

**BALTIMORE COUNTY COUNCIL
NOTES TO THE AGENDA
LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2025**

*Issued: February 6, 2025
Reissued: February 7, 2025
Work Session: February 11, 2025
Legislative Day No. 4: February 18, 2025*

*The accompanying notes are
compiled from unaudited
information provided by
the Administration and
other sources.*



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY AUDITOR

BALTIMORE COUNTY COUNCIL

February 18, 2025

NOTES TO THE AGENDA

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APPENDIX

None

* Note included in reissued package.

**AGENDA
BALTIMORE COUNTY COUNCIL
LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2025, LEGISLATIVE DAY NO. 4
February 18, 2025 6:00 P.M.**

CEB = CURRENT EXPENSE BUDGET
BY REQ. = AT REQUEST OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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CALL OF BILLS FOR FINAL READING AND VOTE

PETE GUTWALD, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PERMITS, APPROVALS & INSPECTIONS

- 1 Bill 3-25 – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – Baltimore County Basic Services Mapping Standards - Transportation

BILLS FOR FIRST CONSIDERATION

LAUREN BUCKLER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION

- 3 Bill 4-25 – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – CEB – Specialized Transportation Service

AMANDA WENSEL, EMS CAPTAIN, FIRE DEPARTMENT

- 6 Bill 5-25 – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – CEB – Maryland Opioid Restitution Funding FY2025

SCOTT EBBERT ASSISTANT CHIEF, FIRE DEPARTMENT

- 9 Bill 6-25 – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – CEB – Pennsylvania Task Force Reimbursements

WALT PESTERFIELD, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

- 12 Bill 7-25 – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – CEB – MOOR ORF Corrections Grant

COUNCIL

- 16 Bill 9-25 – Councilmembers Young, Marks, Kach & Patoka – Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services Fund
- 18 Bill 10-25 – Councilmembers Marks, Kach & Patoka – Emergency Medical Service Billing – Volunteer Ambulance Units – Revenue Sharing
- 20 Bill 11-25 – Mr. Marks – County Charter – Vacancy – County Council Members

APPROVAL OF FISCAL MATTERS/CONTRACTS

LAUREN BUCKLER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION

- ~~WITHDRAWN~~ 1. Amendments to Contracts – On-call snow removal and deicing services

CHRIS MARTIN, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- ~~WITHDRAWN~~ 2. Agreements – (24) – Cooperative Agreements utilizing the State of MD Dept. of Information Technology Consulting and Technical Services+ (CATS+) – Staffing solutions

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

KEVIN REED, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF BUDGET & FINANCE

- 22 1. Res. 9-25 – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – Authorization – Conditional Purchase Agreement

COUNCIL

2. Appointment – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – Baltimore County Animal Hearing Board – Cynthia Dreiband
3. Appointment – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – Baltimore County Animal Hearing Board – Michele Silwick
4. Appointment – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – Baltimore County Animal Hearing Board – Dr. Dana Kollmann
5. Appointment – Mr. Ertel(By Req.) – Baltimore County Police Accountability Board – Stephanie Betterson

Mr. Ertel (By Req.)

Department of Permits, Approvals & Inspections

Baltimore County Basic Services Mapping Standards – Transportation

Bill 3-25 updates the basic services mapping standards and technical language relating to transportation to conform with current best practices and Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) traffic impact study guidelines. There is no change to the Basic Services Maps themselves, or the adoption process. See Exhibit A.

Under the current standards, DPWT is required to use the 1965 version of the Highway Capacity Manual. The Administration advised that since the 1965 edition was published, the Transportation Research Board (formerly known as the National Research Council) has made six updates. Rather than specify a particular edition, Bill 3-25 states that DPWT must use the most recent edition of the Highway Capacity Manual, thus allowing the County to utilize the most recent standards as they are adopted by the Transportation Research Board.

The bill also corrects the outdated name for the Board. Last, the bill replaces outdated language regarding DPWT's Traffic Study Guidelines with a statement that the methodology for conducting a traffic impact study shall be in accordance with the DPWT guidelines, which are posted on the County's website.

Bill 3-25 will take effect 45 days after its enactment.

