

COUNTY COUNCIL OF CECIL COUNTY
LEGISLATIVE SESSION MINUTES
LSD 2024-02
January 23, 2024

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
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 January 23, 2024, was called to order by Council President Gregory at 7:00 p.m. President Gregory noted that this meeting was postponed from January 16, 2024 because of inclement weather.

ROLL CALL

Council Manager Culver called the roll and noted four members were present and one absent.

OPENING PRAYER/MOMENT OF SILENCE

President Gregory asked for a moment of silence for Corporal Daniel Stickney, Jr of the Rising Sun Police Department and George Reynolds who recently passed away.

Pastor Mark Grissom from New Freedom Church in Rising Sun 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 January 23, 2024. The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

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 2, 2024. The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Russ Johnson of Elkton spoke on successful conservative budgeting and education issues.
Sean Brimm of North East spoke on cannabis regulations and education funding issues.

Phyllis Kilby of Colora spoke on education funding issues.
Brian Hampton of Perryville spoke on election and education issues,
Diane Hawley of North East spoke on education funding issues.
William Moon of North East spoke on education funding issues.
Anne Marie Nacey of Earleville spoke on education funding issues.
Lori Hrinko of Elkton spoke on education funding issues.

PRESIDENT AND COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Culberson thanked everyone for attending. She noted she attended the Rural Counties Coalition bill review with President Gregory. She also attended the Cecil County Chamber of Commerce Cecil Night in Annapolis. She also attended the Health Advisory Council meeting. lastly, she noted the intel numbers for the past week.

Councilman Miller noted he attended the Young Farmers Breakfast on January 15 at the Calvert Grange. He also attended the Chamber's Cecil Night in Annapolis. He also congratulated the Spry Brothers on winning the Outstanding Cooperator of the Year at the Cecil Soil Conservation District Banquet on January 12. He also attended the Farm Bureau Meeting and discussed upcoming state legislation.

Vice President Meffley thanked everyone for attending and thanked the Board of Education facility staff that assisted a constituent in Chesapeake City with a tree that fell from the school property. He also attended the Young Farmers Breakfast, Chamber's Cecil Night in Annapolis and the Soil Conservation banquet. He also attended the Martin Luther King, Jr. service and breakfast on January 15.

President Gregory noted she also attend the MLK event and that it was sponsored by Wrights AME Church and Five Rivers Church. Attended the Chamber's Cecil Night in Annapolis. She noted she is attending the MACo Legislative Committee Meetings, and they are already reviewing bills introduced at the State Legislative Session. She noted the Governor's Office has submitted bills on housing and density, that MACo is carefully following these, as well as all other bills that affect County government. Lastly, she encouraged everyone to attend the pasta dinner fundraiser at the Elkton American Legion on January 26.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Bill 2024-01 - Establishment – Commission on Veterans Affairs

To establish a Cecil County Commission on Veteran Affairs for the purpose of advancing the general welfare of our veterans through the advocacy and advisement of our veteran programs at the local, State and Federal level. These activities will help promote the health and wellness of our veterans as well as provide education about programs, resources, and opportunities for economic assistance to our veterans and their spouses. The Commission will help promote employment opportunities and encourage local businesses to hire and retain veterans and to educate businesses in workforce development initiatives intended to foster and develop gainful employment opportunities for all veterans of Cecil County.

Introduced by the Council President Gregory, Vice President Meffley, Councilwoman Hamilton and Councilwoman Culberson.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 23, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on February 6, 2024 and consideration on February 20, 2024.

President Gregory noted that several counties have this type of Commission and noted how this commission functions. This Commission would be made up of veteran organizations and would help veterans by providing information, outreach and assistance in all matters relating to the well-being of our veterans. She noted the goals for this commission is to help and honor veterans by advancing the general welfare of our veterans through advocacy and advisement for our veteran programs at the local, state and federal level. She noted these activities will help promote the health and wellness of our veterans as well as promote education, programs, how to get economic assistance to our veterans and spouses, help promote employment opportunities, encourage local businesses to hire and retain veterans and to educate businesses in workforce development initiatives intended to foster and develop gainful employment opportunities for all veterans of Cecil County. This will also provide a forum for the VFW and American Legions to review and advertise events for veterans and spouses. Vice President Meffley and Councilwoman Culberson noted they would like to be added as co-sponsors.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Bill 2024-02 - Amendment – Zoning Ordinance – Critical Area – Definitions, and Official Critical Area Maps.

