

**COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2023-11
June 6, 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.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the County Council of Cecil County of June 6, 2023, was called to order by Council President Gregory at 7:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER

Councilman Miller asked for a moment of silence for former Cecil County Treasurer Norman Hasson and Ralph Young who recently passed away.

Councilman Miller introduced Pastor Robert McKnight of United Redeemed Church in Elkton who gave 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 June 6, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

- a. Bill No. Bill 2023-08 - Bond Authorization – General Obligation Project Bonds

An Act authorizing and empowering Cecil County, Maryland (the "County"), to borrow from time to time not more than Fifty Seven Million Dollars (\$57,000,000) for the purpose of financing the costs of certain public facilities within the County described herein, and to effect such borrowing by the issuance and sale of its general obligation bonds in one or more series from time to time; empowering the County Executive to execute and deliver one or more executive orders prior to issuing the bonds in order to fix, prescribe and determine the details of the bonds and the issuance and sale thereof; empowering and directing the County to levy ad valorem taxes in rate and amount sufficient to provide funds for the payment of the maturing principal of and interest on the bonds; exempting the bonds from the provisions of Sections 19-205 and 19-206 of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended, or successor provision; authorizing the County to issue and sell bond anticipation notes in one or more series pursuant to the authority of

Sections 19-211 through 19-223 of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended, or successor provision, prior to and in anticipation of the sale of the bonds; providing that the County may issue and sell all or any portion of the bonds as bonds the interest on which is excludable from gross income for federal income tax purposes; authorizing the County to issue bonds for the purpose of refunding any bonds issued pursuant to this Act in one or more series pursuant to the authority of Section 19-207 of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland; and relating generally to the issuance and sale of such bonds.

Director of Finance Shon McCollum noted these are for the upcoming CIP projects. Director McCollum also noted that the intent is to also refinance previous bonds to more favorable terms. He noted that every 2 years the County issues bonds for projects and the last bonds were issued in 2021.

No public comments were received.

- b. Resolution 32-2023 - Grant Application – Community Development Block Grant – Holloway Beach Sewer Project – Habitat for Humanity Home Rehabilitation Project

A Resolution to authorize the Cecil County Department of Community Services, Housing and Community Development Division, to apply for funding from the Maryland Community Development Block Grant program through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The Department of Community Services requests that this Resolution be considered as expedited legislation due to the application deadline. Grant funds will support the Holloway Beach Sewer Project and the Habitat for Humanity Home Rehabilitation Project.

Director of Administration Steve Overbay noted the project was to assist low and moderate income families with connection fees to the public sewer once the Holloway Beach project was completed and also to assist Habitat for Humanity with rehabilitation projects.

No public comments were received.

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 May 16, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Sean Brimm of Elkton stated he would like more funding for the Board of Education.

William Dixon of North East commented on the upcoming dredging project on the North East River.

Lisa Nurnberger of North East would like more funding for the Board of Education and Health Department.

Tanya Emkey of Aberdeen noted ongoing issues at Indian Acres with the property manager.

Anna Gormon of Elkton noted ongoing issues at Indian Acres with the property manager.

Russ Johnson of Elkton noted his support for the budget.

Harold McCanick of Elk Neck noted the disrespectful behavior at the Budget Hearing.

Jordan Seguin of Elkton stated she would like more funding for the Board of Education.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Culberson reviewed the Intel numbers for the past two weeks. She also attended Perryville and North East High School graduations. She noted that the State Highway Administration is planning to close the median at Route 40 and Jackson Station Road and place flexible post so you will not be able to cross.

Councilman Miller noted he attended the School of Technology and Rising Sun graduations. He also attended Sun Fest in Rising Sun and congratulated them on the event. He also noted he will be touring Long Green Farm, the winner of the Leopold Conservation Award, this week.

Councilwoman Hamilton noted that this is National Roofing Week. She also attended the School of Technology and Elkton High School graduation and wished all graduates congratulations and success on any future endeavors. She also attended Sun Fest in Rising Sun and the Perryville Seafood Festival this past weekend. She also thanked everyone who contacted her on the budget.

Vice President Meffley noted the County will continue to examine the issues at Indian Acres. He attended the Correctional Officers graduation. He attended the Bo Manor High School graduation. He also attended the North East Bridge dedication for Cecil County Veterans. He also attended the Social Services Meeting. He offered congratulations to Berkeley Orr on his retirement from the Board of Education after 40 years of service. He also attended the MRDC Head Start end of school meeting. He also thanked everyone for the calls on the budget.