Executive Summary

The Baltimore County Zoning Regulations include Article 4A Growth Management. This article regulates the Basic Services Maps. The proposed ordinance updates the technical language in the Basic Services Maps section on transportation. There is no change to the Basic Services Maps themselves, or the adoption process. The update would apply to Section 4A02.4(D) Basic Services Mapping Standards—Transportation. This subsection references the “Highway Capacity Manual, 1965.” Since this 1965 edition of the Highway Capacity Manual, there have been six updates that have been made by the Transportation Research Board (formerly known as the National Research Council). The ordinance refers to the “most recent edition of the Highway Capacity Manual.” This subsection also cites a methodology that has been updated in the manual. The ordinance proposes to replace this outdated language with a reference to the Department of Public Works and Transportation’s Traffic Study Guidelines.

Prepared by: Department of Permits, Approvals and Inspections

Bill 4-25 (Supplemental Appropriation)

Council District(s) All

Mr. Ertel (By Req.)

Department of Public Works and Transportation

Specialized Transportation Service

The Administration is requesting a supplemental appropriation of federal funds totaling \$4,861 to the Special Transportation Service Gifts and Grants Fund program. The Department advised that the funds will support the salaries of current full-time and part-time CountyRide Bus Drivers I and II. See Exhibit A.

Fiscal Summary

Funding Source	Supplemental Appropriation	Current Appropriation	Total Appropriation
County ⁽¹⁾	--	\$ 675,956	\$ 675,956
State	--	--	--
Federal ⁽²⁾	\$ 4,861	408,265	413,126
Other	--	--	--
Total	<u>\$ 4,861</u>	<u>\$ 1,084,221</u>	<u>\$ 1,089,082</u>

⁽¹⁾ The grant requires a 25% match of the total award amount, which the County will meet using Local Share Program funds totaling \$675,956, or approximately 62%.
⁽²⁾ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration funds passed through the Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA).

Analysis

The Specialized Transportation Service Program provides general-purpose transportation (predominately, but not necessarily, for medical appointments) to supplement existing transportation services for Baltimore County residents (60 years of age or older), disabled adult residents, and rural residents with limited access to public, private, or commercial transportation.

The Department advised that the proposed \$4,861 supplemental appropriation will support the salaries of current full-time and part-time CountyRide Bus Drivers I and II.

The grant period is FY 2025. The grant requires a 25% match of the total award amount, which the County will meet with Local Share Program funds totaling \$675,956, or approximately 62%.

The Specialized Transportation Service grant award reflects a portion of the funding awarded to the County through the Maryland Transit Administration's FY 2025 Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) funding assistance program. On December 15, 2024, the Council approved Bills 83-24 and 84-24, which appropriated additional FY 2025 LOTS funding to the Large Urban Operating and the Rural Public Transportation Gifts and Grants Fund programs, respectively, and Bill 85-24, which appropriated \$12,429 to the Special Transportation Service Gifts and Grants Fund program.

With the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council, Bill 4-25 will take effect March 16, 2025.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION
SPECIALIZED TRANSPORTATION SERVICE (SSTAP) SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATIONS ACT

Fiscal Year 2025

The attached Specialized Transportation Service (SSTAP) Supplemental Appropriations Act Grant Agreement for FY25 allows Baltimore County to receive an additional \$4,861 in federal funds passed through the Maryland Department of Transportation. These funds are in addition to those outlined in Bill 85-24 and were recently identified by the State of Maryland to be allocated to SSTAP recipients. They will be used to provide transportation for the elderly and people with disabilities who live far from public transportation. CountyRide provides on-demand, handicapped-accessible transportation services to Baltimore County residents who are age 60+, adults with disabilities, and rural residents of all ages who have limited access to public, private, or commercial transportation. Rides are predominantly, but not exclusively, for medical visits. The Conditions of Award and Terms and Conditions of this supplement are consistent with those previously awarded for County GR-1109. The project time period is from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Prepared by: Department of Public Works and Transportation

Bill 5-25 (Supplemental Appropriation)

Council District(s) All

Mr. Ertel (By Req.)

Fire Department

Maryland Opioid Restitution Funding FY 2025

The Administration is requesting a supplemental appropriation of State funds totaling \$255,432 to the MD [Maryland] Opioid Restitution FY 2025 Gifts and Grants Fund program. The Department advised that the funds will primarily be used (over a two year period) toward the salary and benefits of an EMS Captain and two Paramedics to expand the County’s Quick Response Team (QRT)’s substance use disorder (SUD) services from 16 to 40 hours per week. See Exhibit A.

