



Howard County Council

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

COUNCILMEMBERS

Christiana Rigby, Chair
District 3

Deb Jung, Vice Chair
District 4

Opel Jones
District 2

Liz Walsh
District 1

David Yungmann
District 5

Operating Budget Work Session #2 Meeting Minutes – Approved

Web-based Hybrid Meeting

Video Streamed on <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/watch-us>

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Council Chairperson Rigby opened the meeting at 9:35 a.m.

Members Present: Christiana Rigby, Chairperson; Deb Jung, Vice Chairperson; Liz Walsh; Opel Jones; and David Yungmann.

Staff Present: Michelle Harrod, Council Administrator; Gary Kuc, County Solicitor; Amanda Mihill, Assistant County Solicitor; Craig Glendenning, County Auditor; Owen Clarke, Deputy County Auditor; Lori Buchman, Auditor's Office; Roz Hightower, Administrative support; Theo Wimberly, Administrative Manager; Jeff Meyers, Lynne Blume Rosen, and Owen Kahn, Legislative Analysts

Administration Staff Present: Noted below.

Agenda

Legislative and Judicial

The Council listened to presentations and asked questions about Revenue, Fees, and Funds for: the Circuit Court (1 new administrative assistant position needed to deal with backlog), the Sheriff's Office, the State's Attorney, the Board of Elections, the Office of Law, the County Council, and the Department of Corrections. The Council also heard from the Budget Office about Non-Departmental Funds and Expenses.

Circuit Court

Council Member Jung asked about reasoning for salary increase for the Court's social worker position, according to Ms. Keiser, increase is to align with similar positions elsewhere in county governments to help recruit and retain. Council Member Jung also asked about the raises for the Administrator and Deputy Administration, Funding is a placeholder pending County classification study. Council Member Jung also asked about starting salary for new administrative position. Grade H is standard for that position, step depends on candidates' qualifications and experiences.

Sheriff's Office

Council Member Rigby asked about the use of overtime in the Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff indicated that factors beyond his control are the cause but is working on controlling it. The Sheriff was asked to provide a chart on the matter. Council Member Jung asked about the Sheriff's involvement with boys and girls clubs and possible expansion in Wilde Lake. The Sheriff would like to expand the clubs as resources and partnerships allow. Council Member Jung wondered about unspent money earmarked for recruitment and about unfunded positions. Position count result of negotiations that led to funding other items. Unspent money the result of several candidates failing to complete training academy. Council Member Jung asked about implementation of body worn cameras and procurements. The Sheriff noted that he is not the lead agency on this matter. Council Member Jung asked why vehicle charges have increased. Mr. Mamo noted the number of vehicles has increased thus capitalization and maintenance charges have increased.

Council Requested:

- *A chart relating to overtime issues.*

State's Attorney

Council Member Yungmann asked about positions in the State's Attorney office related to body worn camera program. The State's Attorney indicated that more paralegals are needed due to the volume of video. Council Member Rigby noted that it is important to address the mental health needs of staff. Council Member Jung asked about implementation of body worn cameras and procurements. The State's Attorney indicated a need to further review the State legislation and to ensure that information is reliable and kept secure. Council Member Jung asked how the State's Attorney handles minors. The State's Attorney notes a focus on rehabilitation with juvenile respondents and using options. Council Member Jung asked if the State's Attorney talks to the Police Chief about appropriate responses to minor incidents. The State's Attorney indicates that talks are frequent, robust, and on-going.

Board of Elections

Council Member Yungmann showed a concern for the proliferation of polling places. Council Member Jung asked about a shortage of election judges. The Elections Administrator indicated a concern that has increased since COVID and further study is merited on how to address the concern.

Office of Law

Gary Kuc provided the Council with an overview of the FY2024 proposed operating budget for the Office of Law.

County Council

Council Member Jones asked for more information about the Auditor's whistle blower hotline and costs. The Auditor indicated that research will be done pending funding and that executive exempt employees do not get paid overtime. Council Member Rigby indicated a concern about a lack of transparency with fraud investigations. Council Member Jones requested data concerning the use of staff time in investigations of the Library. Council Member Rigby wanted more information about the information that DTCS could uncover. The Auditor indicated that DTCS could, if it chose, find any information in any of the County's data systems that DTCS supports.

