

Minutes  
13, 2007

Mid-Shore Regional Council

June

Cambridge, Maryland

The Mid Shore Regional Council held their regularly scheduled quarterly meeting on June 13, 2007 at the Elks Lodge in Cambridge Maryland. Members in attendance included: Allen Nelson, Carolyn Spicher, Father LaBarge, Delegate Addie Eckardt, Delegate Richard Sossi, Delegate Jeannie Haddaway, Frank Narr Jr., Jeff Ghrist, Jerome Stanley, Mayor Rippons, Ricky Travers, Senator Colburn, and Russell Dize. MSRC staff members present were: Scott Warner and Terry Deighan. County Managers/Administrators present were: Andy Hollis. Economic Development Directors present were: Paige Bethke and Brad Broadwell. Also in attendance was Maryland's Department of Business and Economic Development Regional Representative Mindie Burgoyne. Several guests in attendance included John General of CBTRCE, Pat Mitchell of Maryland Broadband, Wen-Fei Uva the new Agricultural Development Specialist for the MSRC, Elizabeth Spahr of Horn Point Laboratories and a representative from the League of Women Voters of the Mid Shore.

### **Action Items:**

#### *Approval of Minutes*

In Chairman Nelson's absence, Vice-chair Mr. Travers called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Introductions were made and Mr. Travers moved to the first order of business which was Approval of the March 22, 2006 Minutes. Mayor Rippons made a motion to approve as written, Delegate Eckardt seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

#### *Treasurer's Report*

Mayor Rippons presented the treasurer's report for questions and approval; having no questions Mayor Rippons made a motion to accept the report as presented, Father LaBarge seconded the motion and the report was approved by unanimous consent.

#### *Approval of FY08 Scope of Work*

Mr. Warner presented the MSRC Scope of Work for FY2008 informing the Board the Executive Committee had met on May 31, 2007 to review/revise the Scope. He highlighted changes made to the document and asked for comments; after a brief discussion Father LaBarge made a motion to accept the Scope of Work for FY2008 as presented, Mayor Rippons seconded the motion and the Scope was approved by unanimous consent.

#### *Approval of FY08 Budget*

Mr. Warner presented the FY08 budget for discussion/approval also noting it has previously been reviewed by the Executive Board Committee on May 31<sup>st</sup>. Again he noted some changes from last year and asked for comments; being none Mayor Rippons made a motion to accept the budget as presented, Carolyn

Spicher seconded the motion and the budget was approved by unanimous consent.

## **Old Business**

### *Passing of HB61/SB440*

Mr. Warner informed the Board that the legislation that updates the Annotated Code of Maryland Article 20C which formed the MSRC, SB440 entitled Mid-Shore Regional Council – Membership was signed by Governor O’Malley on May 8, 2007.

### *Update on MSRC becoming an EDA Economic Development District*

Mr. Warner informed the Board that the MSRC office had received documents from Calvin Edghill, EDA Senior Community Planner; on May 29, 2007 that would enable them to become an EDD and that the MSRC staff had started to assemble the documentation requirements. One of the requirements necessary was a letter of support from the Governor which was forwarded to the Governor on April 12, 2007 from DBED Secretary David Edgerley.

### *Update on the effort to increase the state funding to the five Rural Regional Councils*

Mr. Warner explained that on May 4, 2007 the five Regional Council Executive Directors met with DBED Assistant Secretary Murray to inform him of the programs and operations of the five regional councils. Secretary Murray was very impressed at the scope of work, the diversity of issues addressed, and the ability of the councils to work together. At that time the Executive Directors encouraged him to support FY09 funding in the amount of \$200,000.

### *Update on Mid-Shore Regional Council projects*

Mr. Warner informed the Board of the tremendous progress to date of the Maryland Broadband Cooperative and introduced Mr. Patrick Mitchell, Executive Director of the Cooperative who highlighted some of the accomplishments and goings on to date including; On June 2, 2007 a ceremony was held to celebrate the completion of Phase 1 from NASA Wallops Island Facility to Salisbury University. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge is to be completed this month also a partnership with Gore in Cecil County is being completed this month as well. The pre-engineering is being done on the Harry Nice Bridge in Southern Maryland and in the Mid-Shore region. Another partnership with NavAir located on the Naval Air Station Patuxent River base is underway.

### *Rural Maryland Broadband Coordination Board*

Mr. Warner told the Board that on May 7, 2007 the Board approved federal funds to be issued to MdBC for a routine scheduled draw and that State funds are to be issued to MdBC to begin Phase 2.

