

TRI-COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR THE LOWER EASTERN SHORE OF MARYLAND
SERVING SOMERSET, WICOMICO AND WORCESTER COUNTIES

Executive Board Meeting Minutes
April 28, 2011

Craig Mathies, 1st Vice Chair, called the meeting of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland Executive Board to order on Thursday, April 28, 2011, at the Tri-County Council office in Snow Hill at 6:00 p.m.

Voting Member in attendance: Jerry Boston, Somerset County; Rick Pollitt, Wicomico County; Senator Jim Mathias.

Non-Voting Members in attendance: Ted Shea, Wicomico County; Bob Hawkins, Pocomoke City Council.

A quorum was present.

Staff in attendance: Mike Pennington, Kristie Eberly, John Donegan, Riggan Johnson, Milton Morris and Pat Tiger.

On a motion by Mr. Boston, seconded by Mr. Pollitt, the minutes of the Executive Board meeting on February 17, 2011, were approved as written.

Old Business

New Facility Update

Mr. Donegan reported that demolition began on the building the beginning of April. The general contractor for Phase 1 of the building remodel, or all the areas not occupied by Shore Transit, is Joseph M. Zimmer, Inc. The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is in the process of reviewing the low bidder for Phase 2 which is the Shore Transit areas of the building. The Phase 3 Request for Proposal (RFP), which is for the site work and front parking areas, will be going out in a few weeks. He also noted that he is in negotiations with Allegany County for an excess generator.

Mr. Donegan noted that during the 2011 Legislative Session, Senator Mathias and Delegate Conway were able to get a bond bill in the amount of \$300,000 for the building renovation.

Mr. Donegan also noted that after the monthly status meeting with the contractor, which is held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, the building is open for tenant visits. If anyone would like to see the building at a different time, contact Mr. Pennington and he will arrange a site visit.

Shore Transit Update

Mr. Johnson reported that Senate Bill 402 and House Bill 431 - Motor Carrier Companies Local Public Transportation Systems Exemption from Motor Carrier Permit Requirement passed

during the 2011 Legislative Session. This action will remove transit from the Public Service Commission's regulation and allow transportation services that operate under the auspices of the Maryland Transit Administration or other state agencies as well as the federal Department of Transportation to avoid costly duplication in regulatory costs and still meet all necessary health and safety requirements.

Mr. Johnson reported that the fluctuation of fuel prices is still a concern. As of today, gas is at \$3.90 per gallon and diesel is at \$3.96 per gallon. At the end of the 3rd quarter, Shore Transit has used 65% of its fuel budget. Approximately 60% of fuel consumption is diesel, 26% is bio-diesel and 14% is gas.

Mr. Johnson reported that ridership through March was 277,211 rides and revenue is up. There have been changes made to the schedules to reduce costs. He received one phone call questioning the elimination of the Ocean Pines stop. There will be a public hearing on May 26 for the \$1 Saturdays fare change. MTA requires a public hearing for fare changes even if it is a reduction.

The redesigned website is a great success. It had over 3,000 hits in March. The most visited pages are Google transit and the schedule and stops. The average visit is about 4 minutes and they look at 5 pages.

Lower Shore Workforce Alliance (LSWA) Update

Mr. Morris reported that LSWA and HAWK have partnered for an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) maintenance training program. The first 45 day class has 13 students who will graduate in June and be placed locally. For the next class they are planning on targeting veterans. There are two more modules for this program, ground support and flying UAVs, which may be implemented depending on interest.

Mr. Morris reported that as of April 20, LSWA has 144 people in a training program. The most popular training continues to be CDL (Commercial Drivers License) and CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant).

Mr. Morris noted that summer youth program funding has been awarded to Somerset Board of Education, Worcester County Board of Education and Telemon.

Budget Update

Mr. Pennington reported that we are still waiting for more exact funding figures from the State for Shore Transit and LSWA. Funding is expected to be level for Shore Transit and there is a potential 10% cut in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding for LSWA. The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) funding has been increased from \$73,500 to \$100,000 for FY12.

Regional Visioning

Mr. Pennington reported that the Economic Development Administration (EDA), which provides funding for the Tri-County Council, requests that the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) be updated in depth every 5 years. We will be working with Wor-Wic Community College, BEACON at Salisbury University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore and the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce to engage community leaders in developing this regional strategic plan. Dr. Ray Hoy from Wor-Wic Community College has agreed to chair the regional visioning effort. There will be 4 to 5 meetings over the course of the next year with the first meeting in June. The plan should be completed in the spring of 2012.

New Business

Mrs. Tiger reported that the health insurance will increase 1.7 to 4.7% depending on the option chosen by the employee. There was no increase for the dental or vision insurance. The Maryland State Retirement Plan is increasing from 5% to 7% for the employee contribution but the employer contribution will remain at 5%.

Mrs. Tiger distributed the 2011-2012 Holiday Schedule for review and approval. On a motion by Mr. Pollitt, seconded by Mr. Boston, the Executive Board unanimously voted to approve the 2011-2012 Holiday Schedule.

Other Business

Mr. Pollitt reported he has been approached by PAC14, the local public access channel, about broadcasting more local government meetings. The channel is available on Comcast Cable TV and currently broadcasts Wicomico County Council and Salisbury City Council meetings. He asked if Somerset and Worcester counties would be interested in learning more about what PAC14 does and could offer the counties. Following discussion, the Executive Board asked Mr. Pollitt to contact PAC14 about doing a presentation at the Tri-County Council meeting in June.

Mr. Pennington reported that he was contacted by the Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council (LESHC) to see if the Tri-County Council would be interested in doing an agreement to provide office space in the new facility which LESHC would be able to use as matching funds for their state grant funding. Following discussion, the Executive Board decided that they were not interested in such an agreement at this time.

Mr. Pennington noted that due to the election outcome, the Water & Sewer Committee is in need of a chair. Anyone who is interested in chairing this committee, contact him.

Mr. Pennington reported that the administrative funding for the Local Management Boards (LMB) has dwindled over the last few years but there is still funding available for their programs. He was asked if the Tri-County Council would be interested in administering the LMBs. Following discussion, the Executive Board asked Mr. Pennington to research the LMB funding and determine if it would be feasible to bring them under the Tri-County Council and report his

findings at the Tri-County Council meeting in June.

There being no further business, on a motion from Mr. Boston, seconded by Mr. Pollitt, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.