

**Mid Shore Regional Council
Board Minutes, Cambridge, Maryland
October 27, 2004**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Mid Shore Regional Council was held on October 27, 2004 (rescheduled from October 6, 2004) at the Holiday Inn Express in Cambridge Maryland. In attendance were: Kevin Morse, Terry Deighan, Hilary Spence, Mayor Rippons, Charles Cawley, R. Andrew Hollis, Father Chris LaBarge, Hope Harrington, Dr. Thomas Flowers, Jane Baynard, Effie Elzey, J. Bradford Horsey, Jerome Stanley, Delegate Addie Eckardt, Marty Gangemi, Delegate Jeanne Haddaway and several guests. (A sign-in sheet is attached as part of these minutes).

Action Items:

Approval of Minutes:

Ms. Spence called the meeting to order after dinner at 5:20 pm after which those present stated their name and affiliation.

Minutes:

On a motion by Ms. Harrington that was seconded by Mr. Horsey the June 2, 2004 minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Mayor Rippons presented the treasurer's report noting the overage in the insurance category due to paying the premiums on a three year insurance policy. Having no questions asked on a motion by Father LaBarge that was seconded by Mr. Stanley the treasurer's report was approved by unanimous vote. (The treasurer's report is attached as part of these minutes).

Old Business

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) GIS Data Management and Fulfillment Plan

Dr. Michael Scott of Salisbury University presented this report to the board outlining the plans purpose and potential investment opportunities. The board got insight on the needs of Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot counties from Shane Johnston, Ray Clarke, and Karen Houtman. Topics covered included aerial photograph costs and distribution costs and agreements for distribution. On a motion by Mr. Gangemi that was seconded by Mr. Cawley and passed unanimously the Mid Shore Regional Council received approval to act as agents for the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

Broadband Analysis/Findings/Discussion/Next Steps

Mr. Morse updated the board of the progress of the broadband project and is asking the boards permission to act as the designated agent on behalf of all nine counties involved. A resolution has been drafted that will give him this status. Mr. Morse then highlighted the most important parts of the custom research summary provided to the council by the Yankee group outlining the cost for getting the system operational and also the cost per month for both residential and commercial users once the system is in place. The time to

connect as well as the possibility of being able to turn a profit after only two years were only a few of the topics covered. A general discussion was held where looking into the possibility of utilizing existing towers for the project will be explored as well as several options for financing were discussed that included private investors, bonds and financing through local governments. Ms. Spence suggested the council members read the report distributed and come to the next meeting prepared to make a commitment on how to proceed with this project. (A copy of the research summary and resolution are attached as part of these minutes).

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship (ESEC)

Rich Loeffler of the Small Business Development Center and Natalie Chabot of Dorchester County Tourism office were present to voice their concerns that the goal of the ESEC will be in direct conflict with Dorchester First which provides technical assistance and micro loans to tourism, retail and service related businesses Mr. Loeffler stated that Dorchester First offers loans in the amount of (3) three to (5) five thousand dollars to eligible persons trying to establish/expand business opportunity in Dorchester County and suggested that the ESEC would make more loans to businesses in Talbot County because the office is located in Easton. Mr. Morse stated to Mr. Loeffler that the ESEC does not duplicate or conflict with Dorchester First for the following reasons: The ESEC will target technology/knowledge based companies with significant growth potential, and pay higher than average wages. The target companies will require loans from \$30K to \$250K. The average loan amount that ESEC will offer will be between (30) thirty and (50) fifty thousand dollars during the first two years of operation and will limit its investments to three companies. Upon depletion of the existing loan funds of \$155k the ESEC will apply for up to \$1M of federal funds to further capitalize the loan program. Mr. Cawley voiced his opinion that there is no chance of duplication of services between the two organizations and if anything the ESEC could help Dorchester County by providing capital to businesses that want to locate in their "Hub Zone" and proposed Technology Park. Dorchester County members stated they will revisit the request for funding and letter of intent and notify the MSRC of their decision.

MTA operating agreements

Mr. Morse informed the board we had finally received our MTA agreements and is requesting permission to once again maintain the grant for the council. Mr. Stanley gave an update on the radio systems being put into the buses and how the addition of this new equipment will strengthen the project as a whole. After a brief discussion Ms. Harrington made a motion that the MSRC be phased out of administering the MUST grant and control be placed back into hands of authority, Mr. Gangemi seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

New Business

Recommendations for MSRC legislative agenda

Ms. Spence requested any items of interest that members thought we should be tracking in the up coming legislative session. A couple of topics suggested were broadband if the use of bonds were to be a factor and septic tank flush fees. Steve McHenry informed the

board it will be the 10th anniversary of the MD Rural Council and they will be planning a celebration during the session.

CEDS Update/Requests from Committee

Mr. Morse updated the board of the findings of the last CEDS meeting of October 14th, two issues were brought to light one being the lack of adequate daycare and the second issue has to do with the work force and the lack of an acceptable work ethic by employees. Father LaBarge pointed out the need for daycare for Spanish speaking families, delegate Eckardt said she is a major supporter for this effort at which point Mr. Morse asked delegate Eckardt if she would be available to serve on a task force for daycare that he is forming along with Fred Smyth, economic director of Talbot County. They will also be forming a work force task force to address those issues.

Rural Summit

Steve McHenry of the Rural Maryland Council gave an update of topics to be covered at the 7th Annual Summit taking place November 4th & 5th in Solomon's Island Maryland and urged anyone not signed up yet to do so.

Annual Meeting-Appointments to the Council/Elections

Hilary Spence requested nomination suggestions be submitted to the council as soon as possible since elections will be held on December 8th.

Invitation to participate in Leadership Maryland

Charles Cawley gave a brief overview of Leadership Maryland which is a year long study of a multitude of topics in different locations around Maryland the class only accepts 50 participants per year and as he had completed the course years earlier and he highly recommended that the board allow Mr. Morse to apply. Mr. Cawley made a motion to authorize Kevin Morse to apply for a spot in Leadership Maryland, Mr. Stanley seconded the motion and it was passed by unanimous vote.

Eastern Shore Regional Councils' Joint Meeting

Mr. Morse reminded the council of our joint meeting with the Upper Shore Regional Council and the Tri County Council for the Lower Shore on November 10th at the Hyatt in Cambridge.

Member Matters

None

Adjourn

On a motion by Father LaBarge that was seconded by Ms. Harrington the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 pm by unanimous vote.