

The Mid Shore Regional Council held a scheduled quarterly meeting on December 8, 2011 in Dorchester County at the Delmarva Community Services building in Cambridge. Members in attendance included: Dirck Bartlett, Andy Hollis, Walter Chase, Bill Cooper, Kurt Fuchs, Carolyn Spicher, Delegate Addie Eckardt, Gale Nashold, Jerome Stanley, Jeff Ghrist, Robbie Hanson, Ricky Travers, Anne Fleming, and Mike Zimmerman. Chairman Fuchs was carrying proxies for the Senator Richard Colburn and Delegate Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio (they had another engagement). MSRC staff present was Scott Warner and Terry Deighan. Economic Development Directors attending were Keasha Haythe and Paige Bethke. Guests in attendance included: Linda Prochaska of Senator Mikulski's office, USDA State Director Jack Tarburton, USDA Farm Services Agency Maryland State Executive Director Charles Cawley, Chesapeake College President Barbara Viniar, Dr. Michael Scott of ESRGC, Caroline County IT Director Jim McCormick, Dan Kuennen of UMES, Mindie Burgoyne of DBED, Richard Sossi representative for Congressman Harris, Brad Powers of Shore Gourmet, Michael Thielke of ESEC, Dr. Memo Diriker of BEACON, Tyler Patton of Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Greg Urban, Eric Bathras and Steve Crawford from the State of Maryland Department of Information Technology and Carolyn Swift, reporter for the Star Democrat.

Introductions were made and Chairman Fuchs called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Action Items

The first order of business was approval of the September 15, 2011 Minutes. Mr. Cooper made a motion to approve the Minutes, Ms. Eckardt seconded the motion, and the Minutes were approved unanimously.

The next order of business was ratification of the Executive Board's September 2, 2011 Minutes. Mr. Chase made a motion to ratify, that was seconded by Mr. Nashold and approved by all.

Next in the Treasurer's absence, Mr. Fuchs' presented the Treasurer's Report. He noted all expenses are were on track and asked if there were any questions, being none he accepted the report into record as presented.

Old Business

Broadband Update

Maryland Broadband Cooperative (MdBC)

MdBC Vice President for Public Affairs Tyler Patton gave the following updates. He stated that the cooperative is up to just around 70 members and just passed its five year anniversary. He stated that they are always looking for new members. In addition, Mr. Patton stated that the build to the Caroline Technology Park located in Ridgely is complete. The build from Rt. 50 in Cambridge to the Dorchester County Technology Park was started last week. It will be complete (barring any huge storms or natural

disasters) by the end of the year. Mr. Patton then mentioned that the BTOP is moving along and he will defer to Greg Urban for that update and try to help answer any questions.

Planning Grant

BEACON Director Dr. Memo Diriker gave a brief project history of the broadband planning grant. The grant is in month 21½. Dr. Diriker stated that the draft report is underway and gave a timeline for completion. Ultimately, the project will be progressing from the regional plans to the state plan.

Mapping Grant

ESRGC Director Mike Scott stated the 5 year mapping project just began year 3. The project team has delivered the 4th successful update of broadband availability for the State of Maryland. They have performed wireless broadband speed testing across the State utilizing four interns. In addition, they are supporting the reporting and mapping of the state BTOP project.

Maryland Department of Information Technology (DoIT) update on federal Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) grant award