Fiscal Summary

Funding Source	Supplemental Appropriation	Current Appropriation	Total Appropriation
County	--	--	--
State⁽¹⁾	\$ 255,432	--	\$ 255,432
Federal	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--
Total	<u>\$ 255,432</u>	<u>\$ --</u>	<u>\$ 255,432</u>

⁽¹⁾ Maryland’s Office of Overdose Response Funds. No County matching funds are required.

Analysis

The QRT partners the Department’s Paramedics with certified peer recovery specialists (CPRS) from the County’s Department of Health to provide individuals with SUD and their families access to community resources. The QRT also provides real time response to overdose patients, reducing the number of 9-1-1 calls and EMS transports. The Department advised that it will use the proposed \$255,432 supplemental appropriation primarily to cover the salaries and benefits

(\$254,307) of one EMS Captain, one Paramedic Firefighter, and one Paramedic, enabling the QRT to expand its hours of service from 16 to 40 per week. The Department further advised that it will use \$1,125 of the supplemental appropriation to purchase a subscription to an American Sign Language (ASL) virtual translation service for the QRT.

The Department estimates that the funding will enable it to serve 600 residents during the grant period.

The grant period is January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026. The Department advised that no County matching funds are required.

With the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council, Bill 5-25 will take effect March 16, 2025.

Executive Summary

Baltimore County Fire Department

FY2025 Current Expense Budget
MD Opioid Restitution Funding
SUPP-FIR-2024-1333
200-CC160000- GR-2145- \$255,431.50

Baltimore County Fire Department (BCoFD) is requesting an amendment for the 2025 Current Expense Budget by appropriating to the Gifts and Grants Special Revenue Fund. These monies derive from Maryland State funds made available to Baltimore County through MD Opioid Restitution Funding. The State of Maryland has made known the funds available are to be used in funding the expansion of the Quick Response Team (QRT).

The QRT program, which has already positively impacted several families in Baltimore County, partners Community Paramedics with Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRS) from the Baltimore County Department of Health to conduct home visits for clients and families with Substance Use Disorders (SUD). QRT program is a County wide service, providing care in all districts and communities. This award affords Baltimore County Fire Department's QRT the opportunity to expand these overdose resources to the community from two days per week to five. The Quick Response Team will refer individuals to treatment and provide access to community resources for both individuals with SUD and their families. Individuals who are not ready to seek treatment will receive scheduled follow-up to ensure engagement. The Quick Response Team initiative provides real time response to overdose victims, reducing the number of 9-1-1 calls and EMS transports while increasing a coordinated community response. The Baltimore County Fire Department is pleased to expand upon our collaboration with the Baltimore County Department of Health to provide these resources to the community. Additionally, this proposed grant funding will support continued oversight by an EMS Captain to ensure our goals and strategies remain aligned and attainable.

The grant period is January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026. The appropriation is a 100% funding opportunity with no County match. The total award is in the amount of \$255,431.50; \$127,715.75 per year for 2 years.

Prepared by: Fire Department

Bill 6-25 (Supplemental Appropriation)

Council District(s) All

Mr. Ertel (By Req.)

Fire Department

Pennsylvania Task Force Reimbursements

The Administration is requesting a supplemental appropriation of federal funds totaling \$34,932 (as amended) to the Pennsylvania Task Force Reimbursements Gifts and Grants Fund program. The Department advised that the funds are for salary reimbursement as a result of mutual aid deployments. See Exhibit A.

Fiscal Summary

Funding Source	Supplemental Appropriation	Current Appropriation	Total Appropriation
County	--	--	--
State	--	--	--
Federal ⁽¹⁾	\$ 34,932	\$ 150,000	\$ 184,932
Other	--	--	--
Total	<u>\$ 34,932</u>	<u>\$ 150,000 ⁽²⁾</u>	<u>\$ 184,932</u>

⁽¹⁾ U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds passed through the City of Philadelphia (\$174,860) and the Maryland Department of Emergency Management (\$10,072). No County matching funds are required.

