

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY  
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES  
LSD 2023-02  
January 17, 2023**

The County Council of Cecil County met in legislative session at the County Administration Building, 200 Chesapeake Blvd., Elk Room, Elkton, MD. The following members of the Council were present:

Jackie Gregory, Council President  
Robert Meffley, Vice President  
Rebecca Hamilton, Council Member  
Al Miller, Council Member  
Donna Culberson, Council Member

**NOTE:** The recording with transcription of this meeting is available on the County website at [www.ccgov.org/council](http://www.ccgov.org/council).

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the County Council of Cecil County of January 17, 2023, was called to order by Council President Gregory at 7:00 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER**

Councilman Miller introduced Reverend Charles Rossiter from Baldwin United Methodist Church in Elkton who led the opening prayer.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Vice President Meffley, the Council moved to approve the legislative agenda of January 17, 2023. Motion was approved unanimously.

**STATE OF THE COUNCIL ADDRESS**

President Jackie Gregory gave the State of the Council address. She noted healthy discussion and debate lead to common ground and progress and is pleased to have the opportunity to work with her colleagues to find solutions to the challenges we face together. She noted Vice President Meffley's experience as a business owner and advocate of the trades, represents Council on the Maryland Rural Development cooperative, serves as treasurer for the Upper Shore Regional Council and as a board member of the Cecil County Trade Foundation for the School of Technology. She welcomed Councilwoman Hamilton, who has experience in business management and operations for the building materials industry. Councilwoman Hamilton represents council on both the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board. She noted Councilman Miller's deep and historical connection to farmers, rural industries and the County Fair. She also noted Councilman Miller serves as the representative to the Cecil County Farm Bureau and the Cecil County Fireman's Association. She noted Councilwoman Culberson has experience in healthcare, budgeting, and elder care and she represents Council on the Commission on Aging and the Social Services Board. President Gregory noted her background in education and legislative matters and she represents Council at the Maryland Association of Counties, the Maryland Rural Counties Coalition, and the Early Childhood Advisory Council.

President Gregory noted Council's primary role is legislative but works closely with the administration on the budget and unanimously supported issues including funding and securing our schools, providing resources to law enforcement, corrections, and emergency management teams, approving competitive wage increases to government employees and funding a responsible capital improvement program. She also noted Council met with groups on community wellness, primary and secondary education, transportation initiatives, the Chesapeake Bay and local tributaries, infrastructure initiatives, economic development programs and projects, public utilities, the opioid epidemic, and the current state of command for our largest employer Aberdeen Proving Ground.

President Gregory noted the success of Elkton High School's varsity soft ball team, Cecil County's teacher of the year Nadeline Fleischer-Pile, the Calvert 4-Hers, and the heroic lifesaving actions of Corporal Annette Goodyear, Cpl. Jonathan Pruett, and citizen George Gregson.

President Gregory noted highlights for the past year including approval of executive appointments for boards and commissions, legislation to help volunteer fire services recoup additional funds, establishment of the Police Accountability Board, property tax relief for law enforcement officers, business growth with expanded sewer infrastructure and incentives to Northrup Grumman that creates high paying jobs. Looking forward, she noted we have the opening of Great Wolf Lodge, the Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill, dredging projects on the North East River and challenges on implementation of the Blueprint for Education, legalization of cannabis, and police accountability.

#### **STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS**

County Executive Danielle Hornberger gave the State of the County address. She noted her promise to support our citizens needs while exercising fiscal responsibility, ensuring a safe community, expanding quality of life initiatives that strengthen our residents, ties to Cecil County and expanding economic opportunities and is happy to report that the state of our county is incredibly strong, and our opportunities for success limitless. She announced that, due to cost cutting efficiencies and a conservative approach to spending the county audit report will show more than 44 million dollars in surplus. She thanked the county volunteers who give their time and energy to Cecil County's local boards and commissions, and acknowledged the department directors.

Executive Hornberger noted Cecil County School of Technology, fire science student, Christopher McCann, who represented our county in the national skills competition and finished as the gold medalist, North East Police Corporal Annette Goodyear who put herself in harms way to prevent a student from being struck by a car and Devon and Julie Price of Elkton, who donated a 79 foot Norway spruce to Rockefeller Center.

Executive Hornberger noted the low tax rate and sound economy as we continue to be highly attractive to the private sector. She noted the opening of Northrup Grumman's hypersonic center of excellence which will add more than 200 high-tech jobs in the aerospace field. She also noted Great Wolf Lodge would be opening its largest resort this year as well as projects at Bainbridge.

Executive Hornberger recognized the support for our municipalities and all the events they host. She noted the value of tourism, regional sporting events, our parks and rivers and community events. She noted the success of our ag industry, ag tourism, equestrian heritage and the Maryland

5 Star Event. She thanked Jeff Newman and his team for this event. She also noted our commitment to the Chesapeake Bay and the Clean Water Act.

Executive Hornberger highlighted the budget and the 44 million dollar surplus. She noted that she will continue to keep spending in check and our credit rating high. She noted that property tax rates were cut twice and reduced the income tax rate to the fifth lowest in Maryland. She also noted the expansion to our tax program for seniors and military tax that include sworn officers.

Executive Hornberger thanked Sheriff Scott Adams on his efforts and working with the administration on raises and bonuses for officers and working on increases for dispatchers. She also acknowledged State's Attorney James Dellmyer and his effort to help fight crime.