Council President Gregory noted that Habitat for Humanity reported on the successes for this year and they are working with the School of Technology on another house to be done by November. She also offered her congratulations to all the high school graduates, including her son. She attended the Women Veteran United Committee Memorial Day Event at the Chesapeake House Travel Plaza on Interstate 95. She also attended Memorial Day Services at the North East VFW, Port Deposit VFW, the Perryville American Legion and Rising Sun American Legion. She also noted the Comptroller of Maryland, Brooke E. Lierman, toured Elkton last week.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 34-2023 - Supplemental Appropriation – General Fund Balance – Law Enforcement Armored Rescue Vehicle and Crossover Utility Vehicle.

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, in the amount totally \$417,000 from the General Fund Balance to Law Enforcement's budget for the expenditure appropriation authority to purchase an Armored Rescue/Tactical (SRT) vehicle for \$400,000 and a Crossover Utility Vehicle (CUV) for \$17,000.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on June 6, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on June 20, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that Sheriff Adams addressed this at the June 6 Work Session and that these vehicles are needed for public safety emergencies and events and will help enhance the safety of our citizens and officers.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 23-2023 - Adoption - Real Property and Personal Property Tax Rates - Fiscal Year 2024

A Resolution to levy and impose a property and income tax for the fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2023 and ending June 30, 2024; setting the tax rates for property and providing for the collection of the property tax.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on April 4, 2023, Public Hearing on May 18, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

Director of Finance Shon McCollum noted this will set the tax rates for FY24.

Council had no further questions or comments.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Resolution 23-2023, which was seconded by Councilman Miller.

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

Resolution 31-2023 - Reappointment – Electrical Examiners Board – Joshua Huegel, Frederick Craig, Jr., and Appointment-Paul Palmer.

A Resolution to confirm the reappointment by the County Executive of Joshua Huegel to expire on November 19, 2025, Frederick Craig, Jr. to expire January 1, 2026, and the appointment of Paul Palmer to fill a vacancy to expire May 31, 2026, to the Electrical Examiners Board for three-year terms.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on May 16, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that Mr. Huegel and Mr. Craig have done an excellent job on the board and Mr. Palmer is well qualified. He also noted that this board is part of the licensing requirements and will also hear appeals.

Council had no further questions or comments.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 31-2023, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

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

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 32-2023 - Grant Application – Community Development Block Grant – Holloway Beach Sewer Project – Habitat for Humanity Home Rehabilitation Project.

A Resolution to authorize the Cecil County Department of Community Services, Housing and Community Development Division, to apply for funding from the Maryland Community Development Block Grant program through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The Department of Community Services requests that this Resolution be considered as expedited legislation due to the application deadline. Grant funds will support the Holloway Beach Sewer Project and the Habitat for Humanity Home Rehabilitation Project.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on May 16, 2023, Public Hearing on June 6, 2023, and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that the projects being requested in this application is for the Holloway Beach sewer project and for Habitat for Humanity housing rehabilitation projects. The funds would assist low to moderate income people with the connection fees to the Holloway Beach sewer project and the Habitat funds would assist 6 to 10 low to moderate household to rehabilitate property. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if we do receive the grant will they need to do a budget amendment to accept and Director Overbay noted it would be a budget amendment to accept the grant.

Council had no further questions or comments.

Vice President Meffley made a motion to approve Resolution 32-2023, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

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

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 33-2023 - Supplemental Appropriation - Grant Funds – Community Services – Prevention and Overdose Response and Trauma Supports.

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 \$28,146 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund to record the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Inter-Agency Agreement between the Cecil County Health Department and the Cecil County Department of Community Services. The agreement provides funding for educational, promotional, and training

items for the PORT team members and basic supplies and personal care items for individuals experiencing addiction as distributed by the PORT team members.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on May 16, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay thanked all the Departments on the work they put into PORT and noted these are remaining funds from previous grants that were awarded and will be spent by the end of Fiscal Year 23 on supplies and salaries for the PORT program.

Council had no further questions or comments.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 33-2023, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

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

CALL FOR FINAL READING OF BILLS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Bill No. 2023-04 - Capital Improvement Program FY2024-2028

A Bill to approve the Capital Improvement Program for Cecil County for Fiscal Years 2024 through 2028.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on April 4, 2023, Public Hearing on May 18, 2023, and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

President Gregory proposed Amendment 1 to Bill No. 2023-04.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2023-04

Title: Revise CIP Project No. 55041 "Construct Holloway Beach Sewer"

Synopsis: Move the remaining \$160,000 of the Design/Engineering funds for CIP Project No. 55041 from FY25 to FY24

Introduced by: Council President at the request of the County Executive

On Page 41 of the FY2024 Capital Improvement Program change:

Design/Engineering, move \$160,000 from FY 25 to FY 24

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted this is to accelerate this project in order to mitigate failing septic systems.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Amendment 1 to Bill 2023-04, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

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

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Bill 2023-04 as amended, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

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

Bill No. 2023-05 - Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance - FY 2024

A Bill to adopt the County Budget including the Current Expense Budget, Capital Budget, Special Purpose Budgets and Grants Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and to appropriate funds for all expenditures for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on April 4, 2023, Public Hearing on May 18, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

