

The Mid Shore Regional Council held a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting on March 17, 2010 at the Talbot County Senior Center in Easton. Members in attendance included: Dirck Bartlett, Bill Brooks, Carolyn Spicher, Gale Nashold, Jerome Stanley, Kurt Fuchs, Maria D'Arcy, Walter Chase and William Cooper. County Managers/Administrators in attendance were Andy Hollis and Rick Barton. Economic Development Directors attending were: JOK Walsh, Paige Bethke, and John Mason representing Keasha Haythe. MSRC staff present was Scott Warner and Terry Deighan. Guests in attendance were: Michael Pennington, Executive Director of the TCCLES; Mindie Burgoyne of DBED; Fred Smyth of ESEC; Jack Tarburton, USDA State Director; Charles Cawley, USDA Farm Services Agency Maryland State Executive Director; Rachael McCullough of the Governor's office; Linda Prochaska of Senator Mikulski's office; Lee Whaley of Senator Cardin's office; Mike Thomas of Congressman Kratovil's office; Brad Powers, Shore Gourmet Board President; Memo Diriker of BEACON; Gabriela Roncal of BEACON; Darnell Dinkins, Kevin McWilliams, and Vivian Shade all of Dinkins Communications.

The meeting was called to order at 5:40 p.m. by Chairman Fuchs, introductions were made and Chairman Fuchs announced that he was holding proxies for the State Delegation representatives (Senator Colburn, Delegate Eckardt, and Delegate Haddaway); Mr. Hollis announced he was holding a proxy for Mr. Harrison and Mr. Barton announced he was holding proxies for both Mr. Layton and Mr. Ghrist.

### Action Items

The first order of business was approval of the December 10, 2009 minutes. Ms. Bethke pointed out on page 3 under Mistletoe Hall Project second to last line "FTA" should be "FAA". Being no more corrections Mr. Smyth made a motion to approve the minutes that was seconded by Ms. Spicher and was passed unanimously. The next order of business was ratification of the Executive Board November 18, 2009 Minutes. Mr. Bartlett made a motion to ratify the minutes as presented, Mr. Nashold seconded the motion and the minutes of the Executive Board of November 18, 2009 were ratified by unanimous consent. The next order of business was ratification of Executive Board December 21, 2009 Minutes. Mr. Nashold made a motion to ratify as presented, Mr. Chase seconded the motion and the minutes of December 21, 2009 Executive Board were ratified by unanimous consent. The next order of business was ratification of the CEDS document updated February 19, 2010. Mr. Warner stated that all of the MSRC members are also on the CEDS Committee and he feels it would be good if the MSRC ratified the Committee's actions. On January 6, 2010 the MSRC held a full CEDS Committee meeting

at the Talbot County Community Center at which time two projects were approved for inclusion in the document. The MSRC will submit the updated CEDS document to the EDA Philadelphia office once ratified. The updated document can be viewed on the MSRC website at [www.midshore.org](http://www.midshore.org), just click on “Reports & Publications”. Mr. Chase made a motion to approve ratification of the document, Mr. Bartlett seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously to ratify the updated CEDS document.

### Treasurer’s Report

Mr. Nashold presented the treasurer’s report pointing out the Council is on track with both yearly and monthly expenses as tracked on the Council’s financial graph charts. Being no questions or comments Chairman Fuchs accepted the reports as presented.

### Old Business

#### *Maryland Broadband Cooperative*

Dr. Memo Diriker was present to brief the MSRC on the planning activities that BEACON will be assisting with. Dr. Diriker along with Ms. Roncal had two handouts for the Council Members explaining that this was an on line survey that he would like for everyone to participate in and with the information collected BEACON would be better able to determine broadband need, especially in the mid-shore region. Dr. Diriker also stated that everyone will be getting notices regarding upcoming broadband planning meetings to be held in Cambridge. In addition Dr. Diriker took a few minutes to give a brief update on the GeoDASH Initiative before he and Ms. Roncal had to leave the meeting. Mr. Warner stated that there are currently 59 members of MdBC and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) round one application by MdBC was not awarded and One Maryland did not receive an award either. MdBC is considering a round two application and there have been extensive talks between MdBC and state elected officials regarding the support of a bond bill to help with a 30% match for the grant application. Some state officials are encouraging the MdBC and One Maryland group to apply together. The MdBC mapping and planning grant objectives are moving along well.

### Business and Technology Parks

#### *Caroline County*

Caroline County Administrator Rick Barton stated that Phase I is fully built out and Caroline Economic Development Corporation Executive Director JOK Walsh added that they are working with one prospect at a time and at this point are just waiting to see what happens.

