



WICOMICO COUNTY, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

P.O. BOX 870

SALISBURY, MARYLAND 21803-0870

410-548-4801

FAX: 410-548-4803

Julie M. Giordano
County Executive

Bunky Luffman
Director of Administration

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 22, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Date: August 22, 2023

The County Executive is vetoing Legislative Bill 2023-11 for various reasons. First, during the public hearing, there were several stakeholders who were present and many who spoke out against the bill including 3 out of our 8 municipalities including Hebron, Delmar, and Pittsville. Salisbury was present for the meeting, although chose not to comment. The Council also heard from the head of the Realtors Association, small business owners, past employees, and concerned citizens all speaking out against this bill.

Second, the Council cannot and should not have the ability to remove the salaries from any positions once the budget is passed, especially positions that are specifically listed in the Charter, as well as positions that are currently filled by valid employees per the County Attorney. Removing salaries, in this case, is a form of termination, which the Council has no authority to do. This is a blatant abuse of power by the County Council.

Third, the Council states in the bill, “The County Executive has failed to submit the name of any individual to the County Council for confirmation of an appointment to the position of Assistant Director of Administration...or Deputy Director of Public Works, and the six-month deadline for such appointment and submission has passed.” This statement is false. On April 4, 2023, the Executive submitted Matt Leitzel’s name as the appointee for the Assistant Director of Administration. The Council recognized this submission as he was put on the April 18, 2023 agenda created by Council President John Cannon.

“Closed Work Session Personnel Matter – Appointment of an Assistant Director of Administration”

Also, when the Executive took office, the position of Deputy Director of Public Works was filled until April 27, 2023 when the employee retired. The “six-month window”, although just a provision, would have begun the day after the employee’s last day with the county. Therefore, the Executive still has till October 28, 2023 to submit a name to Council for confirmation for the Deputy Director of Public Works per Section 415 of the Charter.

Although the Council ignored the pleas of our citizens, as the elected voice of the County, the Executive cannot ignore this. This is an inappropriate and flawed bill that not only violates Section 314 and Section 415 of the Charter, it also blurs the lines of the duties of the Executive and the Council.

Per this veto, the Executive is asking the Council to table this bill and wait for resolution from the courts as both parties have agreed to follow the court’s decision.