### *Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)*

In Mr. Smyth’s absence Mr. Warner told the Board that the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center has 21 consultants (brain capital) to date, and that this brain capital is of interest to TEDCO who has asked ESEC to work with them allowing them to utilize their consultants. ESEC was not awarded the IRP in the first

round but will automatically be entered into the next round in July 2007. Operational funding for FY08 was approved for ESEC in Caroline and Dorchester Counties and they will also receive funding from a MAERDAF Grant. At this time funding is still pending from EDA and TEDCO.

#### *MUST (Maryland Upper Shore Transit)*

Mr. Warner asked Mr. General to update the Board on MUST. He informed them that the scheduling and asset allocation system using GPS positioning is about to enter the testing stage and that after three months of testing it should be complete. Also MUST has been working with the KFH Group and MTA on the Upper Shore Coordinated Transportation Plan the committee has been revising the plan over the last two months and the plan should be complete by fall. The plan covers Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot Counties and schedule booklets will be distributed by July in both English and Spanish.

#### *Workforce Issues Task Force*

Mr. Warner caught the board up on the three sub committees as follows: Child Care subcommittee-The MSRC staff is now getting quotes on the printing of the poster. We plan on distributing it with help of the Chambers of Commerce.

Foundations to Enter the Workforce subcommittee - "Statement of Work Ethic" has been endorsed by 49 companies throughout the Mid-Shore Region. MSRC is working with committee members to design an advertisement for the newspaper.

Conflict Management / Current Workplace Issues subcommittee - Mid Shore Mediation held its first Conflict Management Training on May 18, session 2 will be held on June 22, 18 people attended (max for the class was 20) 8 companies were represented and a second class will be held in the Fall. They hope to have at least two classes each year.

#### *Immigrant workforce / CASA study*

Members of the Immigrant Workforce Committee are in the process of interviewing local companies who already hire immigrants. The committee is also continuing to research other organizations around the country that are interfacing with immigrant workers.

#### *Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC)*

The MSRC first planned on having a GIS person(s) on staff at the MSRC office but then the MSRC, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore (TCC), and Salisbury University combined to form the ESRGC. It is housed at Salisbury University and the MSRC and TCC provide \$30,000 worth of funding each year (\$15,000 from each Council). The ESRGC is an organization that seeks to provide access to geographic information system (GIS) technology, data, technical support, and training to the local governments of Maryland's Eastern Shore. Projects in the Mid-Shore region receive a 50% reduction in charges because of the financial support of the MSRC.

### *Mid-Shore Business and Technology Incubator*

Mr. Warner was asked to facilitate a meeting of all possible funders by Renee Winsky (TEDCO) and Jim Henry (DBED) on 5/1/07 a meeting was held at Horn Point, attendees were: TEDCO, DBED, EDA, USDA Rural Development, MARBIDCO, Economic Development Directors from Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties and representatives of Horn Point Laboratories UMCES. John General (CBRTCE) and Mr. Warner designed an organization chart derived from the March 2004 Economic Adjustment Strategy.

### *Agricultural Economic Development Specialist*

Mr. Warner told the Board that on 5/10/07 USDA Rural Development gave the MSRC the okay to run the ad to fill the position as RBEG money was available. A job advertisement ran in the Daily Banner and Chesapeake Publishing papers & web site from 5/18/07 through 5/27/07. On June 1st grant documents were returned to the state to release the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) grant funds for the first installment worth \$12,000 (total grant is \$24,000). On June 5<sup>th</sup> MSRC received a letter approving USDA Rural Development RBEG funds for \$66,900. On June 6<sup>th</sup> a letter was sent to American Farmland Trust to release the Rauch Foundation grant of \$12,000. 12 resumes were received for this position. The Search Committee held a conference call on June 1<sup>st</sup> to review resumes and on June 11<sup>th</sup> interviews were conducted. As the search committee agreed unanimously on the candidate to be hired at this time Mr. Warner introduced Ms. Wenfei Uva who will be the new Mid Shore Regional Council Agricultural Development Specialist and will begin work on August 1, 2007.

### **New Business**

None

### **Other matters**

#### *Lease Agreement of MSRC office space*

Chairman Nelson asked Mr. Warner to explain to the Board why relocating the MSRC offices have become a necessity. Mr. Warner explained that on May 24, 2007 DBED/DGS informed MSRC that it wants to cut rental space to just one office – 220 sq. ft., loss of \$7,500 to MSRC. As a result MSRC located a new office space on Brooks Drive. It is build to suit and should be ready by end of June; it will include on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor 4 offices, conference room, kitchenette and a bathroom. The area also includes an extra room upstairs which will be used as a second conference room with a storage area. The option to rent out the extra two offices to DBED and CBRTCE would bring the lease amount for MSRC down to within the MSRC budget.

### **Member comments/requests**

None

### **Adjourn**

Mr. Nelson adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:10 p.m. by unanimous consent.