Department of Corrections

Council Member Rigby asked about offenders' access to books. The Corrections Administrator indicated that offenders can request physical books from the library and may access ebooks. Council Member Rigby indicated that the corrections facility should be replaced. Council Member Jung asked about the accreditation process. The Corrections Administrator noted that Howard County Corrections has never before sought accreditation. The process is on-going and should wrap up in October. Montgomery County is the only accredited local corrections system in Maryland. Council Member Jung asked about salary and benefits. The County's salary and benefits are commensurate with or better than peer jurisdictions. Council Member Jung asked about recruitment efforts and suggested using signing bonuses. Those efforts are underway. Council Member Jung asked if exit interviews were used. Those interviews are used and have shown that some individuals are not suited to the Corrections career field. Council Member Jung asked about the replacement of certain doors related to offenders with mental health issues. Those doors are on order. It has proven difficult to hire mental health clinicians. Council Member Rigby indicated a need to expand the number of individuals who enter the mental health field. The Council asked the Department to confirm when the number of years for retirement changed to 20 years.

Council Requested:

- *When the number of years for retirement changed to 20 years.*

Non-Departmental Funds and Expenses

Council Member Yungmann asked about the County's methods for addressing OPEB. The Director of Finance indicated that the current liabilities are so large, that any target would be way off, but the rating agencies seem satisfied with the County's approach. Council Member Jung sought clarification about how health care costs are managed and viewed by rating agencies.

Council Member Yungmann noted that Fleet has significant unspent allocations. The Fleet manager noted that the County has a backlog in vehicle replacements due to limited inventory. Additionally, the County is concerned about volatility in fuel prices. Council Member Jung is concerned that too few electric vehicles are being purchased. The Fleet manager indicated that

electric vehicles are unavailable to fleet buyers. Council Member Yungmann asked about the lifespan of electric vehicles compared to conventional vehicles. The Fleet manager indicated that there is some uncertainty, but it should be similar. Electric vehicles do provide a lower maintenance cost.

Council Member Yungmann asked about the unspent PAYGO money allocated to COVID issues. The Executive's Chief of Staff explained the goals of how this money is planned to be used and why things take a long time. Council Member Yungmann wants more specificity about how this pot of money will be disbursed.

Council Member Jung asked about the allocation for the Citizens Election Fund. The Budget office explained where that money is in the budget.

Council Member Jung asked about funding for the Inner Arbor Trust. The Executive's Chief of Staff explained that last year's allocation was a one-time project.

Council Member Jung asked about entities that received County money last year but are not receiving money next year. The Executive's Chief of Staff and Budget office noted that some entities received one-time PAYGO money last year, but, since that money was one-time, it would not appear in PAYGO again. Many entities get County money elsewhere in the budget. Council Member Jung asked about how those entities are required to report to the County. The Council may see those reports.

Council Requested:

- *The long-term plan for increasing the funded ratio of the OPEB plan.*
- *Details of the use of the unspent FY23 Pandemic Relief Paygo (approximately \$5M) and plans for the additional FY24 appropriation of \$2M, including the name of the initiative and the funding amounts.*

Chair Rigby adjourned the meeting at 1:49 p.m.

5/03/2023 Operating Work Session #2 Attendee List:

Budget Office

Holly Sun
Brook Mamo
Caitlin Nardolillo
James Kwak
Paul McIntyre
Andrew Galarza

Circuit Court

Judge William Tucker
Jennifer R. Keiser
Deidre Barksdale

Sheriff's Office

Marcus Harris
Mark Verderaime
Nancy Nguyen

State's Attorney

Richard Gibson
Vicki Rand

Board of Elections

Guy Mickley

Office of Law

Gary Kuc

Council Office

Michelle Harrod
Craig Glendenning

Corrections

Margaret Chippendale
Greg Smith
Scott Tilton

Non-Departmental

DCRS/CSP
Jacqueline Scott
Cheryl Mattis
Kellie Brown
Rose Burton
Megan Godfrey
Kim Eisenreich
County Administration
Brandee Ganz
Glenn Lovelace
Anju Bennett
Robert Phillips
Dean Hof
Transportation
Bruce Gartner
DPZ
Mary Kendall
Brian Shepter
Laura Boone
DPW
Sharon Walsh
Ken Hamm
Brian Hosmer
Kris Jagarapu

County Executive

Angela Cabellon
Carl DeLorenzo

EDA

Larry Twele
Kathy Johnson
Elaine Brown

Finance

Rafiu Ighile
Angela Price
John Vu

Recreation and Parks

Nicola Morgal
Bill Eckert
Mike Milani
Bryan Moody
Dawn Poholsky