



COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

APPROVED

Monday, October 25, 2021

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland convened via video conference at 12:31 P.M. on Monday, October 25, 2021.

PRESENT

Councilmember Tom Hucker, President
Councilmember Andrew Friedson
Councilmember Will Jawando
Councilmember Nancy Navarro

Councilmember Gabe Albornoz, Vice President
Councilmember Evan Glass
Councilmember Sidney Katz
Councilmember Craig Rice

Councilmember Hans Riemer

The President in the Chair.

(1) **DISCUSSION** - [State Legislative Program](#)

Reviewed overarching priorities for Council support of upcoming State legislation expected in the 2022 legislative session. Participants in the discussion were Ms. Wenger, Director, Office of Intergovernmental Relations (OIR) and Ms. McCartney-Green, Legislative Attorney.

Supported, without objection, all priorities listed in the staff report, including amendments, COVID-19 relief and recovery; Fiscal health and economic development; Transportation; Education; Elections; Environment; Health and Human Services; Public Safety; Broadband accessibility and affordability; Cybersecurity; and Local authority.

Mr. Hucker requested more details regarding the bills expected to be proposed at the upcoming session and more information as to what Governor Hogan and State leadership plan to introduce and support for the upcoming session, specifically on items related to racial equity, social justice, public health, and small business assistance.

Ms. Navarro and Mr. Albornoz requested that Councilmembers and staff revisit the memo previously outlined for managing State Legislature worksessions and evaluating priorities.

Mr. Friedson suggested organizing the priority areas with corresponding bills, and the possibility that the Council may need a narrower focus.

Supported, without objection, the priorities outlined within Fiscal Health & Economic Development, including staff recommendations.

Supported Mr. Riemer's request to table discussion of Transportation to a later meeting to allow for more detailed discussion. Mr. Hucker, Mr. Katz, and Mr. Riemer requested, without objection, that the P-3 I-495/I-270 expansion strategy be addressed as a separate issue.

Supported, without objection, the Education priorities with staff amendments to include supporting programs to address racial and social inequities. Mr. Rice proposed language to include supporting an increase in mental health, and social and emotional learning staffing and practices, including the State funds to do so.

Supported, without objection, Elections as a legislative priority. Mr. Hucker suggested that the funds provided by the State may not be sufficient and that there is a need to revisit the State's formulas to determine this for the County. Ms. Navarro, as Chair of the Government and Fiscal Policy Committee, shared that the Committee often has to find funds to provide election services to residents for items such as equipment and outreach. Mr. Hucker stated that the Council should support any efforts to make voting easier and more accessible to voters.

Supported, without objection, the Environmental priorities outlined in the staff report. It was noted that significant activity is expected in the State legislature on environmental matters and Mr. Hucker requested additional details on the specific expected legislation to better determine Council priorities.

Supported, without objection, the Health and Human Services priorities. Ms. Navarro noted the nurse and mental health worker shortages may be addressed by the Council supporting initiatives and licensing changes to support the hiring of more multilingual and culturally proficient staff to better align with other Council priorities. Mr. Albornoz suggested that the Council, perhaps through committee work, discuss larger strategies to address urgent issues on a policy, advocacy, and partnership level, such as the current demand for more hospital/treatment beds available in the County. He asked Ms. Wegner to identify partners at the State level so that his staff can follow up on this issue.

Supported, without objection, the Public Safety priorities as proposed by staff. Mr. Jawando highlighted support of an expected State bill to prohibit juveniles being charged as adults.

Supported, without objection, the Broadband priorities as proposed by staff. Mr. Rice noted that the NACo Broadband Taskforce Report that he shared with Councilmembers should be incorporated, as well as data, into the letter to the State.

Ms. Wenger noted that she is working on a list of proposed Capital Improvement projects that may be possible to fund from the State's surplus funds. These items may be considered to amend the legislative priorities list in progress.

Ms. Navarro requested that the Executive Director task staff with compiling a list of issues from committees that need to be elevated to the State legislature, along with the appropriate deadlines.

The meeting adjourned at 1:26 P.M.

This is an accurate account of the meeting:



Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council