

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
March 2, 2021**

The County Council of Cecil County met in work session in an online virtual meeting because of the current health crisis and based on the Governor's orders to avoid public meetings. Council Members and presenters participated in this meeting; the public observed the meeting by connecting online at www.ccgov.org/council and selecting "livestream".

The following members of the Council were present:

Robert Meffley, Council President
Al Miller, Council Member
Jackie Gregory, Vice President
William H. Coutz, Council Member
George Patchell, Council Member

NOTE: The video and audio recording with transcription of this meeting is available on the County website at www.ccgov.org.

Call to Order

The meeting of the County Council of Cecil County of March 2, 2021 was called to order by Council President Meffley at 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call of Council Members

Council President Meffley asked for a roll call of attending Council Members. The Council Manager called the roll and recorded the following Council Members in attendance:

Roll Call Vote: Coutz-Present, Miller-Present, Patchell-Present, Gregory-Present, Meffley-Present.

Council President Meffley announced that there were five Council Members present, which constitute a quorum.

Suspension of Rules

Councilman Coutz made a motion to suspend the rules to allow Council Members who are connected to participate and vote in this work session, because of the current health crisis and orders by the Governor to avoid public meetings. The motion was seconded by Councilman Miller.

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

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Councilman Coutz, seconded by Councilman Miller, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of February 16, 2021, as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

Conowingo Dam Update

Charles MacLeod, Executive Director, Clean Chesapeake Coalition, made a presentation to update the Council on the Conowingo Dam's status, FERC relicensing, proposed State legislation, and the Conowingo Watershed Improvement Plan. He stated that the dam is experiencing scouring as the reservoir is full, which allows debris, sediment and pollution to flow into the other side of the dam and down the Susquehanna River to the Bay. He stated that Conowingo Dam's original license expired ten years ago, and has been renewed for one year consecutively. MDE issued the water quality certification but put conditions that require Exelon to take responsibility for the pollution that is flowing from the dam. Exelon is refusing to take responsibility and is suing MDE in court. MED and Exelon have settled an agreement to provide some funding, but FERC has not acted on the settlement.

Mr. MacLeod discussed HB 427 and SB 540 that would undo the settlement agreement made by MDE and Exelon. He was uncertain of its impact.

He stated that a Conowingo WIP was created in 2017 to address the dam specifically. Although the WIP's proposed plan is disappointing because there is no mention of dredging the sediments. He stated that there is a new business, Conowingo Systems LLC, that is interested in dredging and using the material for recycling. He stated that they need the Chesapeake Bay program to name dredging as a best management practice.

Mr. MacLeod also stated that Governor Hogan's pilot project of dredging began in November 2020. This project will determine what materials are contained in the sediment.

Mr. MacLeod also spoke about the possibility of Aberdeen Proving Ground taking the sediment to be used in stabilizing the post's shoreline. Council President Meffley stated that he will be meeting with General Kilgo on March 3rd.

Council questions and comments ensued.

Budget Hearing Schedule

Council Manager Massey provided a proposed schedule of budget hearings, which will be scheduled at 4:30 pm on Tuesdays between April 6 and May 18. The Council will be moving back to the Elk Room for all sessions beginning on April 6. These hearings will precede the Council work sessions that will be delayed until 6pm or 6:30pm. All Council legislative sessions will continue to be scheduled at 7pm.

The Council public budget hearing is scheduled on Thursday, May 20 at 7pm to be held at the Elkton High School auditorium.

The Council will meet for budget deliberation on Tuesday, May 25 at 4:30pm. If necessary, a second deliberation is tentatively scheduled on Thursday, May 27 at 4:30pm.

The Council's final consideration of the budget is planned on Tuesday, June 1 at 7pm during the Council's legislative session.

Council Members agreed by consensus to the proposed schedule.

State Legislation Review

Vice President Jackie Gregory, Council representative on the MACo Legislative Committee, provided a review of State legislation:

HB 427/SB 540 Federal Clean Water Act – Authority of the State; Support

HB 1262/SB 762 Maryland Electricians Act Revisions; Support

Letters of support will be prepared and submitted to the committees, delegation, and members, if needed.

Review of Legislative Agenda

A public hearing will be held for Rezoning Case #2021-02 EJP, LLC, at tonight's session. Steve O'Connor, Acting Director of Land Use and Development Services, provided comments and stated that the staff had recommended disapproval, and the Planning Commission made no recommendation, based on a change in neighborhood and mistake in the zoning classification of the property during the last comprehensive rezoning. Mr. O'Connor also read a letter, dated February 19, 2021, from Dwight Thomey, applicant's attorney, which indicated that the applicant was withdrawing parcel 165 (9.4 acres) from the rezoning request. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 20-2021 Establishment – Redistricting Commission - 2021, will be introduced at tonight's session. Council Manager Massey provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 04-2021 Amendment-Comprehensive Plan-Mineral Extraction District, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Steve O'Connor, Acting Director of Land Use and Development Services, offered to answer any questions. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 19-2021 Appointment- Economic Development Commission-Sharon Kurfuerst, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2021-01 County Council-Qualifications, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Council Manager Massey provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Bill No. 2021-02 Ethics- Employment and Financial Interest Restrictions, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Council Manager Massey provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Massey updated the Council on several virtual meetings of interest, housing voucher availability and a proposed study to have a bicycle and pedestrian separate facilities on Route 40 from Martin Airport to Perryville. The Council indicated their opposition to creating a separate lane on Hatem Bridge.

Council Member Items

Council Members agreed to hold their comments for the legislative session.

Adjournment

Council President Meffley asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman Coutz made a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Councilman Miller. Motion was approved unanimously. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 5:40 pm.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 4:30pm, which is planned as a virtual meeting because of the current health crisis. The session will be livestreamed on the County Council's webpage. Members of the public who do not have broadband access should contact the Council Office for instructions to be connected via telephone.


James Massey
Council Manager

Approved:



Robert Meffley
Council President