

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
September 17, 2019**

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

**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:** The video and audio recording with transcription of this meeting is available on the County website [www.ccgov.org](http://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 September 3, 2019, as presented. Motion was approved unanimously.

**Southfields Project**

Ray Jackson, owner of Stonewall Capital, provided an overview of the concept for the Southfields Project. He provided a drawing of the property and illustrated various sections for commercial-industrial, retail-commercial, residential and open spaces. He stated that Trammell Crow, a nationally known commercial real estate developer is partnering with him. He explained that the project was still in the concept phase and that he intends to address the communities concerns, which include traffic, noise, buffering, and environmental. He said that access to the project will be limited to Route 40 and Route 213; and that there will be no access to Maloney Road and Frenchtown Road. He plans to offer a variety of housing from detached single houses, multifamily housing, and senior housing. He described the possible commercial properties that include a day care center, hotel, movie theater, retail and regional sports park. He stated that the project will be phased in over time. He also plans to develop a public-private partnership for a marina, pavilion and community center. He stated that he has hired consultants to address specific infrastructure needs and requirements for adequate public facilities. Council questions and comments ensued.

**Bainbridge Development Corporation Update**

Dr. Carl Roberts, chair of the Bainbridge Development Corporation, introduced Toni Sprenkle, project manager. He stated that he became chair of the BDC in October 2018 and that he will provide open communications with the Council. He also stated that Christopher Moyer, Economic Development Director, is the vice chair of BDC.

Dr. Roberts reminded the Council that he had reported in May 2019 that the United States Navy and Maryland Department of the Environment determined through testing that there were no risks for workers to remove soil in the phase 1 of the 400 acre project. He had stated that ground breaking should begin by late 2019 or early 2020. He also reminded the Council that the county

agreed to build a new wastewater treatment plant for the Town of Port Deposit, which also includes the former Bainbridge Naval Station parcel.

Ms. Sprenkle stated that an Environmental Services Cooperative Agreement has been signed between the USN and BDC in order that federal funds will be provided for BDC to hire a contractor to clear the property. She stated that the cleanup will begin on October 1, 2019.

Ms. Sprenkle stated that the Town of Port Deposit has been working with BDC to update their comprehensive plan and table of permitted uses in their zoning code to be more flexible with the Bainbridge.

Ms. Sprenkle stated that the developer will be responsible for \$12.5M of private infrastructure costs. She also stated that BDC's biggest hurdle is funding the upfront cost of public infrastructure costs. Dr. Roberts stated that various options for locating infrastructure have been discussed to connect Port Deposit and Bainbridge. Artesian Water will be providing water service. County Executive McCarthy, with the support of the BDC and Town of Port Deposit, has requested \$4M capital budget grant from Governor Hogan to offset some of these infrastructure costs.

Dr. Roberts explained that Tome School was nominated by BDC and selected as one of three sites for a state study. He said that this state program will analyze Tome School in order to identify the issues and constraints for historic preservation in order to suggest how the state could make these sites more appealing for redevelopment. He said that the studies may result in more favorable legislation that could entice developers and state funding for redevelopment of Tome School campus, which represents 50 acres on the Bainbridge site.

Dr. Roberts also stated that BDC will continue to allow Cecil College to use Bainbridge for their truck driver training program through development. He concluded his presentation and invited Council Members to contact BDC any time for an update or visit to the site.

### **Shore Rivers**

Zack Kelleher, Sassafra Riverkeeper, stated that the Shore Rivers is a nonprofit organization and was formed when three of the eastern shore riverkeeper organizations combined. He stated that this organization monitors five waterways and issues an annual report card on the quality of each river. He said that the Sassafra River was given a "B-" this year, which was the highest quality of the five rivers. He discussed his organization's management of blue algae and expressed his concern for pollution from Conowingo Dam and its effect of the bay and rivers. He stated that Shore Rivers also monitors public beaches in the region. He explained that Shore Rivers is also an advocacy group to promote educational projects that encourage keeping our rivers clean. Council questions and comments ensued.