President Gregory proposed Amendment 1 to Bill No. 2023-05.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Amendment No. 1 to Bill No. 2023-05

Title: Real Property tax credit for FY24

Synopsis: To add the real property tax credit available only to owner-occupied property of a homeowner as defined in Maryland Code Annotated, Tax Property Article, § 9-105 with real estate tax bill of \$1 and more as of July 1, 2023

Introduced by: Council President at the request of the County Executive

On Page 4, Line 79 to 93, add:

Section 10

Pursuant to Maryland Code Annotated, Tax Property Article, § 9-221, a property tax credit against the county property tax imposed on real property is hereby granted for maximum of \$20,000,000. This real property tax credit is available only to the owner-occupied property of a homeowner as defined in Maryland Code Annotated, Tax Property Article, § 9-105 with real estate tax bill of \$1 and more as of July 1, 2023. The amount of this property tax credit shall be \$1,500 for those homeowners whose County real estate tax bill is greater than or equal to \$10,000, \$1,000 for those

homeowners whose County real estate tax bill is greater than or equal to \$5,000 but less than \$10,000, \$700 for those homeowners whose County real estate tax bill is greater than or equal to \$1,000 but less than \$5,000, \$500 for those homeowners whose County real estate tax bill is greater than or equal to \$500 but less than \$1,000, and actual for those homeowners whose County real estate tax bill is less than \$500 for the July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 tax year for each owner occupied property of a homeowner as defined in Maryland Code Annotated, Tax Property Article, § 9-105. This real property tax credit will be issued as a credit line on the real estate tax bill as of July 1, 2023, with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation. In no event shall this property tax credit reduce a homeowners' net county real property tax to less than zero or entitle a homeowner to a refund of the amount of unused credit.

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to approve Amendment 1 to Bill 2023-05, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

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

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Amendment No. 2 to Bill No. 2023-05

Title: Orphan's Court – Salaries – Elected Officials

Synopsis: Increase Salaries – Elected Officials to include stipends for Judges. The original budget only included one quarterly stipend for the three judges (\$3,375) and not all four quarters.

Introduced by: Council President at the request of the County Executive

On Page 44 of the Proposed FY24 Budget Book increase:

“Salaries- Elected Officials” budget line item in Department 171-Orphan's Court from \$27,375 to \$30,750 in the General Fund, an increase of \$3,375.

“Total Orphan's Court: budget line item in Department 171- Orphan's Court from \$52,935 to \$56,310

On the Proposed FY 2024 Revenue Budget Report increase:

“Total Fund Balance” from \$23,288,955 to \$23,292,330

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Amendment 2 to Bill 2023-05, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

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

Councilman Miller noted the Budget Hearing discussions and opined that going forward the Administration and Board of Education should evaluate funding needs and cooperate on the upcoming Kirwan/Blueprint for Growth Funding issues. He also noted the upcoming debt for the North East Middle and High School projects and the need to evaluate debt service. Finally, he noted the we must continue to evaluate the salaries for our law enforcement officers to ensure we are attracting and retaining the best possible officers. Vice President Meffley noted this is the seventh budget cycle and he supports the FY24 budget. President Gregory also noted her support for the budget and noted the reduction in taxes and the tax refund.

Councilwoman Hamilton made a motion to approve Bill 2023-05 as amended, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

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

Bill 2023-06 – Authorization of Lease Purchase Equipment Financing

A Bill authorizing and empowering Cecil County, Maryland to enter into new financing under a lease purchase agreement or similar arrangement in an aggregate principal amount not to exceed Four Million Dollars (\$4,000,000) for Fiscal Year 2024 for the purpose of financing the acquisition of certain necessary and essential vehicles and equipment for use in the County's governmental programs; providing that the obligations of the County under the agreement shall not be a general obligation of the County, shall not constitute a pledge of the full faith and credit or the taxing power of the County and shall not constitute a debt of the County within the meaning of any statutory or constitutional provision, but shall be subject to appropriation in each and every fiscal year during the term of the agreement; empowering the County Executive to execute and deliver an executive order prior to the execution and delivery of the agreement in order to award the agreement to the successful bidder and to fix, prescribe and determine the details of such financing; and relating generally to such financing.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on April 4, 2023, Public Hearing on May 18, 2023 and scheduled for consideration on June 6, 2023.

Director of Finance Shon McCollum noted that the lease amount is going up due to the additional equipment being purchased at the landfill. Councilwoman Hamilton inquired if the leases will show up on the contract report and Director McCollum noted they will if the lease exceeds the \$100,000 threshold.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Bill 2023-06, which was seconded by President Gregory.

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

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Councilwoman Hamilton, Council President Gregory adjourned the meeting at 8:14 pm.

Council President Gregory announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, June 20, 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. 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