An Act to amend the Cecil County Zoning Ordinance, Article II, Part I, Section 12, Article XI, Part 1, Section 191.11, and Article XI, Part 1, Section 192; Definitions in order to update Critical Area Statewide Base Map and All Areas.

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

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 23, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on February 6, 2024 and consideration on February 20, 2024.

Director of Land Use Stephen O'Connor noted that this would update the Zoning Ordinance to match the newly adopted Maryland Critical Area Commission maps. He noted that the maps would become the official maps for Cecil County for the Critical Areas. He noted this was part of the Critical Area legislation that was passed by the Council last year. He also noted the Planning Board recommended approval of this change.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Bill 2024-03 - Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation – Mary Ann Thompson and James K. MacDonald, and Meulenberg Enterprises, LLC.

A Bill to approve the application of Mary Ann Thompson and James K. MacDonald for the property of 360 Joseph Biggs Memorial Highway (Tax Map 10F, Grid 21, Parcel 32) and Meulenberg Enterprises, LLC for the property of 2159 Principio Road (Tax Map 18, Grid 8, Parcel 10) requesting a recommendation of approval to submit an application for the purchase of an easement to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation.

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

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 23, 2024 and scheduled for public hearing on February 6, 2024 and consideration on February 20, 2024.

Director of Land Use Stephen O'Connor noted that these two farms located at 360 Joseph Biggs Highway and 2159 Principio Road that are requesting to sell the development rights to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) program. As part of this easement sale, the properties must have a public hearing and be part of an agricultural district. Director O'Connor noted that these two farms are first time participants in the program and this bill will serve as the needed public hearing for the application.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 06-2024 - Budget Amendment - Fund Balance - Department of Emergency Services – Purchase of Used Ambulance.

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, in order to appropriate a total of \$25,000 of additional expenditures for the purchase of (1) one used ambulance from the General Fund to the Department of Emergency Services budget.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 23, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on February 6, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that this resolution would allow Emergency Services to purchase a used ambulance from the Chesapeake City Fire Company for \$25,000. The ambulance is six years old and has approximately 54,000 miles. This ambulance would be put into service at the Colora Station to serve western Cecil County.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 07-2024 - Appointment—Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board – Nathan Stewart, Melissa Kinsler, and Robert Muller.

A Resolution to confirm the appointment by the County Executive of Nathan Stewart filling the vacancy of Stephen Cummins III, representing IAFF Local 4645, Melissa Kinsler filling the vacancy of Rodney Heinze, representing Councilmanic District 2, and Robert Muller filling the vacancy of

Richard Collins, representing Cecil County Firemen's Association (Ex-Officio), to the Cecil County Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board, which will expire on June 1, 2024.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 23, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on February 6, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that this board consists of 15 members and the three on this resolution are replacing members who are no longer able to serve.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 08-2024- Tax Credit - Historic Property – Schoolhouse known as Town Point School.

A Resolution to approve a property tax credit of 10% of the documented expenses spent by the owner-taxpayer for the restoration and preservation of the Schoolhouse known as Town Point School, a historic designated structure in Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 23, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on February 6, 2024.

