

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
March 23, 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 23, 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 March 16, 2021, as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

Maryland 5 Star Fair Hill

Jeff Newman, President and CEO of the Fair Hill Organizing Committee, provided an update for the first Maryland 5 Star Event at Fair Hill being held October 13-17, 2021. He explained that there are three phases of events including dressage, cross-country, and show jumping. He stated that the Organizing Committee has determined that a portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Maryland Food Bank. He explained that attendees will enjoy various activities each day including Wednesday's opening ceremonies, Thursday's Equine Industry Day, Friday's food festival, Saturday's tailgate in the country with craft beer and wine festival, and Sunday's champagne brunch with show jumping. Mr. Newman described the plans for the grounds and new facilities built as part of the 5 Star designation. He emphasized that this event will attract worldwide participation and news media. Council questions and comments ensued.

Permanent Homeless Shelter

Councilman Coutz introduced Carol and Bill Dale and Mary Eva Peace as long term volunteers of the rotating homeless shelter, who asked that the county support a permanent homeless shelter. They explained that a group of 30 churches had been organized with volunteers to provide rotating homeless shelters for about 25 people for over 16 years. They explained that the rotating shelter ceased operating because of COVID and they were concerned that there were not enough other homeless shelters to meet the number of places needed.

There was discussion about the other nonprofit sponsored homeless shelters in Cecil County and the services available through agencies such as the Health Department and the Department of Social Services.

Dave Trolio, Community Services Director, summarized the existing homeless services provided by Deep Roots, Meeting Ground and the Mary Randall Center. He suggested that they meet with the other nonprofit groups to seek government funding for additional resources for the homeless.

State Legislation Review

Vice President Jackie Gregory, Council representative on the MACo Legislative Committee, reviewed the status of legislation that the Council had taken a position.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Massey attended the COVID task force and reported on their actions. He reported that FERC has approved the agreement for Exelon to operate Conowingo Dam. He reminded Council of the first budget hearing to be held on April 6 and the time changes for the work session.

Council Member Items

Councilman Coutz thanked the audience and presenters for their attendance. He acknowledged Bill and Carol Dale, and Mary Eva Pierce for their long time dedication to sheltering the homeless. He thanked Mr. Trolio for his comments. He reported on the Sheriff's Office Intel meeting and expressed his concerns for the continual rise of overdoses and the increase in overdose fatalities.

Councilman Miller stated that the Health Department brought representatives from FEMA to visit possible locations for COVID clinics at Warwick Mushrooms and Ag Industrial. He reported that the Cecil Soil Conservation District is sponsoring scholarships for college and high school senior students who pursue agricultural programs.

Vice President Gregory thanked the presenters for their support of the homeless and thanked Mr. Trolio for his comments. She reviewed actions on the legislation that the Council had taken a position. She will be attending the MACo legislative committee and commented on the volume of legislation being considered. She stated that the amendments in SB 919 regarding Fair Hill were minimal text changes.

Councilman Patchell stated his continual concern for the lack of a sidewalk for students who walk along MD 222, between St. Mark's Church and Patterson Funeral Home from Perryville High School. He stated that the State Highway Administration has delayed this project for six years. He asked the administration to assist him in bringing this project to the attention of the SHA. Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, agreed to bring this matter up with SHA about this issue. He went to Calvert Park this weekend and commented on the large crowd and improvements at the entrance. He commended Clyde VanDyke, Parks and Recreation Director, and his staff for their efforts to keep Calvert Park in pristine conditions.

Council President Meffley commented on the success of the Upper Shore Regional Council. He commended USRC for their support of a pilot project to test a new technology, developed by Virginia Tech to treat logs that Cecil County businesses could then export wood to the European market. He attended a meeting to discuss plans for the use of the current Chesapeake City Elementary School.

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 6:07 pm.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 6pm so that the first budget hearing can be scheduled at 4:30pm. Both sessions are planned as a virtual meetings 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