

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
WORK SESSION MINUTES**

May 23, 2023

OPEN SESSION – Elk Room

4:30 P.M.

NOTE: The recording and transcription of this meeting are available on the County website at www.ccgov.org/council.

PRESENT: Council Members: Robert Meffley, Rebecca Hamilton, Al Miller, Donna Culberson, and Jackie Gregory; David Culver, Council Manager; Terry Hale, Council Assistant, members of the administration and members of the public.

Call to Order

Council President Gregory 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 Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Vice President Meffley, the Council moved to approve the minutes of the Council work session of March 28, 2023, as presented. The motion passed 5 to 0.

Discussion – FY24 Budget Deliberation

Director of Finance Shon McCollum outlined the proposed amendments based on the Budget Sessions. Director of Administration Steven Overbay outlined the amendment for the tax refund. Vice President Meffley asked to clarify the refund and Director Overbay indicated it will be a credit on the tax bill for improved primary residential households based on data from the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT). Councilman Miller and Councilwoman Culberson requested clarify on improved property and Director McCollum noted that it is property with a dwelling assessment based on SDAT records. Councilwoman Culberson also asked for clarification if this would also apply to property with escrow accounts and Director Overbay stated it would and that notice would be on the tax bill and information sent to the escrow companies. Director Overbay noted that an information help line to call with questions will be created.

Vice President Meffley inquired as to how the lockbox for education would function and Director McCollum noted it would be a committed fund. President Gregory noted that this fund could have additional money allocated to it in the future as well as funds being allocated for future budgets. Vice President Meffley noted the term lockbox is not in the code and Director McCollum noted it is committed funds and a resolution would need to be introduced to allocate the funding. Councilwoman Culberson noted Kirwan funding requirements and future costs and Councilman Miller noted assigned fund balance needs to be clarified.

Councilman Miller inquired on the clerical position that is shared with the three departments and Director McCollum outlined the allocation of the position between the departments. Vice President Meffley inquired on how the health charges are divided and also on the additional health insurance cost in the County Executive Office. He requested a legal analysis on health insurance for the County Executive and Director Overbay indicated an opinion would be drafted. Andrew Ondish from Philadelphia Road Consulting LLC noted that health insurance is not considered compensation but a fringe benefit.

Vice President Meffley requested that the budget be revised to show the cost of all the attorney's, outside legal counsel and support staff in one budget. Councilwoman Culberson noted that legal costs should be charged to the Department that required the services. Director McCollum noted that could be considered in the next budget. President Gregory noted that this would create additional work to track the cross charges. Director Overbay noted that attorneys are hired to work for various departments.

Councilman Miller reviewed the fund balance in the last audit and the allocation for the CCPS. He proposed either fund the CCPS Operating Budget more with 2 million either out of the County reserve budget or the Kirwan lockbox or budget 2 million dollars out of the County reserve or Kirwan lockbox and ask the CCPS to add 1 million dollars out of the CCPS fund balance to get to 3 million dollars more into the CCPS 2024 Operating Budget. President Gregory noted what ability Council has to change the budget and the increases in student funding over the past several years. Councilwoman Culberson noted the increase from the State of 16 million dollars this year for CCPS and that these funds could be utilized for additional staff. She also noted that CCPS did meet with the County Executive during the budget process to negotiate funding. Andrew Ondish noted that Council can only examine the operating budget and use of fund balance would need to come from the County Executive's office. Vice President Meffley inquired on the amount that was discussed with the CCPS and Director Overbay outlined the discussions and the use of the future committed 10 million dollars as well as another 10 million dollars to be used to offset capital costs. Director McCollum outlined maintenance of effort costs and fund balance. Councilwoman Hamilton indicated that both proposals are similar but cuts would need to be made to the County's operation budget and Andrew Ondish concurred. Councilwoman Culberson inquired if the additional funds would be the new MOE number and Andrew Ondish indicated it would unless it is spent on small cap exclusions. Councilwoman Culberson opined on additional funding from the State and future County costs. Councilman Miller noted that additional funds will still be needed. Councilwoman Hamilton clarified how the 10 million dollar committed funds and the 10 million dollars capital costs will be spent over the next several years and Director McCollum concurred. President Gregory discussed fund balance and Council Manager Culver reminded Council of the budget requirements in the County Charter.

Council Manager Report

Council Manager Culver noted the updated Council Manager report is in the packet.

Council Member Items

Councilwoman Hamilton noted she attended the Cecil College graduation and sent her congratulations to all the graduates. She also congratulated the high school seniors who will be graduating this month and wished them success in all future endeavors.

Vice President Meffley noted he attended the County Employee Recognition lunch. He noted the large turnout at the May 18 Budget Hearing and that the fire company's allocation should be reviewed in upcoming budgets. He also attended the Cecil College graduation, the Scottish Games at Fair Hill and the Chesapeake City Fire Company Banquet.

Councilman Miller noted he attended the School of Technology awards and congratulated the students of the diesel program on the many accomplishments this year. He also attended the Cecil

College graduation and the Scottish Games. On May 22 he met with the Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks and discussed farming issues.

Councilwoman Culberson also attended the Employee Recognition lunch. She also attended the School of Technology awards program and the Cecil College graduation. She attended the Perryville High awards ceremony and noted the success of Perryville boys' and girls' lacrosse teams as well as the track and field team. She also attended the Water Witch Fire Banquet and thanked them for the award to Council for its support.

President Gregory also noted she attended the Capstone event at Elkton High along with Councilwoman Hamilton. She also attended the dedication of the Frank Muller Training Center with Councilwoman Hamilton and Vice President Meffley. She participated in the North East VFW golf tournament on May 20. She also attended the Water Witch Fire Banquet.

Adjournment

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley. Council President Gregory adjourned the work session at 6:07 pm.

Next County Council Work Session – June 6, 2023

Approved:


Jackie Gregory, Council President



David M. Culver
Council Manager