

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
October 8, 2019**

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, Jackie Gregory, William Coutz, Al Miller, and George Patchell; James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant; 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.

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 October 1, 2019, as presented. Motion was approved unanimously.

School Superintendent Update

Dr. Jeff Lawson, School Superintendent of Cecil County Public Schools, introduced Perry Willis, Executive Director for Support Services; Anne Gellrich, Executive Director for Secondary School Education; and Rhonda Asplen, Instructional Coordinator for Secondary Language Arts.

Dr. Lawson stated that the county schools 10th grade students take the MCAP test in reading annually. From 2016 to 2019, student scores went from 1/3 successful to 2/3 successful, the largest increase of any county in the State. Ms. Gellrich stated that they researched the standards in the MCAP testing and adjusted their teaching to raise the reading level of students to college preparatory. Ms. Asplen stated that they adjusted the level of reading to ensure that each grade would increase reading complexity. Dr. Lawson stated that they will continue to use the Core Curriculum but have adjusted their teaching methods. He said that the results of this change was that Cecil County tested fourth highest in the State.

Council questions and comments ensued. Mr. Willis provided an update on the new Chesapeake City Elementary School. Dr. Lawson stated that security storefronts have been completed at two schools. He also discussed a computer app to allow school officials and parents to check on the status and location of a school bus.

Council President Meffley also expressed his concern that a sidewalk was needed at Holly Hall Elementary School so that children would not walk in the road or into residents' yards.

Legislative Request with Delegation

Al Wein, Director of Administration, summarized Cecil County's request to the State for \$4M grant request for the development of the former Bainbridge Naval Training Station and stated that funds would be used for infrastructure related to the first phase. He stated that Steve Cassard, Executive

Director of Bainbridge Development Corporation, will be attending the Consolidated Transportation Plan meeting on Friday to provide an update of the project.

Mr. Wein reviewed Worcester County's proposal to exempt single family homes from the requirement of having an automated sprinkler system installed in new dwellings in the State. He stated that the Cecil County Firemen's Association is opposed to this proposed legislation. Richard Brooks, Emergency Services Director, also stated his opposition to Worcester County's proposed exemption for new homes requirement for automated sprinkler systems.

Vice President Gregory expressed her support for this proposal because of the increase in cost to new homebuyers as well as on the basis of private property rights. Council President Meffley stated that costs can be reduced by installing a constant pressure pump, but that the pump would be useless as soon as the fire company cuts the electric line. Councilman Miller stated that he knew someone who bought a farm in Delaware because of the automated sprinkler system requirement for new dwellings in Maryland.

Vice President Gregory led discussion of the reimbursement to fire company ambulance service for Medicaid patients. She stated that local fire companies are concerned that they receive little to no reimbursement for ambulance service for Medicaid recipients. She stated that Washington County delegation is proposing an increase in the State's reimbursement of Medicaid patients using fire company ambulance services from \$100 to \$200.

Richard Brooks, Emergency Services Director, stated that the State's payment of \$100 has been in effect for over twenty years. He stated that the present State law does not include commercial ambulance services. He stated that commercial transport companies have opted to avoid transporting Medicaid patients, which results in emergency calls going to local fire companies. He stated that the Washington County proposal does not include commercial ambulance service. He stated that proposed increase in Medicaid reimbursement for ambulance service should include commercial ambulance services.

MACo Legislative Committee Appointment

Council President Meffley led discussion of the appointment of a member and alternate member to the MACo Legislative Committee.

Councilman Miller made a motion to reappoint Vice President Gregory as member, and Councilman Coutz as alternate member to the MACo legislative committee. The Council approved the motion unanimously.

Consolidated Transportation Plan Additional Requests

Council Manager Massey reviewed responses from the State Highway Administration to the Council's questions regarding the Consolidated Transportation Plan. Council Members proposed additional issues that they want to address with State Highways Administration at the CTP meeting on October 11, 2019.

Council 2020 Calendar

Mr. Massey reviewed the proposed Council calendar for 2020 and asked Council Members to review. Final approval of the 2020 Council calendar will be requested in November 2019.

Council Manager Report

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

Council Member Items

Councilman Patchell stated that he participated in Cecil Cares Day at the former Perryville Outlets and commented on the large volume of trash.

Councilman Miller attended the Sheriff's Office golf outing and a fundraiser for the North East Library. He asked the administration about the closure of Big Elk Chapel Road and its possible effect on the Fair Hill International.

Councilman Coutz commented on the busy weekend in Elkton. He attended the ribbon cutting for the Garden @ 135 at the Cecil County Arts Center and commented on the number of volunteers and donations for this project. He attended the opening of Showcase on Main. He participated in Cecil Cares Day at Hollingsworth Manor and commented Youth Empowerment Source for their efforts in the community. He also attended Minihane's art festival and Gold Star Mothers brunch at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Vice President Gregory commented on the number of activities last weekend. She attended the ribbon cutting for the new office of CASA of Cecil County. She participated in Cecil Cares Day at Hollingsworth Manor and commented that a volunteer from the Governor's Volunteer Service Commission also participated. She attended the Empty Bowls, a fundraiser for Wayfarers' House, which was held at Art Space on Main. She attended the Charlestown Fire Company's crab feast.

Council President Meffley attended the Sheriff's intel meeting and reported that there have been 493 overdoses this year with 46 fatalities, the same numbers as 2018. He attended the Department of Social Services board meeting and reported that 42 children attended camp this summer, which was funded through a trust fund. He attended a reunion at Elkton High School. He participated in Cecil Cares Day at the animal shelter where he installed a new shower. He attended A Taste of Chesapeake City and participated in pushing the new fire truck into the fire station. He attended the Celebrity Chef's Challenge, a fundraiser for the Arts Council, which was won by Councilman Coutz. He stated that Elkton was full of people all day on Saturday.


Adjournment

Vice President Gregory made a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Councilman Coutz and approved by unanimous consent. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 9:57 a.m.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, October 15, 2019 at 9am in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building.


James Massey
Council Manager

Approved:



Robert Meffley
Council President