

The Mid Shore Regional Council Executive Board held a scheduled meeting on May 27, 2016. It was held at the MSRC office. Executive Board members present included Walter Chase, Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Kurt Fuchs, and Senator Addie Eckardt. Gale Nashold joined via conference call. Additionally, Dirck Bartlett and Allen Nelson met with Chairman Walter Chase on May 25, 2016 at the MSRC office at 12:00pm to discuss the full agenda of the Executive Board meeting. Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Nelson filled out electronic voting forms to be included in the May 27, 2016 meeting. MSRC staff present at the May 25 and 27 meetings was Scott Warner and Terry Deighan. Dr. Michael Scott was present at the May 27, 2016 meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

Executive Session

Mr. Warner, Ms. Deighan and Dr. Scott were asked to leave the room while the Board discussed the Executive Director's annual evaluation. The staff and Dr. Scott were asked to return at 12:30 p.m. The Board commended the staff for their performance over the past year. Mr. Warner and Ms. Deighan were most appreciative.

Action Items

Approval of November 18, 2015 Minutes

The first order of business was to obtain approval of the November 18, 2015 minutes. Mr. Fuchs made a motion to approve the minutes; Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of MSRC FY15 independent financial statements

The next order of business was presentation of the most recent financial statement as prepared by Sump and Associates. Mr. Warner stated it is similar to the past statements, nothing new to report. Senator Eckardt made a motion to approve; Ms. Haddaway-Riccio seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report

Treasurer Fuchs presented the current treasurer's report stating all income and expenditures are on track, up to and including, May's expenses and June's rent being paid. Chairman Chase requested a motion to accept, which Ms. Haddaway-Riccio made, Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

MSRC membership

Mr. Warner stated that in previous meetings the Board had discussed replacing the private business representative from Dorchester County. Following up on the last two MSRC Executive Board meetings, Mr. Warner met with Mike LeMire from Miles & Stockbridge, on March 2, 2016 to give an overview of the MSRC. Mr. LeMire attended the MSRC quarterly meeting on March 9, 2016. He is very willing to serve on the Council. Senator Eckardt made a motion to add Mike LeMire to the MSRC, Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Scott Warner to serve on “Rural Health Care Delivery Workgroup”

Mr. Warner stated he is seeking the Boards approval for him to serve on the Rural Health Care Delivery Workgroup that is part of Senate Bill 707 entitled Freestanding Medical Facilities – Certificate of Need, Rates, and Definition. The bill requires the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) to establish a workgroup on rural health care delivery to oversee a study of healthcare delivery in the Middle Shore region and to develop a plan for meeting the health care needs of the five counties -- Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s and Talbot. Since the workgroup will hold public hearings to gain community input regarding the health care needs in the five study counties, he wanted to make sure the MSRC was okay with him doing so.

He is also aware of the Board’s concerns of him spreading himself too thin. He stated that if they are in favor of him serving he is certain he would learn much and be able to share it with the a Health Cluster Economic Impact Work Group and the Board. Ms. Haddaway-Riccio made a motion to allow Mr. Warner to serve on the workgroup, Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Ratification of electronic vote “Authorizing Resolution to file an application with the MTA for a FY17 MTA Coordination Grant”

Mr. Warner stated he received six responses from the Executive Board and they all were to “Accept”. Mr. Fuchs made a motion to ratify the vote, Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. Ms. Haddaway-Riccio abstained since her position on the Governor’s staff oversees the MTA. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. All were in favor with the one abstention.

Discussion/Approval of FY17 Scope of Work

Mr. Warner stated that the only recommended change to the FY17 Scope of Work is on page 2, the 5th bullet “Explore the establishment of a Health Cluster Economic Impact Work Group”. The change would be to amend “Explore the establishment of” to “Establish”. There was no further discussion, Senator Eckardt made a motion to approve the Scope as amended, and Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. The motion carried unanimously and will be presented at the MSRC June 9, 2016 meeting for the full Council’s consideration.

