

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
March 10, 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: Video and audio recording with transcription are available for this meeting 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 March 3, 2020, as presented. Motion was approved unanimously.

School Superintendent Update

Dr. Jeff Lawson, Superintendent of Cecil County Public Schools, made a presentation about the improved graduation rates. He illustrated that students who do not graduate from high school are more likely to be incarcerated, unemployed, divorced and have children who also drop out of school. He described their school system's efforts to focus on students who are struggling in middle school to help them be successful. He presented statistics to illustrate that CCPS graduation rate has risen from 91% to 93%, African American student graduation rate is 94%. He explained that students with disabilities receive a certificate for their success in an alternate curriculum.

Councilman Patchell commended the school's revisiting tool, which allows students to have additional opportunities to review class materials. Council President Meffley commended the Principal for a Day program and commented on the principal's role in personal attention to individual students. Dr. Lawson clarified the school system's revised class attendance policy of students who are absent for 10% or more school days. Council questions and comments ensued.

Council President Meffley suspended the rules to go to Council Members Items while the Health Department's presentation was uploaded.

Seasonal Testing of Soil for Onsite Sewage Systems

Meredith Springsteen, Program Supervisor for Septic Programs, Cecil County Health Department, made a presentation on seasonal testing of soil for onsite sewage systems. She explained the principles of a sewage system and why seasonal testing is done. She stated that since the opening of seasonal testing in February, they have conducted 26 of 30 tests and have 18-20 more tests to be conducted before testing ends on March 13. Council questions and comments included the status of Holloway Beach and the use of mound systems.

Chesapeake City Scenic Byway

Council Manager Massey reported on his research on extending the scenic byway through North Chesapeake City. He stated that the Chesapeake Country National Scenic Byway ends at the C&D Canal Bridge. In 2001, Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties received funding to prepare the Corridor Management Plan and nominated the scenic byway to the Federal Highway Administration. The designation of the National Scenic Byway from Stevensville to Chesapeake City was approved in 2002. The State Office of Tourism is proposing to nominate the Chesapeake Country Scenic Byway as an All American Road. Marci Ross, Director, indicated that she will call a meeting of the partners to formulate plans, which will include extending the route southward to Somerset County. She stated that we can propose that the route be extended northward through North Chesapeake City. She also stated that the entire length of the C&D Canal should be included in the proposal.

There are no mandated regulations for a State Scenic Byway, National Scenic Byway or All American Road. It would be up to Cecil County to draft any regulations. Queen Anne's and Kent Counties have regulations in their zoning code.

Council President Meffley recognized Rebecca Mann, former Chesapeake City Council Member, who stated that she represented a citizens group in Chesapeake City who want the County to adopt guidelines that were originally drafted for the Scenic Byway program. She stated that there was an urgency because of the proposed cell tower along Route 213 in North Chesapeake City.

Council President Meffley asked that Ms. Mann provide the guidelines so that the Council can consider them.

State Legislative Update

The Council Manager presented the state legislation that had been provided at the previous work session. After discussion, the Council agreed to send a letter of support for HB 225 Gaming – Sports Wagering – Implementation and HB 1489 Government Entities – Authorization to Bank with Credit Unions. The Council agreed to send a letter of opposition to HB 42 Public Information Act – Applications for Inspection – Responses and Time Limits

Vice President Gregory asked the Council to consider the following: HB 1407 Primary and Secondary Education – Student Discipline (Right to Teach Act of 2020); and HB 802 Civil Actions – Civil Immunity – Educator Intervention in Student Violence (Good Teacher Protection Act). Council Members agreed to invite Lori Hrinko from the Cecil County Classroom Teachers Association to discuss education bills for consideration.

Council Manager Report

Council President Meffley asked to skip the Council Manager report and to adjourn the meeting.

Council Member Items

Councilman Patchell had no comments.

Councilman Miller attended the Procurement Open House and met many contractors. He spoke to Boy Scout Troop 22 at Leeds United Methodist Church about county government and the Cecil County Fair. He attended the chili cook-off and congratulated Don Harmer and Alan McCarthy, winners. He attended the Rising Sun Lions Club Italian Dinner and commended their volunteer work in the community. He attended the Local Management Board that discussed mental health issues.

Councilman Coutz thanked the audience for attending. He attended the North East Volunteer Fire Company's Beef, Beer and Shrimp fundraiser, which was well attended. He attended the Cecilton Volunteer Fire Company banquet, raised funds for Ducks Unlimited.

Vice President Gregory attended the 4-H Achievement night and commented on the large variety of programs for youth. She attended the North East Volunteer Fire Company banquet.

President Meffley attended the Economic Development Commission and commented on the importance of enterprise zones to the county's economic growth. He attended the chili cook-off, Rising Sun Lions Club dinner, and Upper Shore Regional Council meeting. He plans on attending the Chesapeake City St. Patrick's Day parade.

Council President Meffley had no comments.


Adjournment

Council President Meffley asked for a motion to adjourn the Council work session. Councilman Coutz made a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Vice President Gregory. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 10:30 am.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 9am in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building.


James Massey
Council Manager

Approved:



Robert Meffley
Council President