

Mid Shore Regional Council
Executive Board Minutes, Easton, Maryland
July 07, 2004

Present – Hope Harrington, Jim Gring, Hilary Spence, Charles Cawley, Kevin Morse, Jeanne Haddaway

Action Items

Minutes

The April 7, 2004 Executive Board Meeting minutes were approved upon motion by Ms. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Cawley and unanimous consent by all.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Morse stated that the current balance is \$75,514.67 with \$70,871.11 in reserves. The FY05 budget includes \$52,000 from the Economic Development Administration; \$140,000 from DBED, \$30,000 from the counties and \$5,000 from the MTA for MUST administrative coordination. Mr. Morse stated that it may be the last year the MUST pilot project is funded because coordination funds do not exceed 3-4 years. After that point, the counties may be expected to contribute 50% instead of 25% of the MUST coordination funds. However, the providers may be able to coordinate the project themselves. The next TAG meeting will be this summer after the new ridership statistics have been released. The providers have stated that ridership statistics are up, much due to the new readable bus schedule developed by the Handy Group. The counties will be asked to pay \$2000 for FY05 MUST expenses due to a malfunction with the MTA grant agreement. However, Caroline County will pay \$5000 because they did not pay FY04 expenses.

The MSRC is awaiting a grant agreement with the FTA that will put tracking systems in all of the MUST buses. The project has not begun because the MTA has not executed the grant agreement. Delegate Haddaway stated that she can help expedite that process. Ms. Spence suggested that the MSRC and Delegate Haddaway send a letter to the MTA in response to the letter from Ms. Trotman requesting the MSRC hire the IT person. Secretary Flanagan and Jack Canan will be cc'd.

The MSRC has already paid Salisbury University for the Regional GIS Center in the amount of \$20,000. The Treasurer's Report was approved upon motion by Mr. Cawley seconded by Ms. Harrington and unanimous consent by all.

New Business

EDA Grants

Mr. Morse stated that he is actively seeking \$150,000 in matching operational funds for the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center. The USDA has contributed \$55,000 and DBED will give \$100,000 in risk capital funds. Mr. Noyes from the EDA will not use \$150,000 match for operations and Mr. Morse stated that TEDCO can not use their funds for operations. Mr. Morse estimates that overhead costs will be \$60,000-\$75,000 for the

next two years in order to hire a Director. One option Mr. Morse will pursue will be to contact Mr. Noyes and apply for an EDA grant in the amount of \$30,000 and match it with local dollars. Mr. Morse may also pursue a \$60,000.00 Kellogg grant for capacity building funds.

Ms. Harrington stated that the Talbot County Economic Development Director Search Committee may have an applicant that would be ideal for running the ESEC. The Board agreed that the ESEC director should be a "dealmaker" with a financial background.

Broadband: Intel Consortium Proposal

Mr. Morse stated that TLA Associates has completed their Eastern Shore Broadband Study and one recommendation was to create a backbone and wholesale broadband cooperative. However, DBED did not believe that there was a business case to invest in the backbone and they believe that the private sector should provide these services. Mr. Morse was referred by Ellis Kitchen, the CIO for the MD DBM, to contact Alleghany Communications. The group is targeting "mid-America" to provide backbone and last mile wireless services with Intel. A pilot community has been set up in Fontana, CA and they would like this area to be the model for the East. The group will bring the business model to the Boards during the MACO conference in August. Ms. Spence requested that if we have the meeting in MACO this should be the only item on the agenda. The board unanimously agreed.

Regional Wastewater Committee

Mr. Morse stated that in response to the municipal meeting held on March 31, 2004, the municipalities stated that they would like to see a group take the lead on the Regional Wastewater Study. Mr. Morse is still waiting for recommendations to spearhead the committee or invest their time with the issue.

USRC Update

John Dillman, III has been hired as the Upper Shore Regional Council Executive Director.

Creation of Maryland Association of Regional Councils

Mr. Morse met the Regional Council directors last week to discuss forming a non-profit organization that will be able to apply for grants and provide a formal venue for the Regional Councils. The Association will not be a lobbying group. Mr. Cawley suggested that the MSRC explore the possibility of an association informally for 2-3 years and rotate positions before forming the 501(c) 3 organization.

Personnel: Executive Assistant Search

Mr. Morse stated that Kim Mielke has resigned from her position and her last day will be July 16, 2004. She will assist in the search for her replacement.

FY05 Legislative Issues

The board agreed that broadband and regional council funding are the main legislative priorities for the Mid-Shore Regional Council. Delegate Haddaway stated that she is on

the Economic Matters committee and Delegate Eckardt and Conway are on the Appropriations committee and it is important that any issues are brought in front of the Eastern Shore Delegation. She also stated that it is too early to have any insight on the upcoming session.

Follow up: CBRTCE Discussion

Mr. Morse stated that at the last Executive Board meeting it was agreed that the MSRC will not collaborate with the TCE on any further projects. The TCE is presenting the Economic Adjustment Strategy findings on July 28, 2004 upstairs at the Easton Welcome and Resource Center.

Maryland Association of Counties Meeting Dates:

The MSRC will not hold a full board meeting during MACO. The Rural Regional Council Dinner will be held at Embers Restaurant on Wednesday August 18, 2004 at 6:00 pm. Ms. Harrington and Mr. Cawley will not attend. The Board would like to meet Thursday August 19, 2004 to discuss the Intel Consortium formally after 4:30 pm. The Full Board Meeting will be scheduled for September.

Member Matters

Mr. Cawley is interested in the status of the Environmental Peninsula marketing plan because he feels that the Shore needs an identity and it is crucial to market the Regional Technology Park located in Ridgely, Maryland. Mr. Cawley would also like to meet the new Talbot County Economic Development Director when the position is filled. The Director should meet with Kevin, along with Mr. Walsh and Ms. Causey.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned upon motion by Ms. Harrington, seconded by Mr. Cawley and unanimous consent by all.