

March 15 , 2006
Mid Shore Regional Council
Full Board Meeting

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Mid Shore Regional Council was held on March 15 th at the Caroline Country Club. Members in attendance were: Marty Gangemi, Scott Warner , Andy Hollis , Father Chris LaBarge , Paige Bethke , Mindie Burgoyne , Russell Dize, JOK Walsh , Gale Nashold , Brad Broadwell , Ellery Adams , Walter Chase, Jerome Stanley , Fred Smyth , Hope Harrington , Hilary Spence , Mayor Rippons, Charlie Cawley and Terry Deighan . Several guests were also in attendance that included: Bob Hutchinson, Janice Kerr of the League of Women Voters of Talbot County, Melanie Anderson and Chris Jarboe of the Naval Air Station Paxtuxent River , Jim Dooley, Neil Pedersen , Jim Thompson and Steve Foster of the State Highway Administration.

Call to Order

Chairman Gangemi called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. at which point everyone present stated their name and affiliations.

Action Items

Approval of Minutes

The first order of business was approval of December 05, 2005 minutes. On a motion by Ms. Spence that was seconded by Father LaBarge the minutes of December 5, 2005 were approved by unanimous consent.

Treasurer's Report

In the absence of the new treasurer Ricky Travers Chairman Gangemi presented the treasurer's report asking for any questions or concerns having none this issue was closed.

Old Business

Update on Maryland Broadband Cooperative:

Mr. Warner brought the Council up to speed on the coop stating that they are in the process of finding an Executive Director to spearhead this endeavor. Interviews were conducted Friday, March 10 th .

Update on Workforce Issues Task Force:

Mr. Warner gave a synopsis of a meeting hosted by the Mid Shore Regional Council at CADMUS on February 9 th covering workforce issues with many influential business persons in attendance including participants representing the school system. Mr. Warner prepared a summary sheet of the issues covered in the meeting ranking them in importance as determined by the group in attendance. He explained that the next step will be to create sub committees that will cover the higher ranked issues as determined by the group on February 9 th . He also shared the findings of Dr. Memo Diriker of BEACON who conducted a workforce survey for the Council.

MUST (Maryland Upper Shore Transit):

Mr. Warner announced that a promotional video for MUST is in production and should be ready to utilize in a few weeks. He hopes to promote the bus system through the video showing it at meetings, local television stations etc... The continued funding of the project was a concern and Mr. Warner stated that the project is due to be funded for at least another year. He then gave an up date on the FTA project which has installed monitoring devices in the buses that will allow them to be tracked and will help in the coordination efforts which is always an on going issue.

Regional e-commerce web site

Fred Smyth, Executive Director of the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center updated the Board on this project stating to date we have approximately 45 products interested in participating and some of the tasks we will be helping with are product development, packaging, labels etc. We are looking into getting a web designer, photographer and copy writer. Hopefully the site will be up and running by summer and in full swing with most of the kinks worked out by Christmas.

Agricultural Economic Development Specialist

Mr. Warner told the Board he has been working with Andy Andrews of the American Farmland Trust in hopes of getting an Ag Specialist for the Eastern Shore region. A general discussion ensued where the issue of real need was addressed. It was the consensus of the Board to get the input of the Ag Extension Agents before determining if this position is needed or not. Ms. Burgoyne of DBED commented it would be very helpful and beneficial to the outcome of this project if we first determined all interested parties for this particular endeavor and to contact them so we can all help each other with the sharing of ideas, contacts etc. in an effort to not duplicate efforts.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)

Mr. Smyth, Executive Director of the Entrepreneurship Center announced that a meeting of the Loan Review Committee had been held recently and from that meeting after hearing presentations from all current applicants the committee picked four businesses to support to date that will provide 15 executive level jobs. He touched briefly on the website and stated it gets approximately 600 hits a month to date. The Center has approximately \$25,000 left to loan and is expecting two more applications in the very near future.

Latino workforce / CASA study

Mr. Warner stated he went to Tacoma Park to visit the headquarters of CASA. He toured the facility and saw it in operation and we are now waiting for the results of a study being conducted by BEACON that will help to determine whether or not an institution such as this would be feasible on the Eastern Shore . Mr. Warner will keep the Board up to date on the study due to be finished in April.

New Business

Ratification of the minutes of Executive Board meeting

Chairman Gangemi announced that the Executive Board met on Dec. 16, 2005 and the minutes of that meeting had been approved in Executive Session earlier today and a copy of those minutes are included in member packets for viewing.

Vote on Amendment to Mid-Shore Regional Council Bylaws Article X

Mr. Warner explained that this amendment is for emergency voting or convenience voting by the Executive Board only. It would allow members to vote via e-mail, phone or fax. Mayor Rippons made a motion to approve the amendment, Ms. Spence seconded the motion and it was passed by unanimous consent.

Presentation on Ethanol usage in Mid-Shore Region

Robert Hutchinson who is a member of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee gave the council an update on his attempt to bring ethanol usage to the Mid-Shore Region. He stated many deterrents to the area such as no rail & no natural gas available in either Talbot or Caroline Counties only in Dorchester. He stated that ethanol is a 10% blend and could be used in any vehicle. E85 is 85% ethanol and 15% gasoline, a sensor and metal fuel line are minor modifications needed to use this type of fuel. Mr. Hutchinson stated that they want to grow barley as much as possible (hopefully 40% of the time). He also noted that to his knowledge no one else is trying to run a plant on barley on this scale in the entire nation. He is seeking help in finding funding for this project and asked all present if they had any funding initiatives that might be appropriate for this project to please let him know. He will keep us updated on his progress.

Presentation on Development Related Transportation Issues

Mr. Neil Pedersen, Administrator for the State Highway Administration talked to the group about the enormous growth on the Shore and its impact on the highways on the shore. He referenced a study that showed that in 20 years the traffic on US-50 during the week will be what weekend traffic is currently. He also commented that 2 or 3 additional traffic signals will be needed on US-50 in Trappe if the proposed development in Trappe comes to pass. He described pitfalls and difficulties with such fast growth and the importance of planning and gathering information and gave some tips on funding. Mr. Pedersen thought that the MSRC could possibly play a role in funneling or prioritizing projects in the region and help the State in those priorities (the Southern Maryland Tri-County Council has been doing this very successfully). He also encouraged increase communication between municipalities, counties, and state on large developments – especially those with 250 homes or more. A lengthy conversation among the council took place and Mr. Cawley suggested that this topic was far too large to tackle at this meeting and suggested that we set-up a sub committee to address this issue. Hilary Spence proposed to have a taskforce formed and Walter Chase seconded the motion. Walter Chase, Hilary Spence, Paige Bethke and Ellery Adams volunteered to serve on this committee.

Other matters

Mr. Cawley asked the attendees of the Naval Air Station to tell the group a little about why they were in attendance this evening. Chris Jarboe explained that he and Melanie

Anderson were only here as observers this evening and they are planning to be on the Mid Shore Regional Council's agenda in June to discuss the issue on the Pax River-their intent is to open a line of communication on the Eastern Shore dealing with this subject.

Member comments/requests

None

Adjourn

Chairman Gangemi asked for a motion to adjourn which was given by Father LaBarge and the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.