Chairman Fuchs introduced Deputy State Chief Information Officer (CIO) Gregory Urban who was invited to the meeting to give an update on the federal grant awarded to the State of Maryland. Chairman Fuchs stated to the attendees that Mr. Urban has been with DoIT since 2005. His responsibilities include: deliver IT services statewide to State agencies, county and municipal governments, and other public sector entities. Additionally, his department is responsible for providing constituent access to government through new media and he oversees the operational divisions within DoIT, Web Systems (including Maryland.gov), Networks (including network Maryland), Enterprise Information Systems, and Application Systems Management. Along with Mr. Urban were two members of his team, Eric Bathras and Steve Crawford. Both are Regional Project Managers with Skyline Network Engineering assigned to DoIT for the State project. Mr. Urban gave an overview and update of the state project which has a federal time line of three years to be completed. August 2013 is the completion deadline. It must connect 1,006 CAI (Community Anchor Institutions). He explained there are three main groups involved including the MdBC. The nine jurisdictions in central Maryland are being led by Howard County. DoIT is heading the construction in the 16 other counties. Construction started in late summer 2011. In October 2011 the first CAI was lit – a State Police barracks in La Plata (Southern Maryland). They are a third of the way through the grant timeline and much of the state is still in the preconstruction phase including the Eastern Shore. The state locked in their fiber purchase prior to the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan. This was a big break since these natural disasters had a severe affect on rising fiber prices. He also mentioned that some of the fiber will be used to tie into the 700mhz emergency radio system. After concluding his remarks with other overview information Mr. Urban then entertained several questions from the Council and guests.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Chairman Fuchs stated that the first CEDS meeting for the 2012 document update was held Monday, October 6, 2011 at 12:00pm at the Talbot County Operations Center Conference Room, 605 Port Street, Easton. Also, the CEDS Executive Committee will meet on December 13, 2011 at the MSRC office. This meeting is to evaluate proposed

projects based on the guidelines established in the CEDS document. The next CEDS Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2011 at the Talbot County Operations Center Conference Room at 12:00pm

Business and Technology Parks

Caroline County

Caroline Commissioner and MSRC Third Vice-Chairman Jeff Ghrist stated that the county is modifying the marketing plan and have interviewed some private companies to probably enter into a public private partnership to market the park.

Dorchester County

Dorchester Economic Development Director Keasha Haythe stated that fiber optic cable is to be installed next week and talks with potential prospects are ongoing.

Regional Medical Facility

Talbot Councilman and MSRC First Vice-Chairman Dirck Bartlett stated the Council met with the new Shore Health System President and CEO Ken Kozel regarding the planning process of the project. Included in the discussion was that SHS should be submitting the Certificate of Need either in March or September of next year. Ms. Bethke added that on November 10, 2011 she along with Talbot County Manager John Craig and Scott Warner traveled to the EDA Philadelphia Regional Office to meet with EDA Economic Development Specialist Alma Plummer to discuss the Regional Medical Facility project. Ms. Plummer is the new EDA representative for Maryland replacing Debra Beavin. She felt that this was a good trip

Shore Gourmet

Shore Gourmet President Brad Powers stated that during the last quarter of 2011, in addition to standard operations in the Sales and Distribution department, Shore Gourmet participated in various promotional venues. These included the First Fall Wine Festival at the Old Brick Inn in St. Michaels, the Waterfowl Festival in Easton, and the Master Gardeners' Workshop at the Avalon Theatre in Easton. He also stated that General Manager Kevin Deighan continued to provide advice to producers and retailers on a one-on-one basis. However the highlight of this quarter was an opportunity to provide information to a larger audience through a presentation at the UMES 8th Annual Small Farm Conference in Princess Anne. Brad Powers, Kevin Deighan and Bill Edwards of SB Bison Farm in Hurlock showed a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Increasing Farm Income Through Value Added Marketing". One immediate result of the Conference was the interest expressed by a senior at the college to work as an intern for Shore Gourmet. Through her advisor, she has been given a project that will both assist a value-added producer and result in a Senior Studies paper as part of her course requirements. As a continued interest in establishing a specialty animal slaughtering and meat processing facility on the Shore, contacts have been made with the Departments of Agriculture, General Services and the State Highway Administration to determine the availability of the former MDA Animal Health Lab at Centreville. Also, Kevin and Brad toured the large animal processing facility at UMES that was built, but never used, in the new Food Science Center. This is a unit on which a great deal of money was spent, but funding for operation was never allocated. Now it is being leased for 2 years by a company producing heirloom tomato sauces. New Producers included: Jessica Wiggins, Blue Water Grill in Millsboro Delaware (sauce) and Bruce Hudson, Luke's Heirloom Tomato Juice & Nectar. Some new retail spots purchasing product are