Director of Land Use Stephen O'Connor noted that this property owner is applying for the tax credit for this historical property at 19 Port Herman Road in Chesapeake City. He noted that this house is part of the historic district and that the owner has done extensive repairs to the façade of the house which qualifies them for this credit. Councilman Miller noted that the fiscal impact is \$800.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 01-2024 - Budget Amendment - Fund Balance - Department of Emergency Services

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, in order to appropriate a total of \$84,866 of additional expenditures for the purchase of radios, a cardiac monitor/defibrillator, automatic external defibrillators, and required radio parts from the General Fund to the Department of Emergency Services budget.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 16, 2024, postponed to January 23, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that these funds were in the FY23 Budget but because of supply chain issues, the equipment was not available. He noted in addition, along with the equipment being available, grant funding in the amount of \$29,490 is also available to offset the cost of \$84,866.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 01-2024, which was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – A, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y
The motion was approved 4 to 0 with one absent.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 02-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds - Office of Economic Development
– MARBIDCO - Agriculture Microgrant Program.

A resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 in order to provide a total of \$42,000 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund- Office of Economic Development, in order to record the cost share grant awarded from the Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO) for the purpose of matching funds towards the Agriculture Microgrant Program in Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 16, 2024, postponed to January 23, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that Cecil County appreciates the cooperation between MARBIDCO, Upper Shore Regional Council, Cecil County and the farmers. He noted this grant helps farmers with new business opportunities and help grow existing businesses. He noted this grant is matched with Cecil County funds and funding from the farmers in the program.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Resolution 02-2024, which was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – A, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y
The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 03-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Office of Economic Development
– Upper Shore Regional Council – Agricultural Microgrant Program.

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, in order to provide a total of \$43,000.00 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund – Office of Economic Development, in order to record the grant awarded from the Upper Shore Regional Council, for the purpose of an Agriculture Microgrant Program in Cecil County.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 16, 2024, postponed to January 23, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay thanked Upper Shore Regional Council for this grant. He noted this funding goes directly to the farmers. Last year Cecil County did 48 grants and over 140 total grants so far during the first three years of the program.

Vice President Meffley made a motion to approve Resolution 03-2024, which was seconded by Councilman Miller.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – A, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y
The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 04-2024 - Supplemental Appropriation – Grant Funds – Office of Economic Development –Marketing Costs.

A Resolution to amend the Annual Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for Cecil County, Maryland, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, in order to provide a total of \$112,320 to the Special Revenue Other Grants Fund, Office of Economic Development, to record the grant awarded from the Maryland Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) for the purpose to allow the County to develop signage, literature, web pages, a video, and to market our sites and stories to visitors and locals.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 16, 2024, postponed to January 23, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted this grant will help Cecil County promote our historical and cultural sites for tourism. He also thanked the Maryland Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration for this grant and recognizing the importance of these sites in Cecil County.

Councilwoman Culberson made a motion to approve Resolution 04-2024, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – A, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y
The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

Council Manager Culver stated for the record:

Resolution 05-2024 – Reappointment– Weed Control Advisory Board.

A Resolution to confirm the reappointment by the County Executive of Robert Weaver, Jim Calao, Charles Herzog, Kenneth Newcomb, Doris Behnke, Ryan Fisher, Carroll Michael Scheeler, William Ewing, Jessica Edge, Scott Heaps, and John Fabian to the Weed Control Board for a three-year term, which will expire on January 16, 2027.

Introduced, read for the first time, order posted on January 2, 2024 and scheduled for consideration on January 16, 2024, postponed to January 23, 2024.

Director of Administration Steven Overbay noted that noxious weed control is important to Cecil County and this Board has helped implement the new technologies and contracts to control these weeds. Councilman Miller thanked the administration for making these 3-year terms.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Resolution 05-2024, which was seconded by Vice President Meffley.

Roll call vote: Hamilton – A, Miller -Y, Culberson – Y, Meffley – Y, Gregory- Y
The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

NEW BUSINESS

Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #119

President Gregory noted that the Cecil County Public Schools Budget Amendment #119 is for \$326,300.

Councilman Miller made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #119 in the amount of \$326,300. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Culberson. The motion was approved 4 to 0 with 1 absent.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion made by Councilwoman Culberson, seconded by Vice President Meffley, President Gregory adjourned the meeting at 8:11 pm.

Council President Gregory announced that the next Council Legislative Session is scheduled on Tuesday, February 6, 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