Enterprise Fund – Wastewater Treatment Plant Services – Chesapeake City, which will be introduced at tonight’s session. Council questions and comments ensued. Councilman Patchell clarified that the county was providing a service to Chesapeake City, not that the county was taking over the city’s sewer system. Council President Meffley clarified that the treatment plant was not in good condition, but the county was not paying for any upgrade.

Resolution No. 35-2019: Appointment – Board of License Commissioners – Bernard M. Chiominto, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no Council questions.

Under Old Business, the Council will announce that Bill No. 2019-07 As Amended was returned by the Executive without action.

Under New Business, Cecil County Public Schools’ budget amendment #63 will be considered for approval. There were no Council questions or comments.

COUNCIL MANAGER REPORT

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

COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS

Councilman Patchell stated that he will save his comments for the legislative session.

Councilman Miller attended the Farm Bureau meeting. He attended the Cecil Fair Committee and commented that the Fair will be the best nine days of the summer. He attended a program with Dr. Ira Chasnoff on child development and the effects of maternal alcohol and drug use on a child, sponsored by the Local Management Board and Early Childhood Advisory Council. He attended the Regional White House Conference and commented on the presentations by Dr. Ben Carson and Kellyanne Conway. He visited Calvert Park this weekend and commented on the 8,000 in attendance.

Councilman Coutz thanked the audience for attending. He attended the Regional White House Conference and commented on the presentations by Dr. Carson who gave him additional information on the opportunity zones program. He attended Flag Day celebrations in North East and Rising Sun.

Vice President Gregory thanked the audience for attending. She attended the annual meeting of the Upper Shore Regional Council and commended on the good turnout. She also commented on the presentation about MARBIDCO, which provides funds for small and family farms. She

reported on USRC support of Cecil County's broadband expansion project. She attended the Wade-In and commended staff for the good turnout and interesting program.

Council President Meffley stated that he would save his comments for tonight's session. He attended the Sheriff's Office Intel meeting and reported that there were 275 overdoses in Cecil County last month, including 28 fatalities.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Gregory made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councilman Coutz and approved unanimously. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 9:55 a.m.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at 9am in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building.

Approved:



Robert Meffley
Council President


James Massey
Council Manager