⁽²⁾ The FY 2025 adopted budget erroneously characterized these funds as "state" rather than "federal."

Analysis

The Department advised that the proposed supplemental appropriation is salary reimbursement as a result of mutual aid deployments. The Department further advised that during FY 2025, specially trained Fire Department employees were deployed with the FEMA Pennsylvania Task

Force and the Maryland Helicopter Aquatics Rescue Team more often and for longer than anticipated due to the occurrence of more severe and frequent storms within the eastern United States (e.g., Tropical Storm Debby and Hurricanes Helene and Milton).

The FY 2025 Adopted Operating Budget included a \$150,000 appropriation to the Pennsylvania Task Force Reimbursements Gifts and Grants Fund program; this bill (as amended) appropriates the additional \$34,932 to the program, increasing the total appropriation to \$184,932.

With the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council, Bill 6-25 will take effect March 16, 2025.

Executive Summary

Baltimore County Fire Department

FY2025 Current Expense Budget
SUPP-FIR-2024-1334
200-CC160000-GR-1600 Deployments
\$34,932.11

The Baltimore County Fire Department (BCoFD) is requesting an amendment to the FY2025 current expense budget. This amendment involves appropriating funds to the Gifts and Grants Special Revenue Fund, derived from federal (FEMA) funding passed through the City of Philadelphia and the State of Maryland for salary reimbursement as a result of mutual aid deployments with the Pennsylvania Task Force and Maryland Helicopter Aquatics Rescue Team (HART).

During the FY2025 expense budget, the fire department provided specially trained members for deployment to multiple outside jurisdictions. The budget currently includes \$150,000 for salaries and back-fill. Due to the occurrence of more severe and frequent storms within the eastern United States, including Tropical Storm Debby and Hurricanes Helene and Milton, deployments were more frequent and longer in duration.

To accept the funding received in support of these deployments, we respectfully request an increase in the appropriation by \$34,932.11, bringing the total appropriation to \$184,932.11.

Prepared by: Fire Department

Bill 7-25 (Supplemental Appropriation)

Council District(s) All

Mr. Ertel (By Req.)

Department of Corrections

MOOR ORF Corrections Grant

The Administration is requesting a supplemental appropriation of State funds totaling \$476,863 to the MOOR [Maryland’s Office of Overdose Response] ORF [Opioid Restitution Funding] Corrections Grant Gifts and Grants Fund program. The Department advised that it will use the funding to cover (over a two-year period) the salaries and benefits costs of two full-time (40 hours per week) Correctional Officers, one part-time (20 hours per week) Nurse Practitioner, one full-time (40 hours per week) Registered Nurse, and one part-time (34 hours per week) Certified Peer Recovery Specialist to support the expansion of the Department’s Medication for Opiate Use Disorder (MOUD) program. See Exhibit A.

Fiscal Summary

Funding Source	Supplemental Appropriation	Current Appropriation	Total Appropriation
County	--	--	--
State ⁽¹⁾	\$ 476,863	--	\$ 476,863
Federal	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--
Total	<u>\$ 476,863</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>\$ 476,863</u>

⁽¹⁾ Maryland’s Office of Overdose Response funds. No County matching funds are required.

Analysis

The supplemental appropriation will assist in the expansion of the Department’s Medication for Opiate Use Disorder (MOUD) program in order to provide timely assessment and access to

medication for all incarcerated individuals in need and to support their transition to community care and the re-entry process.

In order to facilitate the MOUD expansion, \$471,905 of the proposed \$476,863 supplemental appropriation will be used to support the salaries and fringe benefits of five new positions as follows:

- \$184,956 (\$117,874 in salary and \$67,082 in benefits) to support two full-time (40 hours per week) Correctional Officer positions to provide security in the housing units while healthcare staff conducts programs; assist in de-escalating conflicts; help in the individual movements from the dorms to clinic areas for induction (i.e., the initial phase in which an individual begins medication), counseling, lab testing, and acute and chronic care management; and accompany and assist nurses in the provision of medications to help meet medication compliance while reducing diversion incidents;
- \$113,875 (\$85,000 in salary and \$28,875 in benefits) to support a part-time (20 hours per week) Nurse Practitioner to provide health services under the direction and responsibility of a physician, including performing physical examinations; supervising the administering and dispensing of medications; and initiating, altering, and terminating medications;
- \$108,000 (\$80,000 in salary and \$28,000 in benefits) to support a full-time (40 hours per week) Registered Nurse to provide professional nursing care, including dispensing and administering medications; providing timely documentation of services based on plan of care; and identifying other physical, psychological, social, and spiritual needs for assigned patients;
- \$65,074 (\$44,501 in salary and \$20,573 in benefits) to support a part-time (34 hours per week) Certified Peer Recovery Specialist to provide peer mentoring and linkage to reentry resources and facilitate contacts with the recovery community.

