

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Resolution No. 49-2023

Introduced: March 6, 2023

Auditor: Michael A. Martin

Fiscal Impact:

The fiscal impact is the net impact of (1) savings derived from fewer Zoning Board meetings and (2) increased costs resulting from additional billable hours paid to the Hearing Examiner.

However, it is indeterminable since the number of future Zoning Board hearings that could necessitate billable hours for the County's Hearing Examiner are unknown at this time. This is consistent with what was identified for previously approved Council Bill 77-2021.

Hearing Examiners receive \$200 for each hour of work contributed to Zoning Board cases plus associated travel costs. The Zoning Board consists of five members and each member is compensated \$100 per meeting.

Purpose:

This legislation proposes to adopt new procedures that govern how the County's Hearing Examiners are utilized. It seeks to leverage the Hearing Examiner's expertise to reduce the number of hearings that would be required of the Zoning Board.

Under Section 16.303(f) of the Howard County Code, the Hearing Examiner is required to adopt such rules of procedure, which are to become effective upon the County Council's approval of this proposed resolution.

NOTE: Council Resolution 49-2023 is companion legislation to Council Bill 10-2023, which makes codified changes to the roles of the Hearing Examiner. The intent of each legislation is to supplement the changes of CB77-2021, which established a requirement for the Hearing Examiner to hear and report on all petitions prior to the Zoning Board hearing.

Other Comments:

The Rules of Procedure will be subject to approval by the Zoning Board on March 15, 2023, which will be submitted as a Zoning Regulation Amendment (ZRA) to approve the final version of the Rules of Procedure.