High Spot Restaurant in Cambridge, St. Michaels Crab & Steak House in St. Michaels, The Old Brick Inn in St. Michaels, and Dog Fish Head Brews & Eats in Rehoboth Beach, DE.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)

ESEC Executive Director Mike Thielke stated that he has been working on development of an Eastern Shore Entrepreneur Ecosystem that would provide Technical Assistance (i.e. Business Counseling, Coaching, Mentoring, SCORE), Training (i.e. Shore Venture Entrepreneur Training Series, Tech Transfer), and Access to Capital (i.e. Revolving Loan Funds, Angel Fund, CDFI, New Market Tax Credit, and SBA loans). Mr. Thielke stated he would like to create an advisory council of people to assist with the CDFI New Market Tax Credits, SBA loans). Mike also stated he is hard at work to Replenishing Capital Funds; he recently received a \$500,000 loan from USDA, which required a 25% match, which he has almost fully raised, he also received a \$105,000 grant for technical assistance from USDA. His Board Development Strategy for an Advisory Council and also a Board of Directors is also underway. Mr. Powers suggested that with regards to youth programs he look into partnering with 4H Clubs and FFA.

Maryland Upper Shore Transit (MUST)

In MUST Coordinator and CBRTCE C.E.O. John General's absence Mr. Warner gave the following updates. Everything has been going well between MSRC and MTA regarding grant reimbursements. New bus schedules are in the final stages of being completed and are scheduled to be printed and delivered in mid January. An advertising RFP is being updated with guidance from MTA; several companies have already showed interest. Title IV, ADA, and EEO compliance will be printed on literature and is already posted on the MUST website. MTA representative Jim Raszewski has been very helpful with regards to the compliance language and placement. The Local Management Board (LMB)/Health Transportation Network (HTN) Project's non-rider focus groups have been completed by the Handy Group. The next DCT Community Transportation Advisory Council (CTAC) meeting is Wednesday, December 14 at 10:00am at Chesapeake College. Mr. General wants to present an asset summary of MUST (DCT and QACR) at the next MSRC meeting.

GeoDASH Initiative

BEACON Director Dr. Memo Diriker recapped the GeoDASH Initiative project's history; he stated activities in Western Maryland are on hold until the State okays Jim Garrity's replacement; presently BEACON is paying for GeoDASH activities and therefore only Eastern Shore projects are being addressed; and future activities include commercialization of the initiative.

Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC)

ESRGC Director Mike Scott stated that the ESRGC provided an intern to City of Cambridge free of charge for the Fall – he also noted that \$1,500 worth of software from ESRI goes with the intern. The ESRGC is in the final stages of Critical Area Map updates in Talbot County and are currently working with Caroline County to prepare for public meetings regarding their CBCA changes in early 2012 and Queen Anne's County to verify CBCA changes – they have two years to change and adopt. The ESRGC also implemented significant updates to MSRC Website, hosted the MSRC GIS Committee Meeting, and completed a LiDAR elevation mosaic for the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

New Business

2012 Meeting Dates

Chairman Fuchs stated tentative meeting dates for MSRC are: Thursday, March 15, 2012 in Talbot County; Thursday, June 21, 2012 in Caroline County; Thursday, September 20, 2012 there will be a MSRC meeting prior to a Joint Regional Councils' Meeting / Tour TBD; and Thursday, December 13, 2012 in Dorchester County.