### **Cecil County Public Schools Update**

Dr. Jeff Lawson, School Superintendent, introduced Perry Willis, Executive Director of Support Services, and distributed an update on safe and secure school entrances. Mr. Willis stated that they have completed renovations at Bohemia Manor High School, Cecilton Elementary School and Holly Hall Elementary School. He also stated that Cecil Manor Elementary School and Leeds

Elementary School renovations are almost completed. He also stated the construction of the new Chesapeake City Elementary School has begun. Council questions and comments ensued. Mr. Willis explained that original estimates for renovating entrances to provide safety had been underestimated because of unanticipated reconfigurations of adjacent areas for staff sight control of entrances. He stated that the school system will obtain actual contractor estimates before funds are requested. Council questions and comments ensued. Mr. Willis clarified that outside cameras have been installed at all schools, which are accessible to security officers.

#### **Proposed Post Retirement Benefits**

Lisa Saxton, Finance Director, provided an explanation of the proposed changes in the county's post- retirement benefits as contained in Resolution No. 53-2019 Amendment – Personnel Policies and Procedures – Retirement Benefits. She provided copies of her proposal that illustrated the current and proposed Other Post Retirement Employment Benefits (OPEB) liability and annual benefit. The legislation will eliminate the retirees' option to remain in the county's health insurance. Retirees will be given an annual stipend based on 15 or more years of service in three levels, based on years of service. Retirees will receive their annual stipend through a third party as a health spending account. Retirees will submit for reimbursement. Current retirees will not be affected by this change. Council questions and comments ensued.

#### **Proposed Elkton Enterprise Zone**

Sandra Edwards, Economic Development Manager, stated that the administration is considering an amendment to Resolution No. 50-2019 Enterprise Zone- Elkton. She stated that they wish to remove a number of parcels from the proposed expansion of the enterprise zone. She stated that they are proposing to remove about 900 acres that are within the Town of Elkton because the current zoning does not support inclusion in the enterprise zone. She stated that the properties of Southfield Project, the Williams Automotive, Lidle, Big Elk Mall and Holly Hall are proposed to be removed from the legislation. She stated that these properties may be reconsidered in April 2020. She stated that the public hearing for Resolution No. 50-2019 is scheduled on October 1, 2019. There were no Council questions or comments.

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

Council President Meffley led a review of the legislative agenda.

Al Wein, Director of Administration, stated that Lisa Saxton, Finance Director, provided a presentation on Resolution No. 53-2019 Amendment – Personnel Policies and Procedures – Retirement Benefits. There were no Council questions or comments.

Al Wein, Director of Administration, provided introductory comments on Resolution No. 54-2019 Appointment – Planning Commission – Bill Miners and Wyatt Wallace. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 45-2019 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation – Application Finalists FY 2020, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 51-2019 Supplemental Appropriation – Fund Balance – Volunteer Fire Service, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. Al Wein, Director of Administration, had no comments but offered to respond to Council questions. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 52-2019 Supplemental Appropriation – Child and Adult Care Food Program – Community Services Fund, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2019-10 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation- Mary Lee Howard Vosters, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2019-11 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation-Farmington Acres, LLC, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2019-12 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation- Clay Farms GP, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2019-13 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation-James and Ann Higgins, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2019-14 Budget Transfer and Appropriation-Capital Budget-Roads and Bridges-Belvidere Road Culvert Project, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. Scott Flanigan, Public Works Director, provided comments on this project. Vice President Gregory clarified that this legislation will provide sufficient funding to cover the cost of the project.

Under new business, Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #66 in the amount of \$4,384,893 for July 2019 and August 2019, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no Council questions or comments.

#### **Council Manager Report**

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

#### **Council Member Items**

Councilman Miller attended the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the North East Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary and presented certificates of recognition to Anna Husfelt for her 52 years of service and to Suzann Barker for being the oldest active member of the auxiliary.

Councilman Coutz will save his comments for the legislative session.

Vice President Gregory expressed her appreciation to the Chesapeake City VFW and Chesapeake City Ecumenical Association for their efforts in sponsoring the National Day of Remembrance and commented on the larger turnout.

Council President Meffley attended the ribbon cutting for the School of Technology's new diesel program and commented on the large number of students who applied for the program.

**Adjournment**

Councilman Coutz made a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Vice President Gregory and approved by unanimous consent. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 10:34 a.m.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, September 24, 2019 at 9am in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building.

Approved:



Robert Meffley  
Council President



James Massey  
Council Manager