Discussion/Approval of FY17 Budget

Mr. Warner stated due to the increased state funding the MSRC will be receiving thanks to the Governor including the historical legislative intent of \$200,000 to each regional council in the state budget, and the legislators approving it, this coming fiscal year the MSRC will have more capacity. Additionally, the MSRC will be receiving money from the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) since the fund allocates money to each of the regional councils. Therefore, two budgets are being presented for consideration, the traditional MSRC operating budget and a RMPIF budget.

First, Mr. Warner explained the proposed MSRC operating FY17 budget as compared to the FY16 budget.

- Increases
 - Health: rate increase
 - Life Insurance: rate increase
 - Accounting: MSRC covering accounting expenses for Shore Gourmet
 - Advertising: CEDS requirement
 - Computer: supplies, Monnen's monthly charges going up, new optical laser equipment, and office equipment replacements
 - Contractual: MSRC website to be rebuilt and a promotional brochure to be drafted
 - Legal: to cover possible charges for RMPIF and Shore Gourmet
 - Meeting expense: new expenses included NADO conferences, health care committee meetings
 - Membership: new memberships to BJ's and NADO
 - Postage: increase Priority Mail charges
 - Travel: NADO conferences
- Decrease
 - Telephone: Ms. Deighan negotiated lower rate
- Remaining the same
 - Rent increased FY16 by \$3,600 just in case ESEC decided to no longer rent the back office (\$300 per month). This year the MSRC will not have to bill ESEC for a monthly rental stipend.

Senator Eckardt made a motion to recommend the proposed FY17 budget be presented to the full board, Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. The motion carried unanimously and will be presented at the MSRC June 9, 2016 meeting for the full Council's consideration.

Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF)

Next, Mr. Warner discussed the proposed investments that would be funded with the money the MSRC will be receiving from RMPIF.

Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC): \$15,000

The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland (TCCLES) suggested that they would like to invest \$15,000 of their RMPIF in supporting the operation of ESEC. The MSRC could match this amount. This would be a similar partnership that the TCCLES and MSRC have in supporting the ESRGC. ESEC is a 501c3 corporation that was created by the MSRC.

Shore Gourmet/Chesapeake Culinary Center: \$18,500

In March Mr. Warner was contacted by Chesapeake Culinary Center (CCC) Executive Director Beth Brewster regarding a possible partnership with Shore Gourmet (SG). As the CCC is preparing to open their SG store they would like to hire a Development and Education Director. (Remember SG signed a licensing agreement with the CCC on 9/28/15.) Since the initial contact SG Board President Kurt Fuchs and Mr. Warner have been discussing with each other and Ms. Brewster the proposal.

The CCC sent a proposal to SG. In the proposal they ask the MSRC to invest \$18,500 for the first year. In the same paragraph it is also stated that the SG Board will be giving guidance to the staff person.

Since SG is a 501c6 corporation that the MSRC created, Mr. Fuchs and Mr. Warner believed it would be appropriate for the SG Board of Directors to recommend (or not) to the MSRC to financially support this proposed partnership.

The SG Board of Directors held a meeting initiated electronically on May 11, 2016. They voted to recommend entering into this proposed partnership. The MSRC needs to decide to approve the funds (\$18,500) to move them the SG who in-turn will pay them to CCC. Furthermore, if SG enters into this partnership agreement between with the CCC, the MSRC/SG attorney will be engaged to write the agreement.

Dr. Michael Scott was in attendance to help clarify partnerships with ESRGC in the investment of the following funds

Agricultural GIS Extension: \$30,000

This would be a partnership with the TCCLES which would also invest \$30,000 in the project and the ESRGC. One of the significant difficulties facing family farms is a technology gap between the large commercial farming interests and the smaller family farms that are such a vital component of life on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Modern family farms are increasingly driven by technology, and local farmers have to collect sophisticated data about their land. Often, the data must be collected to meet regulatory requirements, but ends up being of little use to the farmers themselves. Salisbury University would like to collaborate with the University of Maryland Extension on an exciting project to help farmers take the same data they are required to report already and use it directly for their own benefit. By combining the expertise of the University of Maryland's College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension and Salisbury University's ESRGC, they will create a Geographic Information Systems Initiative for family farms in Caroline, Dorchester, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. In doing so, we will work with local farmers to develop mapping and spatial analysis projects driven by their needs and requiring little to no additional effort on the part of the family farmers.