The Department advised that it will utilize the remaining \$4,958 for supplies (e.g., office desk, office chairs, laptop bundle).

The Department estimates that the program will serve 190-333 incarcerated individuals per year. The Department further advised that when the grant funds are no longer available, the positions will be discontinued.

The grant period is January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026. No County matching funds are required.

With the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council, Bill 7-25 will take effect March 16, 2025.

Executive Summary

Baltimore County Department of Corrections is requesting an amendment for the 2025 Current Expense Budget by appropriating to the Gifts and Grants Special Revenue Fund. These monies derive from Maryland State funds made available to Baltimore County through MD Opioid Restitution Funding. The State of Maryland has made known the funds available are to be used in aiding the expansion of the Department's Medication for Opiate Use Disorder (MOUD) Program.

The proposed grant funding will assist in the expansion and service delivery of medication for opiate use disorder (MOUD) program through expansion of necessary supplies and personnel to include two (2) Correctional Officers, one (1) Certified Peer Recovery Specialist, one (1) Registered Nurse and one (1) Nurse Practitioner. The MOUD program will address unmet and urgent overdose-related needs.

The grant period is January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026. The appropriation is a 100% funding opportunity with no County match. The total award is in the amount of \$476,863.00; \$238,431.50 per year for 2 years.

Prepared by: Department of Corrections

Bill 9-25

Council District(s) All

Councilmembers Young, Marks, Kach & Patoka

Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services Fund

Bill 9-25 establishes a dedicated, non-lapsing Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services Fund (the “Fund”). The purpose of the fund is to promote the public health, safety, and welfare of County residents and communities by establishing and maintaining a dedicated fund for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services provided by the career and volunteer fire companies in the County. “Volunteer fire company” includes any volunteer fire, ambulance, and rescue companies.

The Fund may be financed from current expense budget funds and contributions, donations, gifts, grants, or appropriations by or through the United States, the State of Maryland, any other political jurisdiction or quasi-governmental organization, or any private entity. All monies provided to the Fund shall be treated as a grant to the Fund. The Fund shall be charged for the reasonable expenses of its administration. If the County Council dissolves the Fund, the monies in the Fund and all monies due and owing at the time shall revert to the General Fund, or in accordance with the terms of federal or state grants, as applicable.

The Chief of the County Fire Department (the “Chief”) and the Director of Budget and Finance (the “Director”) must jointly administer the Fund according to accepted principles of sound accounting and fiscal management. The Director must maintain records of the Fund in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. The Chief must determine the method, procedures, and terms of accounting for payments by or charges against the Fund in consultation with the Director.

In general, the Fund may be used for:

- The management, operation, and maintenance of all fire, rescue, or emergency medical services;
- The purchase, construction, maintenance, and operation of real and personal property necessary or incidental to fire, rescue, or emergency medical services; or
- The operation of fire, rescue, or emergency medical services.

In addition to any assistance provided to a volunteer fire company under the general uses for the Fund or Article 10, Title 4 of the Code, the Fund may also be used for:

- Gear and equipment for volunteers, including the replacement or augmentation of apparatus owned by a volunteer fire company;
- Maintenance or upgrades to facilities owned by a volunteer fire company, including fixtures and furniture;
- Training for volunteers or volunteer fire company staff;
- Administrative staff to support a volunteer fire company;
- Volunteer recruitment and retention;
- Awards for the length of service awards program; or
- Stand-by support provided by a volunteer fire company.

Financial assistance provided by the County in the form of Fund monies may supplement other Federal, State, or County financial assistance programs received by the County Fire Department (the "Department") or a volunteer fire company. However, any person hired or retained by a volunteer fire company using Fund revenue shall not be considered a County employee.