Executive Hornberger noted the capital budget provided for roads, broadband, two additional turf fields for the high schools, designing the Public Safety Training Facility, Cecil College investments and the new North East Middle and High School. She also thanked Dr. Jeff Lawson on providing additional safe school entrances. She noted our quick turnaround on projects and permits as well as the preservation of 440 acres of farmland and restrictions on solar farms. Finally, she noted the I-95 Belvidere Road project is underway.

Executive Hornberger noted accomplishments in Community Services including wellness communities, pet adoption services, Cecil Cares Day, grants from the video lottery and providing broadband to 99% of the County. She also noted the Emergency Management accomplishments including 15,000 EMS incidents and 120,000 dispatch calls and emergency planning. She noted this would not be possible without our volunteer fire departments.

Executive Hornberger noted our surplus and our refinancing of bonds to 2% interest. She noted going forward she will continue to be fiscally responsible and focused on providing services.

#### **RECESS**

President Gregory asked for a motion to recess. On a motion by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilman Miller, Council moved to go into recess at 7:33 pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

President Gregory asked for a motion to reconvene the Legislative Session. On a motion by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton, Council moved to go back into session at 7:44 pm. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion made by Vice President Meffley, seconded by Councilwoman Culberson, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the legislative session of January 3, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Jordan Seguin of Elkton commented on the school budget and the need for additional funding.

Harold McCanick of Elk Neck commented on the budget surplus and spending.

## **PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilwoman Culberson gave the Intel Report for the previous two weeks. She noted that over the past five years, overdoses have gone down, however, deaths from overdoses have increased.

Councilman Miller noted he attended the Cecil Soil Conservation banquet and congratulated Dividing Farm for winning the 2021 Cooperator of the Year. Councilman Miller also attended the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Commemorative Service for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 16, 2023 at the Five Rivers Church. Mr. Loucious Hires was the guest speaker at the event and gave a motivational speech.

Vice President Meffley also noted he attended the Cecil Soil Conservation banquet and noted the history and accomplishments of Dividing Farm. He also attended the MLK services and noted Mr. Hires background in the United States Secret Service and highlighted his speech for unity.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted the swearing in ceremony for Governor Wes Moore is January 18, 2023, and she recently participated in his Town Hall Meetings. She noted that in the meeting they had a great discussion about our veterans and the benefits and assistance they can receive to help fight homelessness, mental health issues and educational opportunities. She also noted her attendance at the MLK service and that Mr. Hires speech was inspirational and his current role in the Secret Service as Director, Office of Equity and Employee Support Services.

Council President Gregory also attended the Cecil Soil Conservation banquet and MLK service and agreed with the rest of Council on how well these events were done. President Gregory also noted that she and Councilwoman Hamilton attended the Chesapeake City Volunteer Fire Department Beef and Oyster dinner on January 14, 2023.

## **INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS**

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

**RESOLUTION 02-2023** - Appointment—Department of Social Services Board – Natalie Gentry, Karen Latimer Patricia L. Brown, Bernard M. Chiminto, and Randy Bailey.

A Resolution to confirm the appointment of Natalie Gentry, Karen Latimer, Patricia L. Brown, Bernard M. Chiminto, and Randy Bailey to the Department of Social Services Board for three (3) year term to expire December 31, 2025.

Introduced, read the first time, order posted on January 17, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on February 7, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted the importance of this Committee.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

**RESOLUTION 03-2023-** Supplemental Appropriation – Sheriff's Office – License Plate Reader Grant

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, in order to provide a total of \$590,000 to the Sheriff's Office, to record a FY23 Local Agency License Plate Reader Grant awarded from Maryland State Police for purchase of License Plate Readers.

Introduced, read the first time, order posted on January 17, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on February 7, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that the grant will supply more fixed and mobile units to supplement the existing units.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS**

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

**RESOLUTION NO. 01-2023** - Appointment – Public Safety Pension Plan Board of Trustees – Steven Overbay, Stephen Brownhill, Matthew Carr, Mary McLennan, Shon McCollum, Angela Blodgett, Wayne Tome, and Angelia Lawson.

A Resolution to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of Steven Overbay to a two (2) year term, which will expire on December 31, 2024, Stephen Brownhill to a three (3) year term, which will expire on December 31, 2025, Matthew Carr to a one (1) year term, which will expire on December 31, 2023, Mary McLennan to a one (3) year term, which will expire on December 31, 2025, Shon McCollum, Angela Blodgett, Wayne Tome, and Angelia Lawson serve until their appointment ends or if such Trustee has been designated by a County officer, until the term of office or appointment of the County officer who appointed such trustee ends to the Public Safety Pension Plan Board of Trustees.

This Resolution was Introduced on January 3, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on January 17, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted the duties of this Committee.

There were no Council questions or comments.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 01-2023, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – Y, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y  
The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Cecil County Public Schools – Budget Amendment #106

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #106 in the amount of \$97,815 for December expenses. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson. The motion was approved by a voice vote of 5 to 0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

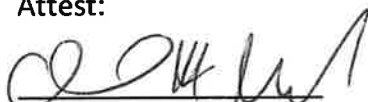
On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Vice President Meffley, Council President Gregory adjourned the meeting at 8:07 pm.

Council President Gregory announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Elk Room of the County Administration Building. The legislative session will be livestreamed at the county's webpage at [www.ccgov.org/council](http://www.ccgov.org/council). The recording and transcription will be uploaded to the county's website as soon as possible.

Approved:

  
Jackie Gregory  
Council President

Attest:

  
David M. Culver  
Council Manager