Examples of the types of projects that could be developed using data that is already being collected are:

Nutrient Management Assistance

Under current regulations, farmers are required to have a nutrient management plan for their farm operation if their annual gross income is \$2,500 or more, or have eight or more animal units (1,000 pounds per animal unit). Information required for a nutrient management plan includes mapping of their property and production fields, submitting records of soil tests no older than three years, intended crop rotations, past crop production history, as well as nutrients to be

used (both organic and commercial nutrient sources). Some farmers, particularly those who produce poultry, are required to have a comprehensive nutrient management plan that shows the conservation efforts recommended specifically for their operation, how they will implement those conservation efforts, and which conservation efforts they currently have in place. Nutrient management plans are required by Maryland regulation. Any farmer found out of compliance faces large fines that would be detrimental to a family farm.

Under this proposal, farmers could submit that same information, which is so time-consuming and expensive to collect and compile, of their operation to our GIS Farming Initiative and our GIS specialist could produce a detailed map series demonstrating the effectiveness of the nutrient management plans, including geographic databases of the plan specifics so that they could be updated rather than recreated each time the plan is resubmitted. Additionally, we would be able to provide the family farmers with geographic analyses of soils, drainage, crops, forest cover and other land cover components to find more effective and efficient ways to meet nutrient management goals. This program would serve multiple needs on Delmarva, as it would benefit both crop farmers and poultry farmers by utilizing chicken manure in an effective, environmentally sustainable way.

Non-Irrigated Fields Project

Recent summers have been extraordinarily difficult for farmers who cannot afford expensive irrigation systems, and if current predictions hold, we will be facing increasing episodes of drought in the coming years. While corn is a very profitable crop for those who can irrigate, it is highly susceptible to drought. Each year, over 80% of the corn crop on Maryland's Eastern Shore supplies Delmarva's poultry industry, a critical economic driving force for our area farmers. Our GIS team can work with farmers to identify detailed soil and drainage characteristics using high-resolution infrared orthophotography and extremely accurate LiDAR- (Light Detection and Ranging) derived digital elevation models. Using this "non-irrigation" assessment, UM Extension specialists can identify drought resistant crops that will work well under the very specific conditions of their property.

Deer Damage Assessment

The ESRGC has already worked with an individual farmer in Worcester County to develop several sets of detailed maps identifying areas where deer have had a significant negative impact on field yield. This previous analysis used existing GIS data layers as well as data mined from the precision agriculture, yield-measurement device attached to the farmer's combine. Under this project, farmers would benefit by having a comparative study of multiple family farms, both identifying areas of damage and analyzing effective means of remediation.

These three proposals are examples of ways the GIS Farming Initiative could immediately help local farmers, but there are many additional potential projects yet to be determined. Under the plan, farmers would first meet with the Project Facilitator, who would be housed at the ESRGC.

Health Data Dashboard: \$15,000

This would be a partnership with the TCCLES which would also invest \$15,000 in the project and the ESRGC. This type of dashboard has been discussed since the beginning of MSRC's discussions on establishing a Health Cluster Economic Impact Work Group. The types of data that will hopefully be captured in creating

this tool are population, population age ranges by area, population density, workforce information and location of major employers, location of medical facilities and ownership, location of specialty practices, number of patients in facilities annually and what type of service, location of fire department rescue services, number of rescue calls annually and where they end up taking patients, number of doctors by area, Medicare and Medicaid by area, number of helicopter trips and where the patients are taken, disposable income of medical workers and where they are located. Additionally, data to collect for economic impacts in a defined region(s) are hospitals, doctors, pharmacies, health insurance companies, companies producing products and services for the industry, retirement/nursing homes, real property tax, etc. In the creation of this dashboard the team will try to reach out to other regions that have done similar work. To this end, one of the attendees at the last MSRC's meeting to explore the establishment of a Health Cluster Economic Impact Work Group, Mr. Tom McLoughlin a retired hospital CEO, has been reaching out through his various contacts to gather assistance/guidance. He recently provided the MSRC the name of an Oklahoma State University professor who currently runs this type of project.