At least 150 days before the end of each fiscal year, each volunteer fire company may submit to the Chief an annual budget setting forth the nature, volume, costs, and other factors concerning the estimate of expenditures for their operations for the ensuing fiscal year. The Chief shall review and compile all annual budgets they receive and submit them to the Director as a supplement to the annual budget of the Fire Department. The Chief must also include a list of all volunteer fire companies that did not submit an annual budget. A volunteer fire company that does not submit an annual budget to the Chief is not eligible to receive monies from the Fund until the next fiscal year for which the Director receives a budget for that volunteer fire company from the Chief. Last, the Chief and the Director may adopt regulations in accordance with Article 3, Title 7 of the County Code to carry out the provisions related to the Fund.

Bill 9-25 will take effect 45 days after its enactment.

Councilmembers Marks, Kach & Patoka

Emergency Medical Service Billing – Volunteer Ambulance Units – Revenue Sharing

Bill 10-25 requires the County to remit a certain amount of net revenue generated by a volunteer EMS unit to the volunteer fire company where the volunteer EMS unit is stationed.

EMS Billing and Revenue

Currently, when an EMS unit in the County transports a person to a hospital, the County bills that person’s insurance company for the emergency medical transport. All funds received by the County for this service are deposited into the County’s General Fund, regardless of whether the transport was done by a career or volunteer EMS unit. In FY 2024, net EMS transport fee revenues totaled approximately \$34.2 million.

According to data provided previously by the Fire Department, in CY 2019 there were 86,672 total transports, of which 73,557 (84.9%) were carried out by EMS units housed in career fire stations and 13,115 (15.1%) were carried out by EMS units housed in volunteer fire companies (more recent data are not readily available). Applying a 15% approximate share to FY 2024 net EMS revenues of \$34.2 million would yield an estimated \$5.1 million in volunteer-generated revenues.

Bill 10-25

Bill 10-25 requires the County to remit at least 60% of the net revenue generated by a volunteer ambulance unit for EMS transports to the volunteer fire company in which the volunteer ambulance unit is stationed. Based on the aforementioned estimates, 60% of the approximate \$5.1 million generated by volunteer EMS units in FY 2024 would yield a minimum remission amount of \$3.1 million. The remitted amount would be disbursed to volunteer fire companies according to their respective shares of the revenue brought in by their EMS units.

Current County Expenditures on Volunteer Fire Companies

In order to ensure the County has adequate ambulance service coverage in all areas, the County administers a volunteer EMS attendance incentive program. Under this program, volunteer fire companies that house a volunteer EMS unit receive a certain hourly amount to be “on call” –

meaning the volunteer EMS unit is able to take calls for service. This program uses monies from the General Fund and is administered separately from EMS billing.

FY 2024 actual expenditures from the Volunteer Fire Company Contributions program totaled \$11,519,732, including \$8,835,485 in grants, subsidies, and contributions (including the attendance incentive program); this amount does not include capital grants or revolving loan funds, nor does it include State or federal grants.

With the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council, Bill 10-25 will take effect July 1, 2027.

Bill 11-25

Council District(s) All

Mr. Marks

County Charter – Vacancy – County Council Members

Bill 11-25 amends the Baltimore County Charter to change the manner in which Councilmembers are appointed when there is a vacancy. The bill also updates gendered terms such as “Councilman” or “Chairman” to be gender-neutral.

Currently, Charter Section 205 states the following: “A vacancy occurring in the office of councilmember prior to the expiration of his term shall be filled within thirty days after the vacancy occurs by appointment by the County Executive of the person whose name shall be submitted to him in writing by the state central committee members representing the political party to which the previous member belonged, and whose legislative district is wholly or partially included in the councilmanic district in which the vacancy has occurred. Each of these members is entitled to one vote for each precinct in which his or her name was on the ballot. If the previous incumbent was not a member of a political party, then the county executive shall appoint the person selected by the remaining members of the county council. The member so appointed shall reside in the same councilmanic district as his predecessor and until his successor shall qualify.”

The bill’s sponsor believes the current process has several flaws. First, there is no definition of when a Councilmember vacancy actually occurs. Second, only a few members of each Central Committee may ultimately have the power to fill a vacancy. However, the exact number of members shifts as Council districts and Central Committee districts change. Also, the weighting of each Central Committee member’s vote to the share of the Council district is overly cumbersome and complex.

