

**Open Work Session**  
**Budget Recap Session**  
**May 17, 2022**

Mr. John Psota, Acting County Executive, and Ms. Pam Oland, Director of Finance, came before Council.

Mr. Cannon said they will attempt to recap as much as they can right now, but whatever they cannot do now he would honestly think they can do in discussion when they approve the final budget itself. He said he does not see where there are that many issues out here that anyone has a problem with. He said he hates to do this without a full Council here. Mrs. Hurley suggested scheduling a special meeting. Mr. Cannon asked if they think there are really that many issues where they have to schedule a special meeting, or can they do an entire recap when they approve it as a Legislative Bill?

Ms. Oland responded, her only suggestion is, if there are changes the Council wants, having the ability to create those changes in an appropriate amendment and not on the fly the night of the passage makes life a lot easier for everybody when they make sure that it is done appropriately.

Mr. Holloway said they cannot send those by email because they have to vote on them, so they would have to do it at the next meeting. Mr. Dodd added, or have a special meeting. Ms. Oland clarified, that is why she is saying, if they have the availability of a special meeting to do this to allow them to know so they can write them between Mr. Wilber and Mr. Mitchell, and make sure they get them crafted in such a way that they are appropriate. Mr. Cannon said they are going to have to have a special meeting.

Mr. Cannon said he has two concerns that they really need to consider. He said one is from their discussion today with some type of supplementary payment for the Environmental Health Specialists. He said he thinks it is at a critical juncture where it has to be resolved. He said, if money does not solve the problem, they find out money does not solve the problem, but he thinks they should at least attempt that. He said that would require a grant, and he thinks, in all honesty, that the \$60,000 number is way too low. He said he does not think that is going to make any difference one way or the other for someone who is looking for a job. He said he would say it has to be even \$5,000 where they are looking to make a supplement. He said that would be about a \$120,000 grant based on Ms. Brewster's math. He said Ms. Brewster said \$60,000 for \$2,000. Mr. Psota clarified, that would be a \$5,000 increase, and \$120,000 would be a \$10,000 increase. Mr. Cannon said they can do the math because he is not sure how many Environmental Health Specialists Ms. Brewster is talking about, but he thinks they should consider probably looking at a \$5,000 change there.

Ms. Acle said she agrees with what Mr. Cannon just said and then the other one she wanted to talk about was the grant for failing septic systems. She said she just wanted to make sure that they use that Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund because, if their County does not use that allocated amount by the State, they will lose it. She said they have money there, there is money in that fund that is not being used. Mr. Cannon said he knows Ms. Brewster said today that they still have money in that fund. Ms. Acle said it is for creating another grant.

Mr. Cannon said, because they are allocating this \$350,000 and this \$500,000 for septic, the question is whether or not in the budget it would help to show it on their revenue side that it may be coming from this fund instead, to which Ms. Oland responded, she does not think they would funnel it to them on the grant side. She said this could be supplementary if that grant happens to run out.

Mr. Cannon said that is for critical areas, but they are not talking critical areas. Ms. Oland responded, they are talking creating about their own. Ms. Acle said she could have applied for that fund where she lives on the west side. Mr. Cannon said they have to be so many feet from the critical area, to which Ms. Acle responded, but that is pretty much the entire County. Mr. Cannon said he does not know that it is. Ms. Acle said anyone can apply for it anywhere. She then asked if they know of anyone who has applied and been denied, to which Ms. Oland responded, she does not know the answer to that question.

Mrs. Hurley asked if it is based on a priority area, to which Ms. Acle responded, it is priority area, yes. She said all of those priority people have applied and now they have more openings that are still not being used. Ms. Oland said they will look into that, but the recommendation is that they have this fund still available to them in the budget, and that way they can create a plan so that, if somebody is denied, they could potentially be the backfill. Ms. Acle said that is a good idea.

Mr. Cannon asked how they are planning to decide who the person is who gets this and who is not because they had no plan with this, to which Ms. Oland responded, if Council does not have an appetite to have that kind of program, the money can come out, and they will not spend the time creating a plan. She said the thought was to see if Council has an appetite to have a plan, and, if there is, they will work with Council to create a plan and maybe they will work with the Health Department to make sure it is filling the gaps of anything they do not have available for them.

Mr. Cannon asked, what is the difference between the \$325,000 and the \$500,000, to which Ms. Oland responded, one is to do a grant program for those that are failing that have to be done now, and the other one is to continue the process with the State of Maryland looking at areas to install septic systems to an area. She clarified, that does not mean that tomorrow they are going to start building a septic system for a town that does not have one or an area that does not have one, it is a long, drawn-out process, so part of it is to pay fees and studies and continue that process moving forward, and the other part is to try to fill in the gaps for the short-term until, hopefully, they can build some of those plans.

Ms. Acle asked if first they will have to apply for the State funding to see if they qualify, and if they are denied that State funding, then it will move onto the County funding, to which Ms. Oland responded, in this process, yes, that is how it could work. Ms. Acle said there are multiple other funding sources besides the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, and she just wants to make sure they are aware of that. Ms. Oland said it also becomes a process for their constituents to try to access all of these funding sources.

Ms. Oland summarized, one of these is to continue the path of creating sewer facilities, and the other one is to help fund failing septic systems that do not have the ability to attach to a sewer system in the near future.

Mr. Holloway asked if it has ever been explored what it would cost with the ones having failed systems instead of, if they are moving forward with water and sewer at some point in time, what it would cost for a routine pump out, to which Mr. Psota responded, no.

Mrs. Hurley asked about scheduling a special session, to which Mr. Cannon responded, there are only four Councilmembers here, so he thinks she will need to send out a survey. He said he thinks that would be best to coordinate that with the Executive and the Finance Director. Ms. Oland said she is in the

office during daytime hours, but evening becomes a little more difficult with the end of the school year, but she does not currently have anything scheduled in the daytime that could not be adjusted.

There was no further discussion.

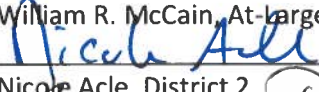
  
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John T. Cannon, President, At-Large

absent

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Ernest F. Davis, Vice President, District 1

absent

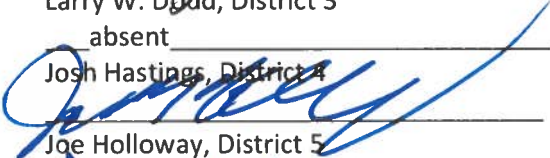
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William R. McCain, At-Large

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Acle, District 2,

  
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Larry W. Dodd, District 3

absent

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Josh Hastings, District 4

  
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Joe Holloway, District 5

  
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Laura Hurley, Council Administrator