#### *Dorchester County*

Mr. Warner stated Dorchester is working with all the stakeholders to progress through the EDA procedures. In Director Keasha Haythe’s absence,

Dorchester County Economic Development Business and Attraction Manager John Mason stated the tentative ground breaking is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup> and they already have several prospects for the site.

#### Infrastructure Related to the Commercialization of Denton

Mr. Warner stated that he took Dr. Anne Cavalier to tour the Denton waterfront on January 26<sup>th</sup> at which time they had a very productive dinner meeting at the Rural Life Museum with JOK Walsh, Ellis Davison, Kathy Mackel, and Andy Mackel. MSRC has been working with Denton Development Corporation through grant writer Jan Willis since the visit and a signed grant should be submitted in the coming weeks. Caroline Economic Development Corporation Executive Director JOK Walsh wanted to give thanks to Scott Warner for all his diligent help.

#### Mistletoe Hall Project & Regional Medical Facility

Mr. Warner stated that he along with Dr. Anne Cavalier visited both sites on January 27 with Mayor Willey, Maureen Scott-Taylor, and Paige Bethke. Ms. Bethke then gave a brief overview of the projects.

#### Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC)

ESEC Executive Director Fred Smyth stated that Shore Venture graduated its second class on January 13, 2010, 57 total people signed up for training in the first year. Many used this as a tool to save their existing businesses and Shore Venture did not anticipate this opportunity. An April class is being promoted beginning the third week in March at present 20 participants are expected for this class. Discussions continue between Chesapeake College and Wor-Wic Community College to discuss a strategy for applying for the Goldman Sacks funding program for entrepreneurship. Requirements are strict and ESEC is the only entity that could meet the requirements.

ESEC has four new businesses in the loan queue; one could be matched with Dorchester loan funds. If this applicant qualifies it would nearly bring the Dorchester funds to fully loaned and ESEC funds will be very low once again. ESEC should be concentrating on finding additional loan funds, this seems critical now since ESEC will not be able to assist all four businesses without the lendable capital and all four businesses look very promising.

In 2009 'brain capital' consulting met with over 100 businesses to assist them with growth issues and many with survival issues. Business used the 'brain capital' because of quick and out of the box solutions and also because the service was free, demand is greater than ever. At this time ESEC is concerned over the number of businesses that come to them just before they have to close, trying to get the word out to not wait for assistance is a priority.

Referrals to ESEC come from the Dorchester County Economic Development Office and from past businesses ESEC has assisted throughout the mid-shore region.

### Maryland Upper Shore Transit (MUST)

Mr. Warner gave the following updates to the Council. The scheduling and asset allocation system final report has still not been sent to FTA by MTA. The Maryland Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation meeting will be held in April at MDOT headquarters. JARC/New Freedom funding for 2011 is now available, proposals are due March 31, 2010. Federal Capital Grants under Section 5310 funding, deadline to submit applications to the regional coordinator John General is May 7, 2010 by 4:00pm. Maryland Senior Rides Program primary focus is to encourage and facilitate the development of volunteer transportation services for low-income to moderate-income seniors. Deadline to submit an application to MTA Office of Planning Statewide Programs Transportation Planner Michele Gardner is March 26, 2010. 10,000 copies of the bus schedules were printed earlier this month. BRAC Impact on Eastern Shore Commuting Patterns Study final report dated June 21, 2009 by the CBRTCE is still waiting for DLLR to closeout. Please remember that Delmarva Community Transit (DCT) is partnering with the Mid-Shore Mental Health System to work with the Veterans Outreach program to assist veterans with transportation, for more information contact DCT. On December 15, 2009 with the coordination of Easton Economic Development Director Maureen Scott-Taylor – John General and Scott Warner met with Easton’s Mayor Robert Willey and Town Manager Robert Karge to discuss the placement of bus stop signs around the Town of Easton; they were very interested and will be discussing the possibility with the town council. The bus advertising contract was awarded to Dinkins Communications Inc. at the beginning of February. Mr. Warner then introduced Dinkins Communications President Darnell Dinkins to introduce his company and show a PowerPoint presentation of advertising campaign.

### Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC)

Chairman Fuchs stated that the ESRGC is a partnership between the MSRC, TCCLES, and Salisbury University. Mr. Warner then updated the Council that the ESRGC facilitated a Mid-Shore GIS Committee meeting on December 16 at the Talbot Community Center. Mr. Mason also spoke about the assistance Dr. Mike Scott, the ESRGC, and the GeoDASH Initiative has given the Dorchester County Economic Development office regarding the design of GIS capabilities for its website.

