

**Wicomico County Council  
Open Work Session  
February 3, 2015**

Work sessions require written minutes that reflect each item that the public body considered, the action that the public body took on each item and each vote that was recorded. **It should be noted that at work sessions, the Wicomico County Council does not take formal action, nor is a vote taken on any item discussed.**

In attendance: John T. Cannon, President; Matt Holloway, Vice President; Ernest F. Davis, Marc Kilmer, Larry W. Dodd, John B. Hall and Joe Holloway.

Present: Matthew E. Creamer, Council Administrator; Edgar A. Baker, Jr., County Attorney; and Melissa Holland, Recording Secretary.

**Elected School Board :**

Mr. Matt Holloway said he liked Mr. Basehart's recommendation for gender and diversity. The Council gave a consensus to add the language requested by Mr. Basehart. Mr. Creamer read the language "In appointing members to the County board the appointed official shall ensure to the extent practicable that the total makeup of the county board reflect gender, ethnic and racial diversity." Mr. Basehart took this language from Caroline County. Mr. Cannon asked if the student should be mentioned in the wording of the bill. Mr. Cannon asked Mr. Baker to look at Baltimore law and see if that fits for Wicomico County for a student representative.

**Airport Commission :**

Legislative Bill 2015-XX- An act to amend Chapter 5 of the Wicomico County Code, titled "Airport Commission" in its entirety to clarify the roles of the Airport Commission and Airport Manager within the County and to include regulatory provisions related to Airport property, aircraft accidents and disabled aircraft on the premises. Wayne Strausburg, Director of Administration and Bob Culver, County Executive came before Council. Mr. Strausburg said the Preamble of the bill reflects the true change in the Airport Commission. The preamble reads: "Historically, the operation and control of the Airport has been the responsibility of the Airport Manager and staff, who were and are employees of the County, and the Airport Commission. However, the Airport Manager is appointed by the County Executive subject to confirmation of the County Council and the Airport Enterprise Budget is approved by the County Executive and submitted to the County Council as part of the annual budget process. Airport capital projects are subject to the County Capital Improvement and budget process. This legislation is intended to clarify the position of the Airport, Airport staff and the Airport Commission within the current governmental structure." Mr. Strausburg said due to the Executive form of government the Airport Commission should only be an advisory board such as Tourism, Civic Center and Recreation and Parks are advisory boards. He said that an asset as critical to the community of the Airport should be under day to day direction under the elected officials. He said it will provide for a more robust effort to address the opportunity of airport property for economic development. Mr. Strausburg said he believes that this should have been changed when the form of government changed

however it was not and this bill will correct that. Mr. Culver said they want to market the Airport. Mr. Hall said as an Airport Commission member he feels that more direct control is needed and said the Airport commission only meets twice a month and to the daily business he feels concurrence from the Executive is needed on a daily basis. Mr. Hall said he would like to make sure that an amendment is done to this bill that the Airport Manager will serve at the pleasure of the County Executive with the concurrence of the County Council. Mr. Hall said he is speaking to termination and if the Airport Manager is terminated it has to be with the approval of the Executive and Council. Mr. Kilmer said the manager is a department head and the Charter said it has to be confirmed by the Council. He said he is concerned about the charter and can this department head be different than the others. Mr. Hall said it is the introduction of a new department and he feels the bill can be amended. Mr. Baker said it would have to be a charter change. Mr. Cannon asked if the charter would have to be changed to allow for the creation of another department. Mr. Creamer said under the charter there is a procedure for creating new departments and for existing departments to be eliminated. Mr. Cannon said if an exception is made for one department head as opposed to all of the others it goes against the theme of the charter. Mr. Hall said if the County Executive has a bad day and wants to terminate the Airport Manager he would like the Council to be involved. Mr. Kilmer said he is not opposed to this amendment however it needs to be a charter amendment. Mr. Cannon said if the charter amendment was done for one department then it would have to be for all departments across the board. Mr. Culver said he is not in favor of making the change for all department heads however, he understands the point in the change for the Airport Manager. Mr. Hall asked if the Council was in favor of a charter change for all department heads to which the Council said at a later time. Mr. Strausburg said the Airport management is technically much more complex than any other departments due to the inter-relationships and the rules passed by FAA and TSA. Mr. Strausburg said they are trying to make the Airport more efficient on a day to day basis and the Commission only meets twice a month and he believes that from a management efficiency standpoint it's important to have the Airport Manager as a department head. Mr. Cannon asked if in Article II it should say "Airport Advisory Commission" to which Mr. Baker said it should stay the same "Wicomico County Airport Commission" and it describes it as being an advisory commission. This will come before the Council on February 17, 2015 for introduction. Mr. Kilmer asked if there is any concern in the community about this to which Mr. Strausburg said that will be known at the public hearing that will be scheduled. Mr. Creamer added there is some concern from some members of the Commission.

Open Work Session Adjourned