Third, under the current process, neither the County Council nor the County Executive have any authority – the Council has no role and the County Executive must appoint the person selected by the Central Committee. Fourth, there is no contingency if the Central Committee cannot come to an agreement – an outcome made more likely by the current process. Last, there are no requirements stated regarding the qualifications of the person selected.

Bill 11-25 seeks to address all of these issues. First, the bill defines what constitutes a vacancy. Under the bill, a vacancy on the County Council shall occur upon the death, resignation, or removal of a Councilmember, or if a Councilmember no longer meets the qualifications for the office of Councilmember.

Second, the bill would simplify the selection process by stating that the overall Central Committee for the County of the vacating member's party would recommend up to three names. This must occur within 30 days after the vacancy occurs.

Third, the bill brings the County Council and the County Executive into the process. After selecting up to three names, the Central Committee must submit the names to the Council. A majority of the remaining members of the Council appoint one of the three names to fill the vacancy within 60 days of its occurrence. If the remaining members of the Council are unable to reach a majority, the County Executive must cast the deciding vote.

Fourth, the bill contains a contingency if the Central Committee cannot accomplish its part of the process. If the Central Committee fails to submit at least three names within 30 days of the vacancy occurring, the remaining members of the County Council shall appoint a new member from the political party to which the previous member belonged. In this case, the County Executive would also serve as the tie-breaking vote, if needed. Last, the bill states that the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall possess the same qualifications for the office of Councilmembers as set forth in the Charter and Code until a successor shall qualify.

As a potential amendment to the County Charter, Bill 11-25 requires the affirmative vote of five members of the County Council and shall be exempt from Executive veto. If passed by the voters on November 3, 2026, the amendment shall stand adopted and become a part of the Charter from and after the thirtieth day following said election.

MB-1 (Res. 9-25)

Council District(s) All

Mr. Ertel (By Req.)

Office of Budget and Finance

Authorization – Conditional Purchase Agreement

Resolution 9-25 authorizes the County to enter into a Conditional Purchase Agreement not to exceed \$125,000,000 to finance the cost of various equipment purchases. The resolution also authorizes the County to execute related documents (e.g., trust agreement) and to sell related Certificates of Participation (COPs). See Exhibit A.

Fiscal Summary

Funding Source	Financing Amount	Estimated Interest Cost	Total Principal and Interest
County	\$ 125,000,000 ⁽¹⁾	\$ 36,359,417	\$ 161,359,417
State	--	--	--
Federal	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--
Total	<u>\$ 125,000,000</u>	<u>\$ 36,359,417</u>	<u>\$ 161,359,417</u>

⁽¹⁾ The County will repay the amount financed over a 10-year period from the COP issuance date.

Analysis

Of the \$125,000,000 financing total, the County will use approximately \$105,862,621 to purchase equipment for various General Government agencies and Baltimore County Public Library and approximately \$12,651,807 to purchase equipment for Metropolitan District operations, with the remainder (\$6,485,572) reserved for contingency purchases. The Office of Budget and Finance has determined that the most cost-effective method of financing the equipment purchases is by

means of a Conditional Purchase Agreement with a financial institution (acting as “trustee”) and the sale of Certificates of Participation (COPs) with a 10-year repayment term.

The trustee will receive, hold, and invest the proceeds from the sale of the certificates. The County will draw down these funds as specific equipment purchases occur. The Office advised that the County will use the investment income to purchase additional equipment. The County will requisition funds from the trustee to purchase the equipment as needed. Title to the equipment will pass to the County upon purchase.

The Office anticipates selling the COPs by competitive bid on April 1, 2025 at an estimated true interest cost and coupon rate of 3.11% and 5.00%, respectively. The County will make annual payments to repay the \$125 million in principal over the 10-year term of the certificates, with the first principal payment to occur in FY 2026. The County will make semiannual payments to cover approximately \$36,359,417 in interest charges over the same 10-year period beginning in FY 2026, subject to the appropriation of sufficient funds to cover the required payments. The Office anticipates the County will receive an approximate \$12 million premium on the proposed issuance net of underwriter’s discounts and issuance costs, which the County will use to pay for higher-than-anticipated costs and emergency and/or unanticipated equipment needs. The debt service interest and principal payments will appear in the General Fund and Metropolitan District operating budgets. The Office advised that estimated costs for principal (\$9,940,000) and interest (\$5,729,167) total \$15,669,167 for FY 2026.

