

Minutes

Mid Shore Regional Council
Easton, Maryland

September 13, 2006

The Mid Shore Regional Council held their quarterly meeting on September 13, 2006 at the Holiday Inn Express in Easton Maryland. Members present were: Marty Gangemi, Walter Chase, Burton Wilson, Christopher LaBarge, Ellery Adams, Gale Nashold, Hope Harrington, Mayor Rippons, Paige Bethke, Russell Dize, Delegate Eckardt, Delegate Sossi, Jane Baynard, Scott Warner and Terry Deighan. Several guests were also present; Kurt Fuchs, Allen Nelson, Janice Bain-Kerr, Sarah Williams and Dr. Michael Scott.

Father LaBarge gave a blessing, dinner was served and Chairman Gangemi called the meeting to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. at which time everyone present stated their names and affiliations.

Ms. Baynard informed the Board she was in possession of proxy votes for members Effie Elzey and Ricky Travers who were not able to attend this evenings meeting.

Action Items:

The first order of business was approval of the minutes from the June 14, 2006 meeting. Ms. Bethke had a change in the minutes as written to add on page 3 under the heading Agricultural Economic Development Specialist – “Ms. Bethke abstained from voting due to her job change” having no more changes Father LaBarge made a motion to approve the minutes as changed Mr. Wilson seconded the motion and the minutes were approved with change by unanimous consent.

Next Chairman Gangemi made an announcement that the Executive Committee had a meeting prior to this one and they approved the Executive minutes at that time from the June 14, 2006 meeting of the Executive Board. Mayor Rippons made a motion to approve the ratification of those minutes, Mr. Nashold seconded the motion and the ratification of those minutes was approved by all.

In the absence of Mr. Travers, Mr. Gangemi presented the treasurer’s report for approval. Being no questions were asked Father LaBarge made a motion to accept the report as presented, Ms. Harrington seconded the motion and the treasurer’s report was approved as presented.

The next order of business was the resignation of Paige Bethke as Member-At-Large serving on both the executive and full boards of the Mid Shore Regional Council. Mr. Warner stated that the remainder of Ms. Bethke's position on the Executive Board would have to be filled and suggested appointing Allen Nelson to the position. Mr. Nelson was added to the Council as an "Additional private citizen or public member" by the Executive Board in its meeting prior to the full board meeting. After a brief discussion Father LaBarge made a motion to appoint Mr. Nelson as Member-At-Large on both the executive and full board, Ms. Harrington seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Old Business

Update on Mid-Shore Regional Council projects:

Maryland Broadband Cooperative

Mr. Warner brought the Board up to speed on the progress of the Maryland Broadband Cooperative. The accomplishments included the following; on July 20, 2006 MdBC held its first board meeting at which time they adopted bylaws, elected a board of directors, hired Pat Mitchell as project manager, and also hired a management team. On August 1, 2006 the MdBC management team met with Mid-Shore representatives to discuss MdBC goals and to get feedback. From that meeting a change of the initial route up Rt. 50 to connect Caroline County via Rt. 328 and Rt. 404 was made. On August 18, 2006 the MdBC celebrated a groundbreaking at the Pocomoke Industrial Park.

Rural Maryland Broadband Coordination Board

Mr. Warner explained that the Coordination Board is a nine member board that includes Hope Harrington representing the MSRC. On August 14, 2006 the Coordination Board held its first meeting at which time the MdBC presented a three year plan to the Coordination Board. On September 8, 2006 the Coordination Board held a meeting via conference call and approved the release of \$500,000 of state funds to the MdBC for its initial projects.

Workforce Issues Task Force

Drafts of subcommittees Phase 1 projects have been prepared and distributed to council members for review. These documents will be distributed with the help of the local Chambers of Commerce and Caroline Economic Development Corporation. There are three (3) separate documents as follows:

Foundations to Enter the Workforce – introductory letter and “Statement of Work Ethic” to be circulated to businesses to sign on ‘conceptually’.

Conflict Management / Current Workplace Issues – introductory letter and one page document with Character Counts and Mid-Shore Mediation programs outlined.

