

The Mid Shore Regional Council held a scheduled meeting on December 11, 2014. The meeting was held at the Delmarva Community Services building in Cambridge. Members in attendance included: Addie Eckardt, Daniel Franklin, Ricky Travers, Rick Price, Don Satterfield, Dirck Bartlett, Chuck Callahan, Jennifer Williams, Walter Chase, Robert Hanson, Debbie Rowe, Kurt Fuchs, Maria D'Arcy and Allen Nelson. Guests in attendance were Economic Development Directors Angela Visintainer (Caroline County), Paige Bethke (Talbot County) and Susan Banks (in attendance for Keasha Haythe, Dorchester County), John General of CBRTCE, Mike Thielke of ESEC, William Barnes of ESMC, John McQuaid of ESRGC (broadband implementation coordinator, Mindie Burgoyne of DBED, Deborah Divins of the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce, Matt Tefteau of the Maryland Farm Bureau, Mike Pennington of the TCCLES, Barbara Viniar of Chesapeake College, Len Wendowski of Easton Town Council, Kay Wendowski, Linda Prochaska of Senator Mikulski's office, Kim Kratovil of Senator Cardin's office, Denise Lovelady of Congressman Harris' office, and Eastern Shore Food Hub representatives Tracy Ward and Ted Bautz of the Easton Economic Development Corporation and advisor Chip Akridge. MSRC staff present was Scott Warner and Terry Deighan.

Chairman Chase brought the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m. and introductions were made. Mr. Warner stated that he was in possession of electronic votes from Gale Nashold who could not attend in person due to another obligation.

#### *Approval of September 17, 2014 Minutes*

The first order of business was to obtain approval of the September 17, 2014 minutes. Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve, Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase asked for all in favor to signify aye, all opposed are afforded the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

#### *Ratification of Executive Board May 28, 2014 Minutes*

Next order of business was to ratify the executive board minutes of May 28, 2014. Mr. Travers made a motion to ratify the minutes, Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase asked for all in favor to signify aye, all opposed are afforded the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

#### *Treasurer's Report*

Treasurer Fuchs presented the current Treasurer's Report stating all expenditures are on track, nothing out of the ordinary. Being no questions, Mr. Bartlett made a motion to accept the report into record, Mr. Hanson seconded the motion. Chairman Chase asked for all in favor to signify aye, all opposed are afforded the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

## Old Business

### *Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)*

ESEC Executive Director Mike Thielke gave updates to the Council. ShoreVenture sessions will be held this coming year at Wor-Wic Community College and Chesapeake College.

He gave 2015 calendar events for hotDesks coworking space and facilities development update.

He also gave an overview of the Eastern Shore Business Plan Competition stating that ESEC partners are Maryland Capital Enterprises and Rural Maryland Council. Mr. Thielke then shared with the group an ESEC client profile on one of the most recent loan recipients Josh Harwell who owns the company Vitacommerce, an online fulfillment company for vitamins. He shared how Mr. Harwell has expanded his company moving it from New York City to Cambridge and with the assistance of ESEC he is able to continue to grow and succeed further. Mr. Thielke asked for assistance in promoting that ESEC is here and available to help local companies grow. Getting the word out is the key.

### *Maryland Upper Shore Transit (MUST)*

MUST Coordinator and CBRTCE C.E.O. John General gave the following updates about MUST.

He stated that the MSRC was notified by a letter from the MTA dated July 28, 2014 that the MSRC was awarded a FY2015 Statewide Coordination and Technical Assistance (SCATA) grant to support the MUST program. It was level funded. The signed grant documents were returned to MTA on August 11, 2014. The five counties that MUST operates are Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot, Kent, and Queen Anne's.

Bus advertising RFPs: Shore Transit RFP (including Shore Transit and QACR) has been awarded. The awarded company Direct Media is currently measuring the buses in preparation for marketing and sales calls. DCS/DCT's RFP is in final stages of being ready to advertise. The MSRC has been informed that the MUST program is included in both RFP's.

Queen Anne's County – County Ride started an Annapolis Route on Monday, November 10. It is the same fare as the MUST routes (\$3.00) and transfers are accepted.

20,000 new bus schedules were just printed and delivered to the MSRC office yesterday, December 10.

Outreach opportunities are being reevaluated due to the constraints on the budget.

The Federal Capital Grants under Section 5310 deadline for submitting application Part I to the Regional Planning offices is Friday, February 13, 2015.

The regional planning office in the upper and mid shore is MUST.

Senior Ride grant program statewide funding totals \$180,000.

## *Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) for Naval Air Station Patuxent River*

Mr. Warner stated the Naval Air Station Patuxent River (NAS PAX) Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) Public Workshop was held on November 6, 2014 at the Delmarva Community Services building in Cambridge. This Public Open House allowed the public to review, discuss, and comment on the Public Draft JLUS Report with the JLUS development team. Documentation included the project background, compatibility issues, and recommended strategies to address compatibility. The documentation posted on the project website ([www.paxjlus.com](http://www.paxjlus.com)) for review on October 22, 2014. In order to develop a JLUS that is responsive to local needs, input from the public is critical. He then stated that the NAS PAX JLUS Policy Committee meeting scheduled for November 20, 2014 was cancelled due to the lack of public comments for review. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 17, 2014, from 1:00pm to 3:00pm at the Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department Hall.

## *MSRC's State of Maryland funding – FY2016*

Mr. Warner stated work is still being done to try and get the MSRC funding to the historical legislative intention of \$200,000, any assistance is welcome. Ms. Rowe from Maryland said they would be happy to provide a letter of support.