The Office estimates that the County will incur initial costs totaling approximately \$185,000 in connection with the issuance, consisting of rating agency fees of \$150,000; bond counsel fees of \$30,000; Trustee fees of \$2,500; and official statement printing/electronic distribution and advertising fees totaling \$2,500. The Office advised that proceeds from the transaction will cover these initial costs.

Debt incurred pursuant to this agreement does not pledge the full faith and credit of the County, nor does it apply to the County’s legal debt margin. However, the debt is subject to ratio analyses used by rating agencies and the County’s Spending Affordability Committee. In October 2024, the debt affordability study issued jointly by OBF and its financial advisor (Public Resources Advisory Group) recommended that the County’s debt service to revenues ceiling ratio increase from 9.5% to 10.5% in FY 2026. The Office advised that the proposed Conditional Purchase Agreement issuance will not cause the County to exceed the 10.5% debt service to revenues ceiling ratio.

According to the Office, the equipment purchases under the proposed Conditional Purchase Agreement will begin on or after the April 1, 2025 anticipated closing date and will span an anticipated 3-year period, for the following agencies and types of equipment:

Agency	Amount
OIT (devices & peripherals, radios, infrastructure, systems and storage, facilities, CCTV)	\$ 34,488,700
Public Works and Transportation (trucks, loaders, excavators, tractors, mowers, heavy equipment, other)	34,165,000
Fire (trucks and truck equipment, ambulances, tower, other)	28,561,400
Property Management (trucks, mowers, groomers, utility vehicles, other equipment)	5,408,386
Library (bookmobiles)	960,000
Environmental Protection and Resource Management (trucks, ATVs, tractors)	680,000
Corrections (scanner, kitchen equipment, utility vehicle, radios, other)	579,135
Recreation and Parks (truck, tractors, utility vehicles)	570,000
Police (utility vehicle, trucks, tractor)	450,000
Total - General Government	105,862,621
Metropolitan District – Public Works and Transportation (trucks, forklift, excavators)	11,727,000
Metropolitan District – OIT (devices & peripherals, radios, infrastructure, systems and storage, facilities)	924,807
Total – Metropolitan District	12,651,807
Contingency – General Government	6,137,379
Contingency – Metropolitan District	348,193
Total - Contingency	6,485,572
Grand Total	\$ 125,000,000

On February 22, 2022, the Council authorized the County to enter into a Conditional Purchase Agreement not to exceed \$100 million to finance the cost of various equipment purchases over a 10-year period. In March 2022, the County issued a total of \$100 million in COPs (\$87.6 million for General Government, \$4.2 million for Metropolitan District, and \$8.2 million reserved for

contingency) at a true interest cost of 1.56%. Principal and interest payments commenced in FY 2023 and will be paid over a 10-year period. The Office advised that the County received a total of \$18.9 million in debt premium from the issuance. The Office further advised that as of January 30, 2025, the County has received \$8.4 million in interest and expended \$99.5 million for equipment under this agreement. The Office intends to expend the remaining available funds under this agreement in FY 2025.

This resolution shall take effect from the date of its passage by the County Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Resolution authorizes the County to enter into a Conditional Purchase Agreement in an amount not to exceed \$125,000,000 in order to finance the costs of certain useful and necessary equipment for the use and benefit of the County and its agencies. The County's obligation to make lease payments under the Conditional Purchase Agreement shall be subject to annual appropriations by the County Council and shall not constitute indebtedness of the County. Prior equipment financing packages were issued in 2002 (\$30 million), 2004 (\$46.5 million), 2008 (\$36.7 million), 2012 (\$82.7 million), 2016 (\$63.7 million), 2019 (\$87 million), and 2022 (\$100 million). Estimated expenses associated with this proposal are \$185,000, which includes \$150,000, for ratings agencies, \$30,000 for bond counsel, \$2,500 for trustee's fees, \$2,000 for official statement distribution, and \$500 for advertising.

Prepared by: Office of Budget and Finance