### GeoDASH Initiative

Mr. Warner explained that the GeoDASH Initiative is a partnership between the MSRC, TCCLES, ESRGC, BEACON funded by DBED and EDA. DBED has continued its partnership for year two and the EDA planning grant for year two is nearing completion. The GeoDASH Team has given several presentations including a January 27 to the Maryland Senate Finance Committee in Annapolis where Dr. Anne Cavalier spoke on behalf of EDA; and Drew Vetter, Director, Agency Performance Measurement, DBED Office of the Secretary spoke on behalf of DBED. Mr. Warner has received great feedback from Senator Mac Middleton, Chairman of the Committee. On March 5 members of

the GeoDASH Team gave a presentation to the Eastern Shore Delegation after which the Delegation requested and used a poultry dashboard tools in their meeting with the Governor on the following Monday, March 8. On March 24 the GeoDASH Initiative will be presenting at the EDA Philadelphia Regional Economic Development Training Conference “Building Strong Economies through Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness.”

Mr. Warner also mentioned that the GeoDASH Initiative’s Economic Development and Transportation Planner Sarah Bunch will be presenting the completed feasibility study on needs, opportunities and challenges for the future of Eastern Shore transportation system and policy to the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) Building a Vision for Regional Transportation Committee.

### Shore Gourmet

Brad Powers, Shore Gourmet President of the Board of Directors and marketing consultant, opened by giving a big thank you to USDA for their help in funding this project, as well as acknowledging the Board of Directors: Bob Hutchison, Gale Nashold, Kurt Fuchs, Carolyn Spicher, Lin Spicer, and Wenfei Uva. He also stated that he is currently working with the Amish Farmers Market to possibly include Shore Gourmet items in an existing booth. Shore Gourmet (SG) is fast tracking several parts of the SG marketing strategy in order to generate results that will prove the efficacy of SG’s ability to generate results with the USDA grant. At present SG has retained a part-time person who is getting sales material together and learning product data in preparation to recruit new retail locations. Mr. Smyth added Shore Gourmet has created a marketing display; it is made up of wooden crates, which is to promote the feel of a farmer’s market. It includes a small refrigerator and/or freezer if needed. The units will be on loan to vendors purchasing product. SG is working on delivery of six small glass front refrigerators and freezers to occur before the end of March. The displays are only available to retailers buying a set amount of product. The purpose is to allow customers to spot SG products whenever they enter a retail outlet, to permit stocking the display to be more uniform and therefore easier to shop, and to standardize visuals in the promotion effort. Also a Chef’s panel was established that will meet once a month to give advice to new producers on what they can do to improve the product, on process for production, and to award a ‘seal of approval’ to the best products. The seal will be a tiny logo affixed to Chef Choice products. A new panel will be assigned every six months; the initial panel is three head chefs of The Inn at Perry Cabin, St. Michaels, Mitchum’s Steak House, Trappe, and Bistro Popular, Cambridge. First meeting was held in February 2010 at which time they reviewed four new products that SG is working to bring to market. Mr. Smyth added that beginning in April a cable television advertising campaign has also been designed to pull products through retail outlets running 30 second spots each ending with ‘Available Locations’. This is another way to reach out to value added producers who have viable products and are not aware of the SG program so they will contact SG. To let viewers see the SG standardize display and identify it when shopping and to personify the producers and SG to the

consumer. Hopefully this will also make getting new locations much easier if the retailer sees SG is helping sell products.

### New Business

None

### Other matters

Mr. Warner stated that the NADO Legislator of the Year Award was presented to Senator Benjamin Cardin. He along with Leanne Mazer and Mike Pennington presented Senator Cardin the award at the NADO 2010 Washington Policy Conference in Arlington, VA on Tuesday, March 2.

Chairman Fuchs also informed the Council that the MSRC received the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy's (ESLC) agricultural award at the ESLC annual conference held in February.

### USDA and Economic Development

USDA Farm Services Agency Maryland State Executive Director Charlie Cawley gave an overview presentation of the many programs USDA. These programs are distributed through two agencies: Rural Development and FSA (Farm Services Agency). They are a great resource for local jurisdictions and have a presence in every county in the US. At present they have put millions of dollars back into rural Maryland. Also present this evening was Mr. Jack Tarburton, USDA State Director, who echoed Mr. Cawley's enthusiasm of the programs available from USDA to the jurisdictions in Maryland. If anyone is interested there is a complete list of programs available from USDA, just contact them.

### Member comments/requests

Mr. Powers expressed his joy with the choice of venue for this meeting, stating the Talbot County Senior Center is a beautiful addition to the area and urged all present to take a tour of the facility and all that it offers. He also suggested inclusion of the feather fiber project to possibly be discussed at the next CEDS meeting.

Mr. Warner wanted to express his thanks and good wishes to Andy Hollis, who is resigning his position as County Manager as of the end of May. We wish him luck in his new position and many thanks for all he has done for the Council over the past several years.

### Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:20 p.m. by Mr. Smyth, seconded by Mr. Nashold and unanimously agreed upon.