

MSRC Executive Board Meeting
Easton Maryland

The Mid Shore Regional Council held an Executive Board meeting on Friday, October 24, 2008. The meeting was held at the Mid Shore Regional Council office in Easton, Maryland. Board Members present were: Gale Nashold, Walter Chase, Allen Nelson and Jeff Ghrist. MSRC Staff present were: Scott Warner and Terry Deighan.

Action Items:

Chairman Nashold called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m., the first order of business was approval of minutes from the May 21, 2008 meeting. Mr. Ghrist made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Mr. Chase seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously. The second order of business was approval of May 21, 2008 Closed Executive Session Minutes. Mr. Chase made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Mr. Ghrist seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

The next order of business was approval of the updated FY09 budget. Mr. Warner explained to the Board that EDA funding was increased from \$52,000 to \$60,000, as all other permanent Economic Development Districts (EDD) receive \$60,000, and since the MSRC has received verbal confirmation of our pending acceptance as an EDD our funding has been increased. Mr. Warner then informed the Board that Maryland State Funding was reduced from \$140,000 to \$98,000, as a 30% budget cut to all regional councils was enacted last week, but according to State legislation, the MSRC should receive at least \$200,000 per fiscal year; so the FY09 actual budget of \$98,000 represents a 51% reduction not a 30% reduction. Mr. Nelson made a motion to authorize the utilization of up to \$42,000 out of reserves to balance the FY09 budget, Mr. Chase seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

The next order of business was ratification of electronic vote approving the endorsement letter of the Town of Federalsburg project for the construction of the connecting road and railroad crossings between the Frank M. Adams Industrial Park and the Federalsburg Industrial Park. Four responses were received from the Executive Board; all approved sending the endorsement letter. Mr. Chase made a motion to ratify the electronic vote, Mr. Nelson seconded the motion and the electronic vote's ratification was passed unanimously.

Next Mr. Warner asked the Board to sponsor the Eastern Shore/Federal Lab Consortium (FLC) Technology Transfer Educational Seminar to be held on January 29, 2009 in the amount of \$200.00. The MSRC and the Chesapeake Bay Region Technical Center of Excellence were the initial facilitators of the Eastern

Shore Economic Development and FLC partnership. Mr. Warner stated he feels continuing to support this effort will provide much needed help to the region. Mr. Nelson made a motion to sponsor the event in the amount of \$200. Mr. Ghrist seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

Next order of business is possible sponsorship of the Dorchester County Economic Development Summit, December 11, 2008. Mr. Warner explained to the Board this event will be inviting students of Dorchester County to attend as well and our sponsorship will help to deter costs for that portion of the Summit. The sponsorship amount being asked for is \$250. Mr. Nelson chose to abstain as he is working with Ms. Haythe on this event. In that event Mr. Ghrist made a motion to approve the request, Mr. Chase seconded the request and the motion was passed with three ayes and one abstention.

Discussion/approval of recommendations for the 2009 MSRC Executive Board was the next agenda item. Mr. Warner clarified to Board members it has been a practice to provide a slate of possible Board members to the full council for the upcoming CY at the last full board meeting of the year. The changes are 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Vice Chairs change according to the MSRC bylaws – 1st Vice Chair Ricky Travers (Dorchester), 2nd Vice Chair Dirck Bartlett (Talbot) and 3rd Vice Chair Jeff Ghrist (Caroline). Also according to the Bylaws the General Assembly representative will be Delegate Addie Eckardt. In addition, Mr. Warner recommended Allen Nelson move from Secretary to Treasurer, Walter Chase move from Member-at-large to Secretary, and Kurt Fuchs would replace Cleveland Rippons on the Executive Board and Mr. Fuchs would hold the Member-at-large position. Chairman Nashold questioned if there was anything in the By-Laws that would prohibit this practice. Mr. Warner stated that the By-Laws do not specify the selection method of the Executive Board. Chairman Nashold made a suggestion to make the “Executive Board” serve as the nominating Committee in the By-Laws for clarification purposes in the future. Mr. Warner said he would check with the MSRC attorney and relay the information to Chairman Nashold. The Chairman then asked for a motion to accept the slate of Executive Board members presented, which will be presented to the full board at the next meeting in November. Mr. Nelson claimed that motion, Mr. Chase seconded it and the proposed slate of CY09 Officers was approved by unanimous consent.

Old Business

Eastern Shore Business and Economic Development Dashboard Specialist

Mr. Warner informed the Board that the Eastern Shore Business and Economic Development Dashboard Specialist had been hired. His name is James Garrity and he started on September 8, 2008. A copy of his scope of work has been completed with the help of Dr. Mike Scott and Dr. Memo Diriker.

Economic Development & Transportation Planner:

Mr. Warner also notified the Board the current status of the position for the Economic Development & Transportation Planner. The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore (TCCLES) and MSRC have received \$110,000 grant for the position. The TCCLES signed and returned the grant in mid September, and the position had started to be advertised this week.

Talbot County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Finance Committee:

Mr. Warner reminded the Board that Mr. Bartlett asked him to attend the Talbot County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Finance Committee meetings and report back to them. The meetings have concluded and Mr. Warner reported that they had made its recommendation to the Talbot County Council in September. A few highlights were:

- Increase of existing transfer tax
- Introduce an agricultural land transfer tax
- Dedicate the all revenue transfer taxes increase to land preservation
- Countryside Preservation zoning areas should be the target preservation
- Talbot County should establish an Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA) program as the preferred payment option for easements

Mid Shore Business & Technology Incubator:

Mr. Warner had the following updates to report to the Board on the Mid-Shore Business and Technology Incubator. The incubator will be a separate EDA grant from the Dorchester County Business and Technology Park grant. Dorchester County has set aside funds in excess of \$1 million and a lot in the Tech Park for the incubator. He, Keasha Haythe and John General will be meeting in the near future to layout a plan to fund the incubator and circulate it to several funding parties. The 1st party will be the Dorchester County Council. A primary focus will be on getting the private sector to fund a portion of the incubator; EDA Economic Development Representative Anne Cavalier suggested that incubator success is greater when the private sector is involved.

CEDS Committee:

Mr. Warner apprised the Board that the Mid Shore Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee held its first meeting on August 26, 2008 and the Executive Committee will meet in November to evaluate new CEDS proposed projects. The second full committee meeting will be held on January 6, 2009 to accept or reject newly proposed projects.

New Business

Shore Gourmet:

Mr. Warner informed the Board that on September 30th he, Wenfei Uva, Fred Smyth, and Terry Deighan met with MSRC attorney Curt Booth and MSRC accountant Darian Sump to review the operation of Shore Gourmet. During the meeting the establishment of the Board of Directors was discussed. Suggestions on possible members criteria were a board member should not be someone who is working with the program on a daily basis. Also a board member that is already familiar with the project would be invaluable. Therefore, it was recommended to have the MSRC Agricultural Advisory Committee also serve as the Board of Directors. The MSRC Executive Board agreed with this assessment with the possible addition of a member who would have marketing expertise. It was also brought up that signers for a new Shore Gourmet checking account were also needed. This topic will be shelved until the Board of Directors is finalized.

Other matters

None

Member comments/requests

None

Adjourn

Mr. Nelson made a motion to adjourn at 1:34 p.m., which was unanimously agreed upon.