

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES
July 20, 2021**

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

4:30 P.M.

NOTE: Recording and transcription of this meeting are available on the County website at www.ccgov.org.

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, William Coutz, Al Miller, Jackie Gregory and George Patchell; James Massey, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant; Charles MacLeod, Council Attorney, members of the administration, and members of the public.

Call to Order

Council President Meffley called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm and announced that there were five Council Members present, which constitute a quorum.

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 July 13, 2021, as presented. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Review of Legislation

Council President Meffley led a review of legislation for tonight's agenda.

Resolution No. 42-2021 Appointment – Council Attorneys – Charles MacLeod and Victor Jackson, will be introduced at tonight's session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 43-2021 Appointment – Historic District Commission – Nancy Simperts, will be introduced at tonight's session. Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, provided introductory comments. Councilman Miller stated that the appointment form did not reflect her interest in the correct Commission and should be updated.

Resolution No. 35-2021 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation – Application Finalists – FY 2022, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Steve O'Connor, Director of Land Use and Development Services, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 36-2021 Appointment—Bainbridge Development Corporation – Toni Sprengle, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 38-2021 Appointment - Historic District Commission – Karl Fockler, will be considered for approval at tonight's session. Dan Schneckenburger, Director of Administration, provided comments. There were no Council questions or comments.

Resolution No. 39-2021 Supplemental Appropriation – Debt Service Fund – Public Library, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. James Appel, Finance Director, provided comments. Council President Meffley asked Mr. Appel to demonstrate where the funds were shown in the FY 2022 operating budget. Mr. Appel cited page 272 in the “Other” section of the budget book, Department 912 – Operating Transfer – 201 Debt Service, listed as “reduction due to debt restructuring of \$580,000.” Councilman Coutz stated his concern that the funds have not been realized until after the bond sale in September. Councilman Patchell clarified that the library’s plan to use these funds for upkeep and maintenance on the new North East Library. Councilman Miller clarified that library construction costs held steady and were not affected by higher construction costs.

Resolution No. 40-2021 Approval - Public Safety Radio System Maintenance – Multiple Year Contract, will be considered for final approval at tonight’s session. John Donohue, Deputy Director of the Department of Emergency Services, provided comments. Council questions and comments ensued.

Resolution No. 41-2021 Amendment - Water and Sewer – Sewer Use -Connection Fee, will be considered for final approval at tonight’s session. Council President Meffley asked the Council Manager to read Amendment No. 1 to Resolution No. 41-2021.

Council Manager Massey stated:

AMENDMENT NO. 1

TO RESOLUTION NO. 41-2021

Amendment – Water and Sewer – Sewer Use – Connection Fee

Synopsis: To clarify that the residential wastewater connection charge amount will be set at the time of the issuance of the building permit; to require connection fee payment before final inspection; and to provide interim provisions of the wastewater connection charge as it applies to building permits submitted prior to introduction of this resolution.

Introduced by: Council President Meffley

On Page 1, delete the synopsis in its entirety and insert the following:

“A Resolution to amend the Water and Sewer policy to determine the amount of the wastewater connection charge from a subdivision proposal or approval to be set at the time of issuance of the building permit; to require connection fee payment before final inspection; and to provide interim provisions of the wastewater connection charge as it applies to building permits submitted prior to introduction of this resolution.”

On Page 2, lines 17-18, delete in its entirety and insert the following:

“that the determination of the amount of the wastewater connection charge from a valid subdivision proposal or approval to be set at the time of issuance of a valid building permit.”

On Page 2, line 19, insert the following:

“WHEREAS, any applicant that has a building permit application for a residential dwelling submitted prior to July 6, 2021 is entitled to a wastewater connection charge of \$6,000 conditioned on the building permit is issued prior to October 1, 2021.”

On Page 2, lines 19-21, delete in its entirety and insert the following:

“NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL

COUNTY, MARYLAND, that the determination of the amount of the wastewater connection charge from a valid subdivision proposal or approval shall be set at the time of issuance of the building permit; payment is required before final inspection; and a residential dwelling submitted prior to July 6, 2021 is entitled to a wastewater connection charge of \$6,000 conditioned on the building permit being issued prior to October 1, 2021.”

Council questions and comments ensued. Lawrence Scott, Council Attorney, clarified that the residential wastewater connection fee will be \$12,000 as of August 1, 2021. He clarified that there are ten or eleven building permit applications that are in progress, which will be charged \$6,000. Mr. Scott stated that the County would be conducting a wastewater rate study to determine the actual cost of hookups. He stated that the administration may come back to the Council to set a rate based on the true value of the hookup. Council President Meffley clarified that the current wastewater enterprise fund is underfunded by \$1M, which is subsidized by county taxpayers instead of the users. He also stated that he expects several developers and homebuilders to attend tonight’s session because of their concern that the increase was not adequately advertised. Vice President Gregory cited the amount of other nearby county connection fees.

Under New Business, Cecil County Public Schools budget amendment #88, in the amount of \$11,968,511 for June 2021, will be considered for approval at tonight’s session. There were no Council questions or comments.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Massey updated the Council on the County’s Wade-In and the MACo dinner.

Council Member Items

Council Members agreed to hold their comments until tonight’s legislative session.

Adjournment

Council President Meffley asked for a motion to adjourn the work session.

Vice President Gregory moved to adjourn the work session, which was seconded by Councilman Coutz. Council President Meffley adjourned the work session at 5:13 pm.

The next Council work session will be held on Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 4:30 pm in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building. The session will be livestreamed on the County Council’s webpage at www.ccgov.org/council. Members of the public who do not have broadband access should contact the Council Office for instructions to be connected via telephone.

Approved:


Robert Meffley, Council President


James Massey
Council Manager