

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

Tri-County Council Meeting Minutes  
June 25, 2014

Jim Purnell, Chair, called the meeting of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland to order on Wednesday, June 25, 2014, at the Tri-County Council Multi-Purpose Center in Salisbury at 6:10 p.m.

Voting Members in attendance: Jerry Boston, Somerset County Commissioners; John Hall and Sheree Sample-Hughes, Wicomico County Council; Rick Pollitt, Wicomico County Executive; Bud Church, Louise Gulyas, Merrill Lockfaw and Virgil Shockley, Worcester County Commissioners; Senator Jim Mathias; Delegate Norman Conway; Laura Mitchell, City of Salisbury; Michael Pruitt, Snow Hill City Council

Mr. Shockley had Mr. Jim Bunting's proxy.

A quorum was present.

Staff in attendance: Mike Pennington, Kristie Eberly, Brad Bellacicco and John Donegan.

Guests in attendance: Scott Warner, Mid-Shore Regional Council; Dr. Michael Scott, Salisbury University/ESRGC; Bill Barnes, Eastern Shore Manufacturing Council.

On a motion from Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Church, the minutes for the meeting of April 23, 2014, were approved as written.

Dr. Michael Scott, with Salisbury University and the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC), spoke to the group about what ESRGC does. ESRGC was formed in 2004 by a partnership of the Tri-County Council, the Mid-Shore Regional Council and Salisbury University to assist local governments and non-profits through GIS. ESRGC has 10 to 20 student interns at any given time and after graduation most of them have continued to work in Maryland.

ESRGC has been working on remapping of Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas since 2008 and will be working on this project for several more years. They are finishing the Broadband Mapping project which will be ending in October 2014. They continue to expand their dashboard projects, which take large volumes of data and turn it into user friendly charts and graphs, for local and state government agencies.

Mr. Bill Barnes, with the Eastern Shore Manufacturing Council (ESMC), gave a brief overview of the purpose and goals of ESMC.

## **Old Business**

### **Shore Transit Update**

Mr. Bellacicco reported that Shore Transit's new routes will be starting on July 7. The routes have been changed based on passenger data. During the summer routes will be run about 1200 hours per week and about 700 hours per week during the winter. Fares will remain at \$3.00 for regular routes, the express routes will be \$5.00 and transfers will now be available for \$1.00.

The new summer trolley route running between West Ocean City, Ocean Pines and Berlin has been well received and the passenger count is increasing as people find out about it.

Mr. Bellacicco reported that an \$8.8 million budget for FY15 was submitted to the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). He has not been notified by MTA what the amount of the FY15 grant will be yet.

Due to the demand for service, age of the fleet and the hot weather, Shore Transit is having trouble keeping buses on the road. The two new minivans have arrived. They are equipped for wheelchair transport and are being used for Origin to Destination (OTD) service. There are also five small buses on order which are scheduled to arrive in October.

### **Line of Credit Extension**

Mr. Pennington reported that Shore Transit will be going into FY15 with a deficit of between \$200,000 and \$400,000. The rates for OTD service have been renegotiated with the county health departments and will go into effect July 1. Along with the changes to the fixed routes, Shore Transit's financial situation should improve in FY15.

Since MTA is historically slow to get grants out, Mr. Pennington asked the Tri-County Council to approve the extension of the temporary \$250,000 line of credit for 3 months to allow Shore Transit to continue to operate as usual until the funding arrives.

On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mrs. Gulyas, the Tri-County Council unanimously voted to approve the extension of the temporary \$250,000 line of credit for 3 months.

### **TCC Multi-Purpose Center Management**

Mr. Donegan reported that the construction of the Eastern Shore Regional Library (ESRL) space has been completed and they are moving in this week.

Mr. Donegan also reported that Maryland Broadband Cooperative (MDBC) installed fiber in the TCCMPC this week. He will be talking to the tenants about their internet needs and using the fiber.

The lease rate has been renegotiated with the largest building tenants and the lease rate for the TCC space has been increased starting July 1. These increases should now balance the building's annual budget and allow reserve funds for future repairs and upgrades.

### **Tawes Crab and Clam Bake**

Mr. Pennington noted that the Tawes Crab and Clam Bake is scheduled for July 16. The Tri-County Council will again be partnering with Somerset County Economic Development, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development and Maryland Broadband Cooperative for a tent at the event. There are some tickets available.

### **New Business**

#### **FY15 Budget - Draft**

Mr. Pennington reported that the draft FY15 budget was included in the meeting packet. There are no increases in funding for FY15 at this time. The draft was prepared with an increase in health insurance premiums in anticipation of a rate change in January 2015. He plans to have the final budget prepared for the September meeting, as funding amounts from MTA should be available by then.

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