Child Care – poster promoting the Chesapeake Child Care Resource Center (CCCRC) (two different styles):

The poster with the black background is for use in print ads while the poster featuring the white background is for companies to use for self printing and utilization in the workplace such as break rooms and HR introductory packets. (copies of both posters are included as part of these minutes)

MUST (Maryland Upper Shore Transit)

Mr. Warner informed the Board the edits regarding the regional hospitals on the MUST video have been completed and the MTA FY07 coordination grant for \$40,000 has been received and approved as well as the MTA FY07 IT Project grant for \$12,000, (this grant is to finish the scheduling and asset allocation system).

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)

In Mr. Smyth’s absence Mr. Warner explained that the four original companies that have received loans are doing well and that two more companies have recently made presentations to the ESEC Loan Review Committee for the remaining \$25,000.

A USDA Rural Development Intermediary Re-lending Program (IRP) for \$750,000 has been submitted as well as a Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) for \$45,000. Mr. Smyth has also been appointed to the Dorchester First! Loan Review Committee and talks have started to possibly relocate the ESEC office to Dorchester County. Mr. Warner told Board Members he thinks this would be a good move since the Center represents Talbot, Caroline and Dorchester Counties and the presence of the ESEC in Dorchester County would only strengthen that fact by not having every Mid Shore entity located in Talbot County.

Regional e-commerce web site

If the grant submitted to USDA is awarded in the amount of \$750,000 to the ESEC; of that money \$150,000 of the IRP would be used to start operating Shore Gourmet, Inc.

The Center also continues to work with resource-based businesses to help create products, labeling, branding, and distribution into outlets.

Agricultural Economic Development Specialist

A grant submitted to the American Farmland Trust in the amount of \$12,000 is receiving its funding from the Rauch Foundation. A USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) for \$66,900 pre-application was submitted on July 27, 2006.

Mr. Warner received a letter dated August 21, 2006 inviting the MSRC to submit a complete RBEG application.

Also, submitted August 30, 2006 was a request to the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) for \$24,000 for FY07 and the same for FY08.

Latino workforce / CASA study

On July 12, 2006 Gustavo Torres and several members of CASA of Maryland and Memo Diriker of BEACON met at the MSRC office to review Beacon's feasibility study and recommendations. Some ideas were to have the CASA Center for the entire Eastern Shore be located in Cambridge with a mobile unit (van with office trailer) travel around to the nine counties. The approximate annual cost of the project would be \$300,000. If CASA chooses to move forward CASA and BEACON will communicate on how to raise funds for such an endeavor. This model projects a twenty four month build up.

Chesapeake Regional Television

On June 20, 2006 the outline for the CRTV was reviewed by the steering committee. Chesapeake College is supposed to be contacting the County Administrators/Managers to get their respective feedback. Mr. Warner's recommendation was to keep the MSRC at arms length due to differences in opinion within the Mid-Shore counties on how to proceed. As Chesapeake College informs MSRC on its progress he will then update the Executive Board.

Maryland Rural Summit

Mr. Warner reminded everyone of the up coming Maryland Rural Summit commencing October 25-27, 2006 in Cecil County and to please register soon if they plan to attend.

New Business

A New Crops Alternative Workshop will be held October 10, 2006 at Chesapeake College from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. parties interested in attending may register through the Mid Shore Regional Council. The workshop is sponsored by Maryland Department of Agriculture with partners – USDA / ARS researchers (Agricultural Research Service), Maryland Cooperative Extension Offices in the Mid-Shore, and the Mid Shore Regional Council.

Presentation on Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative

Dr. Michael Scott of Salisbury University gave a Power Point presentation showing how the ESRGC is helping various counties with growth impact assessment studies. This process allows the separate counties to take into account all variables allowing for future planning in all pertinent areas having to do with growth (traffic, sewer, schools etc.) Dr. Scott's model takes each individual counties information and builds a model dealing with their needs. This presentation gives a very real visual account of future growth. Counties are encouraged to utilize this concept when dealing with growth. Part of his presentation showed a very impressive 3-D moving image of Rt. 404 showing projected traffic patterns after the addition of retail stores in the area such as traffic volume at specific times of the day and night.

Other matters

Chairman Gangemi reminded the Board the next scheduled Mid Shore Regional Council meeting will be December 13, 2006 and will be held at the Caroline Country Club in Caroline County.

Member comments/requests

None

Adjourn

Chairman Gangemi adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:05 p.m.