## *Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund*

Mr. Pennington stated a launch of the “What do you ASPIRE for Rural Maryland?” campaign has started. The Rural Maryland Council in partnership with the Rural Maryland Foundation recently produced an ASPIRE video. We are asking for the RMPIF to be funded in the State of Maryland FY2016 budget in the amount of \$6 million. The RMPIF was created by the legislature under Governor Ehrlich, but has never been funded. He also stated that interaction with the administration regarding the importance of this fund will be instrumental in obtaining funding this year. This fund could assist 18 rural counties if fully funded.

*Chairman Chase asked the Council if anyone had questions regarding any of the following:*

- Maryland Broadband Cooperative
- Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC)
  - Broadband Implementation Coordinator
- Shore Gourmet
- Business and Technology Parks: Caroline County or Dorchester County
- Regional Medical Center Campus EDA grant

Talbot County Councilman and MSRC Executive Board member Dirck Bartlett stated that Talbot County has been communicating with Shore Regional Health (SRH) and some positive movement towards the development of the Regional Medical Center has been made. SRH has purchased the property and signed the Development Rights and

Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA). He also stated that the sewer and water infrastructure grant funds are lined up.

## New Business

### *2015 Meeting Dates*

Chairman Chase stated that the MSRC tentative meeting dates for 2015 are in your folders. They are:

- Thursday, March 12, 2015 – Talbot County
- Thursday, June 11, 2015 – Caroline County
- Thursday, September 17, 2015 – MSRC meeting and tour (maybe a Joint Regional Councils' Meeting / Tour)
- Thursday, December 10, 2015 – Dorchester County

### *Officer Selection*

Chairman Chase stated that at the December 5 MSRC Executive Board meeting the members discussed and are unanimously recommending the proposed slate for the 2015 officers of the MSRC that can be found in your packets. The slate is:

#### 2015 Proposed Executive Board Members

- Chairman: Walter Chase
- First Vice-Chairman: Ricky Travers (Dorchester)
- Second Vice-Chairman: Dirck Bartlett (Talbot)
- Third Vice-Chairman: Dan Franklin (Caroline)
- Secretary: Allen Nelson
- Treasurer: Kurt Fuchs
- General Assembly: Johnny Mautz
- Member-at-large: Gale Nashold
- Member-at-large: Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio

The Chairman asked if there was any discussion or suggestions regarding the proposed slate. Hearing none, Mr. Fuchs made a motion to accept the proposed member list as presented, Ms. Eckardt seconded the motion. Chairman Chase asked for all in favor to signify aye; those opposed have the same rights; ayes have it. The 2015 Executive Board Members were unanimously approved as presented.

### *Presentation*

The presentation was the Eastern Shore Food Hub. It was given by Easton Economic Development Corporation's Executive Director Tracy Ward, board member Ted Bautz, and advisor Chip Akridge. Ms. Ward introduced the PowerPoint presentation and then passed the lead to Mr. Bautz. Mr. Akridge assisted in the presentation. When the presentation was completed there were several questions from the Council, mostly questioning the fairness of public funding sources being used to support a privately owned food hub that will potentially be competing against privately funded local businesses, as well as,

who will actually own and operate the food hub. Mr. Bautz responded several times stating that there would be no duplication or competition with existing businesses. The explanation of the operation of the food hub was unclear. There were statements that the EEDC would be the operator and not a specific individual, but when pressed it was stated that the ownership and operation would be the Eastern Shore Food Hub Corporation (a Maryland non-profit corporation) and the Real Food Productions, L3C (a low profit limited liability corporation). It was pointed out that in public documents presented to the Town of Easton that the same individual is the founder of both companies, board member of both companies, and the stated operator of the Food Hub. Other questions revolved around seeking input from the agriculture community. Mr. Bautz informed everyone that the EEDC will be reaching out to the farmers in February.

During the discussion Mr. Warner reminded the Board that the MSRC has been involved in food hub discussions since he was first asked to attend a February 2014 meeting with Paige Bethke, Cleo Braver and Tracy Ward held at the Talbot County Economic Development Office.

Chairman Chase thanked the EEDC for their presentation and asked them to keep the MSRC apprised as they work on the project.

### *Upcoming Events*

Mr. Warner stated the following meetings are on the MSRC schedule for 2015:

The Mid Shore Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 6, 2015 at 12:00pm at the Talbot County Free Library in Easton.

The Eastern Shore Regional Councils' Joint Luncheon Meeting will be held on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at the Hyatt in Cambridge from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., during the MACo Conference.

The "Taste of the Eastern Shore" legislative reception will be held at the Loews Hotel in Annapolis on Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. This is the same day as the Rural Maryland Council Advocacy Day in Annapolis that will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Regarding the "Taste of the Eastern Shore" Mr. Pennington added they are still looking for sponsors, if anyone is interested or know of anyone to please contact him.

### *Member comments/requests*

Debbie Rowe thanked the Council for her being a new MSRC board member.

Senator-elect Addie Eckardt stated that State revenues are down and spending is up 3%. On January 17 the spending affordability committee will meet and State government departments have been asked to trim back their budgets. This is the second time this fiscal year they have been asked to trim their budgets, the previous time was in June. There are 68 new legislators.

Ms. Burgoyne shared her and Ms. Visintainer's plans to visit Vermont this spring to learn about how to market value-added products. She welcomed anyone with interest to join them. More information will be provided in the future.

### Adjourn

On a motion by Mr. Nelson, seconded by Mr. Hanson the meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m., unanimously.