

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
February 18, 2020

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.

CLOSED SESSION

February 11, 2020

9:30 A.M.

On motion made by Vice President Gregory, seconded by Councilman Coutz, the Council moved to convene in closed session, pursuant to the Maryland Annotated Code, General Provisions § 3-305 (b) (1) the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of an appointee, employee, or official over whom it has jurisdiction; or (ii) any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals; and (7) consult with counsel to obtain legal advice.

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Y, Miller-Y, Patchell-Y, Gregory-Y, Meffley-Y
The motion was carried unanimously.

Present: Council Members: President Meffley, Vice President Gregory, Councilman Coutz, Councilman Miller and Councilman Patchell; James Massey, Council Manager; and Terry Hale, Council Assistant.

The Council discussed the compensation recommendation from the Compensation Review Commission. The Council approved the hiring of Weyrich, Cronin and Sorra as a Council consultant for the budget.

On motion made by Vice President Gregory, seconded by Councilman Coutz, the Council moved to conclude the closed session at 10:07 a.m.

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 February 11, 2020, as presented. Motion was approved unanimously.

On a motion made by Vice President Gregory, seconded by Councilman Coutz, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the closed session of February 11, 2020, as presented. Motion was approved unanimously.

School Superintendent Update

Dr. Jeff Lawson, School Superintendent, presented the school's budget briefing for FY 2021. He presented statistics showing that the county's wealth is increasing and that school enrollment is decreasing. He explained that this may negatively affect our state formula for funding. He illustrated that CCPS has a higher number of students with disabilities than other counties and that the cost of providing services comes at a higher cost. He reviewed his capital budget request for large and small projects. Dr. Lawson also reviewed a summary of his budget categories to compare FY2020 budget with his FY 2021 request, which shows an increase of 4.9%. He also reviewed the breakdown in funding between the State and local funds, which shows that he is asking for \$3,882,774 in additional county funds.

Dr. Lawson also discussed the effects of Kirwan recommended funding on the school budget. He stated that the Kirwan funding is restrictive in use. Their recommendations are targeting cost to support low income, non-English speaking and disabled students. He stated that CCPS will be receiving \$497,000, which will go to Holly Hall Elementary School and Thomson Estates Elementary School to be used for coordination, before and after school care, and a nurse position. He stated that 17.1% of CCPS students are disabled.

Council questions and comments ensued. Vice President Gregory clarified that each school will receive at least \$100,000 through the Kirwan recommendations. Councilman Miller expressed his concern about the transportation costs associated with half-empty buses. Dr. Lawson explained that it is difficult to estimate how many students will choose not to ride the bus on any day and that there is concern in rural areas that the bus routes should not exceed an hour. Councilman Miller also clarified that teacher salaries will be affected by Kirwan, which will be phased in over three years. Council President Meffley stated that the delegation has voiced their concerns about the Kirwan Commission recommendations, stating that if the State wants these recommendations, then the State should fund them.

State Legislative Update

Council Manager Massey reviewed the status of legislation that the Council had taken a position. He also suggested several bills to be considered at the next work session.

Kirwan Update

Vice President Jackie Gregory reviewed legislation that had been discussed at the MACo legislative committee. She stated that many of the counties expressed that if the State wants to implement Kirwan recommendations, they should pay for it. She also stated that the Kirwan recommendations do not reflect the issues of classroom teachers such as student misbehavior. The MACo legislative committee did not take a position on the Kirwan recommendations. Council questions and comments ensued.

Review of Legislative Agenda

A public hearing will be held tonight for Rezoning Case #2019-05 as requested by 109-111 Providence Road LLC. Bryan Lightner, Zoning Administrator, provided a synopsis stating that the staff and Planning Commission had recommended approval based on a mistake in the zoning map. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 09-2020 Appointment - Historic District Commission – Michael Dixon and Patricia Folk, will be introduced at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 10-2020 Appointment - Drug and Alcohol Abuse Council – April Foster, will be introduced at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 11-2020 Appointment - Cecil County Ethics Commission – Janice K. Colvin, will be introduced at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 08-2020 Appointment- Mental Health Core Service Agency Advisory Board- Ian R. Wingfield, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no comments from the administration. There were no Council questions or comments.

Cecil County Public Schools – Budget Amendment #71 in the amount of \$408,887 for January 2020 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 the upcoming meetings and events.

Council Member Items

Councilman Patchell will reserve his comments for tonight’s session.

Councilman Miller attended the town hall meeting for citizens input on the FY 2021 budget. He stated that there were comments on public schools, public library, and Parks and Recreation programs. He attended the Firemen’s Association and provided information on the importance of the 2020 Census. He attended the Voices of Hope Recovery Gratitude Banquet and commended Jennifer Tuerke for the wonderful program.

Councilman Coutz thanked the audience for attending.

Vice President Gregory attended the Voices of Hope banquet and stated that she was inspired by the many years of recovery of the members. She stated that the Kirwan recommendations is a State’s unfunded mandate and takes away local authority. She said that the funds are restricted and do not address the core issues in the classroom.

Council President Meffley attended the Sheriff’s intel meeting and stated that there have been 42 overdoses in the county with 7 fatalities. He attended the town hall meeting for citizens input on the FY 2021 budget and summarized public comments. He attended A Taste of the Eastern Shore

and commented on the opportunity to talk with legislators who expressed their appreciation for the Council's letters of support and opposition.

Adjournment

Council President Meffley asked for a motion to adjourn the open session in order to go into closed session. 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 9:54 am.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 at 9am in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building.

Approved:



Robert Meffley
Council President


James Massey
Council Manager