Officer Selection

Chairman Fuchs' stated that at the November 21, 2011 MSRC Executive Board meeting the members discussed and unanimously approved the proposed slate for the 2012 officers of the MSRC. It is in compliance with the MSRC Bylaws. Chairman Fuchs informed the Council that the slate was in their information packets as he read off the proposed 2012 MSRC Executive Board:

- Chairman: Dirck Bartlett
- First Vice-Chairman: Ricky Travers (Dorchester)
- Second Vice-Chairman: Andy Hollis (Talbot)
- Third Vice-Chairman: Jeff Ghrist (Caroline)
- Secretary: Walter Chase
- Treasurer: Kurt Fuchs
- General Assembly: Addie Eckardt
- Member-at-large: Gale Nashold
- Member-at-large: Allen Nelson

As there was no discussion or questions, Mr. Hanson made a motion to accept the slate as presented, Mr. Chase seconded the motion and the 2012 Officers were approved unanimously.

Other matters

Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund

Mr. Warner stated a rigorous marketing campaign utilizing not only handouts, but also a one page summary sheet, website presence, and display booth is underway. The booth has been displayed at the Maryland Special Legislative Session in Annapolis on October 17 thru 21; the Maryland Rural Health Conference in Ocean City on November 3 and 4; and the Maryland Farm Bureau Convention in Ocean City on December 4 thru 6. The display will also be set up at the Maryland legislative session in Annapolis starting in January outside the Senate Finance Committee at Senator Mac Middleton's request. Delegate Norman Conway would also like to have a display outside the House Appropriations meeting room so the RMC sent a letter of request to the House of Delegates Speaker Michael Busch. The RMC is awaiting a response. All three counties included the funding of the MSRC and RMPIF as top legislative priorities when they met with the Mid-Shore State Delegation in October. Senator Colburn, Delegate Eckardt, and Delegate Haddaway-Riccio all sent letters of support to the Governor. The MSRC forwarded the letters to Senator Middleton and Delegate Conway.

Mr. Warner also reminded the Council of how vital it is for the state to fund the MSRC at the historical legislative intention of \$200,000.

Mr. Warner stated that the MSRC will request that Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot County Governments send letters of support for funding the RMPF and full funding of the MSRC to the Governor, if Council approves. Approval was unanimous.

Delegate Eckardt asked Mr. Warner to forward the job creation and retention figures that he had shown at a recent Shore Leadership presentation to the Council members.

Third Vice Chairman Ghrist spoke on the how important the MSRC's regional projects are and that the MSRC and RMPF be funded so these crucial programs be maintained.

Upcoming Council Events

Mr. Fuchs stated their will be a joint MSRC and TCCLES members' luncheon meeting on Thursday, January 5, 2012 at the Hyatt in Cambridge from 11:45am to 1:00pm. It is during the MACo Conference.

The "Taste of the Eastern Shore" legislative reception at the Loews Hotel in Annapolis is on Thursday, February 9, 2012 at 5:30pm.

Member comments/requests

Mr. Powers stated that TEDCO has been working with USDA on Ag Forums around Maryland. The last one to be held is the Mid/Upper Shore on March 8, 2012. The big topic is cover crops research being done.

Another comment by Mr. Powers was concern over Waterland Fisheries in Dorchester County thinking of leaving Maryland and moving to Delaware because of strict regulations in Maryland.

Dr. Diriker stated on December 14, 2011 Comptroller Franchot will be speaking at the Poultry Summit being held at Salisbury University at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. Tarburton stated that water/sewer has been funded through 2012, and 2012 is also a Farm Bill year.

Mr. Tarburton stated that USDA Rural Development has been funded through FY2012. He noted that the communities' line has been increased and the rural entrepreneurs program has been zeroed out. He also informed everyone that in FY2013 the USDA will be using the 2010 census numbers which means that any community exceeding 20,000 people will no longer qualify for the communities program and they should be mindful.

Mr. Cawley reminded everyone that 2012 is a Farm Bill year and that the USDA is losing DCP (Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program) which equates to a \$5 to \$6 million annual loss to the Mid-Shore area.

The Council gave a big thank you to Kurt Fuchs for two great years of service as the Chairman! Mr. Fuchs welcomed Dirck Bartlett as the MSRC new Chairman.

Adjourn

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 7:25 p.m.