Education Data Dashboard: \$30,000

The TCCLES is unable to contribute to this project due to other investments they need to make in their operation. Since the first dashboard discussion at the MSRC, a number of years ago, Executive Board members have discussed a possible creation of a dashboard regarding public education since this is the largest element of all county budgets. The creation of this dashboard is meant to be an aid to County Council members to more easily examine, track, and compare educational investment within their own county and compare across counties. The collection of such data will be challenging. The ESRGC will need assistance/input from the county councils. The ESRGC will reach out to various parties including state organizations.

The total investment for all the above is \$108,500. According the formula of how RMPF monies are divided as laid out in the legislation, the MSRC should receive at a minimum \$100,000; however, the MSRC may be notified in the near future the actual figure is \$111,133. Additionally, \$30,000 per dashboard is an approximation so all the suggested work should be able to be undertaken. The ESRGC has always been a valued and trusted partner so the MSRC is confident that any agreements entered into will be fulfilled.

Senator Eckardt made a motion to accept the RMPF budget investments as presented favorably, Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated all in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights, ayes have it. The motion carried unanimously and will be presented at the MSRC June 9, 2016 meeting for the full Council's consideration.

Updates/Discussion Items

Maryland Upper Shore Transit (MUST)

Mr. Warner stated that MUST Coordinator John General's health seems to be doing much better, but it is still unknown if he will be able to handle the coordination of MUST in the capacity he once did. In the meantime the coordination activities have been handled by the MSRC and the Handy Group. Ms. Deighan has been working with both

DCT and QAC to get updates done to both the print schedules and the website. Alex Handy has been tasked to increase his normal participation including outreach and awareness of the system.

Health Cluster's Economic Impact Work Group

Mr. Warner stated that on April 27 the MSRC convened a meeting to further the exploration of establishing a Health Cluster Economic Impact Work Group. The outcome of the conversation was to gather data to help educate people on the size and scope of the industry in the region. The Health Data Dashboard discussed under the RMPPIF budget will address this identified need.

Eastern Shore Food Hub / Chesapeake Harvest

Mr. Warner stated that he and Mr. Chase have had several meetings/conversations regarding Chesapeake Harvest, including conversations with representatives from Governor of Maryland's office, Maryland Department of Agriculture, and Farm Bureaus (Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot), as well as other parties.

On April 26, 2016 Mayor Willey facilitated a meeting between MSRC representatives (Walter Chase, Kurt Fuchs and Scott Warner) and Easton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC)/Chesapeake Harvest representatives at the Bartlett Pear in Easton.

The MSRC was informed that the EEDC was supposed to focus Chesapeake Harvest as a marketing initiative, but reviewing all the information that is available at this time, the intentions of the EEDC are not clear.

Al Silverstein, President and CEO of the Talbot County Chamber of Commerce and Easton Town Councilman, called Mr. Warner on Tuesday, May 24, 2016 to schedule a meeting with him and the President of the Board of Directors of the Easton Economic Development Corporation Herb Miller. The meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 3, 2016.

Mr. Warner wanted to confirm with the Executive Board as to whether he should stay engaged and monitor this initiative. The Board members unanimously agreed that Mr. Warner continue to be engaged as it is an important issue with the agricultural community.

Letters of endorsement sent by MSRC

Mr. Warner stated he wanted to remind the Executive Board of endorsement letters that they approved the Council send since they last met. The projects endorsed were:

- Maryland Rural Development Corporation (MRDC) – H1-B Tech Hire Partnership
- MRDC – Strengthening Working Families Initiative
- ESEC – Industry Sector Focus for the Eastern Shore

Copies of the letters were included in the Board members meeting packets.

Member comments/requests

None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.