

Tri-County Council
For the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland
Serving Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties

Tri-County Council Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2013

Sheree Sample-Hughes, Chair, called the meeting of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland to order on Wednesday, March 27, 2013, at EVO in Salisbury at 6:15 p.m.

Voting Members in attendance: Jerry Boston, Craig Mathies, Somerset County Commissioners; Rick Pollitt, Wicomico County Executive; John Hall, Wicomico County Council; Jim Bunting, Bud Church, Merrill Lockfaw, Virgil Shockley, Worcester County Commissioners; Jay Parker, Town of Princess Anne; Laura Mitchell, Salisbury City Council; Tracey Cottman, Pocomoke City Council.

Non-Voting Members in attendance: Renee Stephens, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development; Gerald Mason, Worcester County.

Mr. Virgil Shockley had Mrs. Louise Gulyas' voting proxy.
Mr. Gerald Mason had Mr. Jim Purnell's voting proxy.

A quorum was present.

Staff in attendance: Mike Pennington, Kristie Eberly, Brad Bellacicco, Kristen Kerchner and Milton Morris.

Guests in attendance: Patrick Mitchell and Tyler Patton, Maryland Broadband Cooperative; Scott Warner, Mid-Shore Regional Council.

As a quorum was not present at the December 19, 2012, meeting the approval of the minutes for the meeting of September 20, 2012, was tabled. On a motion from Mr. Church, seconded by Mr. Hall, the minutes for the meeting of September 20, 2012, were approved with a correction. On a motion from Mr. Mason, seconded by Mrs. Cottman, the minutes for the meeting of December 19, 2012, were approved as written. On a motion from Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Shockley, the minutes for the meeting of January 3, 2013, were approved with a correction.

Broadband Update

Mr. Patrick Mitchell, Maryland Broadband Cooperative (Mdbc), told the Tri-County Council that since his last update Mdbc has purchased a building in Salisbury for its corporate office and equipment storage. Fiber has been run directly into the building.

Mdbc currently has 74 members. As they have been expanding into other areas of the state they are starting to move into wireless for cell towers.

On the Eastern Shore they have been working to connect all the hospitals and colleges into the March 27, 2013
Tri-County Council Minutes
Page 2

fiber backbone. Peninsula Regional Medical Center in Salisbury, McCready Hospital in Crisfield and Wor-Wic Community College have not yet been connected.

The BTOP grant will be completed in August 2013. The State is scheduled to turn the fiber in Wicomico and Worcester counties over to MdBC in May.

Old Business

Lower Shore Workforce Alliance (LSWA) Update

Mr. Morris reported that at the end of the 3rd quarter of FY12, LSWA had trained 129 people. At the end of the 3rd quarter of FY13, LSWA had trained 89 people and may have another 10 or 12 before the end of the fiscal year. There has been a 30% reduction in the number that can be trained and a 5% reduction in funds from sequestration in the FY13 funding.

Shore Transit Update

Mr. Bellacicco reported that as of the end of January Shore Transit is under budget projections on expenses and over projections on revenue. The Annual Transportation Plan (ATP) for FY15 has been sent to the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) for review.

Shore Transit has purchased two buses that look like trolley cars from Ocean City. They are looking at using them for a seasonal run which would stop at points of interest in Worcester County near Ocean City, if interest can be generated from local businesses to support such an endeavor.

Mr. Bellacicco stated that Harkins Construction, who is the contractor for the maintenance facility, is currently three weeks ahead of schedule. Depending on the weather, the project could be completed by early June.

Shore Transit currently has positions open for drivers.

New Business

Water & Sewer for TCC Multi-Purpose Center

Mr. Pennington stated that an area for a bus wash was built into the maintenance facility building but it can't be hooked up to water as long as the property is on a well. We would need to connect to Salisbury's water lines, which run along Route 50 to Wor-Wic Community College. He has had preliminary discussions about this with Salisbury City Manager, John Pick. There have also been discussions with MTA about funding for the project since Shore Transit is the one that needs the public water service.

Solar Power for TCC Multi-Purpose Center

Mr. Pennington reported that we are still looking at options for solar power for the Multi-Purpose Center. As there is not sufficient usable property on the site, we are looking at leasing property near the airport for our solar panels. We are still in the early stages of exploring options and will keep the Tri-County Council informed of progress.

Draft FY14 Budget

Mrs. Kerchner reported that the first draft of the FY14 Budget was included in the meeting packet for review. This is only a draft as LSWA and Shore Transit will not find out how much funding they will be receiving until closer to the start of the new fiscal year. Any questions regarding the budget should be directed to her or Mr. Pennington.

Aerospace Study

Mr. Pennington announced that the Tri-County Council has received a \$50,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) for a study of the current aerospace capabilities and future potential for the region due to our proximity to Wallops Island Flight Facility. There were two responses to the Request for Proposal (RFP) and the contract was awarded to LJT. The first draft of the study has been received and the final draft is due May 1.

Lower Shore Tourism Committee

Mr. Pennington reported that the recent rocket launches from Wallops Island were the catalyst for the suggestion of the Tri-County Council forming a Regional Tourism Committee to enhance tourism during events in the region. Senator Jim Mathias has been asked to Chair the committee and he has agreed. On a motion from Mr. Shockley, seconded by Mr. Pollitt, the Tri-County Council unanimously voted to approve the formation of a Regional Tourism Committee.

Business Incubator – Hot Desks

Mr. Pennington reported that Hot Desks, a co-working entrepreneurial center, will be opening in a few weeks in the TCC Multi-Purpose Center. Mike Thielke with the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurial Center is the driving force behind the project and he hopes to have more Hot Desks locations on the Eastern Shore in the future.

Other Business

Mr. Pennington reported that the District Court of Maryland and the Department of Social Services have looked at the TCC Multi-Purpose Center for potential relocation space in the event of an emergency.

The Shore Transit Bus Road-e-o will be held on Sunday, April 7 at 11:00 a.m. in the parking lot of
March 27, 2013
Tri-County Council Minutes
Page 4

the TCC Multi-Purpose Center. The winners will compete in the Transportation Association of Maryland Bus Road-e-o in a few weeks. The Annual Employee Meeting will be held on April 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the Wicomico Youth and Civic Center. Tri-County Council members are welcome to attend both events.

For the second year in a row the Tri-County Council was given a safety award by Injured Workers Insurance Fund (IWIF). Only 20 companies in Maryland have received the award two years in a row.

Mr. Bellacicco distributed a press release on the increase in use of public transportation not only on the Lower Shore but throughout the nation. Shore Transit buses log over 2.5 million miles per year.

Mr. Pollitt talked about the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) planning to eliminate air traffic controllers at the Salisbury Airport due to sequestration. The airport would lose revenue from the military using the runways as they have to have a controller in the tower. Wicomico County has already sent a letter to our senators and congressman asking them to not eliminate controllers at the airport. Following discussion, on a motion from Mr. Pollitt, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell, the Tri-County Council unanimously voted to send letters to our senators and congressman in opposition to the FAA's plans for controllers at the Salisbury Airport.

Mrs. Mitchell asked about the status of the Maryland Bikeways Program grant for bike racks for our buses. Mr. Bellacicco responded that the grant requires certain specifications for the racks and we are having a problem locating racks that meet these requirements. As an alternative we are looking at having the bike racks installed prior to purchase of new buses. The bus manufacturers are able to get racks that meet the grant specifications.

There being no further business, on a motion from Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Church, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.