

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

Tri-County Council Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2016

John Hall, Chair, called the meeting of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland to order on Wednesday, June 22, 2016, at the Riverside Grill in Pocomoke City at 6:30 p.m.

Voting Members in attendance: Jerry Boston and Randy Laird, Somerset County; John Cannon, Wicomico County; Ted Elder, Worcester County; Senator Jim Mathias; Delegate Charles Otto, Dennis Williams, Princess Anne; Laura Mitchell, City of Salisbury; Dale Trotter, Pocomoke City.

Non-Voting Members in attendance: Mindie Burgoyne, MD Department of Commerce

Mr. Boston had Mr. Charles Fisher's proxy. Mr. Laird had Mr. Rex Simpkins' proxy.

A quorum was present.

Staff in attendance: Mike Pennington, Kristie Eberly, Brad Bellacicco, John Donegan, Milton Morris and Becca Webster.

Guests in attendance: Tom "Bunky" Luffman, Delegate Carl Anderton's Office; Steve Rosser, Wicomico County Auditor; Scott Warner, Mid-Shore Regional Council.

On a motion from Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Boston, the minutes for the meeting of March 16, 2016, were approved as written.

Old Business

A. Shore Transit Update – Brad Bellacicco

The summer bus schedule has been implemented. It does not vary greatly from the winter schedule.

The Worcester County Health Department will be using a taxi service for out of county service beginning July 1.

Shore Transit is expecting the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to pay about \$800,000 in FY2016 funding requisitions in the next few weeks. The Department of Human Resources (DHR) FY2017 grant is being processed at the state level.

Bus advertising has gross sales of \$101,000.

June 22, 2016

Shore Transit will now have to comply with Federal asset management plan requirements. Instructions have yet to be received from the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA).

Shore Transit is expecting several small and medium size buses to be delivered this fall. The new buses will be converted to dual (gas and propane) fuel.

Shore Transit has 92 employees of which 56 are drivers. About 10 school bus drivers have been hired for the summer. Drivers with a Commercial Drivers' License (CDL) are paid \$13 per hour.

Phase III of construction, the connection to City of Salisbury water and sewer service, is still moving forward. The lines will cross the property across Route 50 from the Tri-County Council Multi-Purpose Center behind the Royal Farms store.

B. Lower Shore Workforce Alliance (LSWA) Update – Milton Morris

The LSWA funding has been increased to \$1.6 million for FY2017. There will still only be a small amount for in-school youth programs. The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) is continuing to put emphasis on out of school youth programs and therefore more funding.

Work is continuing, with input from the Advisory Board, on the 5 year plan which is due to the state in September. The plan will be posted on the LSWA website for 30 days for public comment.

Mr. Hall announced that Mr. Morris will be retiring on June 30. He thanked Mr. Morris for his work on behalf of the Tri-County Council and presented him a certificate in recognition of his retirement.

C. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) – Mike Pennington

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee reviewed and updated the CEDS for 2016. In 2017 the CEDS will be due for a more intensive review and update.

The Economic Development Administration (EDA), who requires the CEDS for funding consideration, requires that the Tri-County Council approve the CEDS. On a motion from Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Laird, the 2016 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was unanimously approved by the Tri-County Council.
June 22, 2016

D. Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) – Mike Pennington

The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) was created in 2006 but is funded for the first time in FY2017. Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) will receive about \$500,000 to grant to non-profits and government agencies and about \$100,000 will go to each of the five regional councils. The Tri-County Council will be using \$30,000 for a summer youth employment program and \$15,000 for an agricultural dashboard project in conjunction with the Mid-Shore Regional Council.

E. FY2017 Budget – John Donegan

The funding for Shore Transit from MTA that is shown in the budget is an estimated amount. Hopefully MTA will notify us of the actual funding amounts in the next few weeks. Shore Transit will pay off what it has borrowed from the line of credit by June 30 but will probably need to borrow again if MTA does get the grants to us soon. All other funding amounts shown in the budget are actual amounts.

On a motion by Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Elder, the Tri-County Council unanimously voted to approved the FY2017 Budget.

New Business

A. FY2017 Holiday Schedule – Mike Pennington

The FY2017 Holiday Schedule was included in the meeting packet for review and approval. On a motion by Mr. Elder, seconded by Mr. Boston, the Tri-County Council unanimously voted to approve the FY2017 Holiday Schedule.

B. FY2016 Dept. of Commerce Budget Amendment – Mike Pennington

The Maryland Department of Commerce's (DOC) grant requires that all budget line items be plus or minus 10% of the budgeted amount. We are making some adjustments to our budget to meet this requirement.

On a motion from Mrs. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Elder, the Tri-County Council unanimously voted to accept the changes to the FY16 DOC budget as presented.

C. Tawes Crab & Clam Bake – Mike Pennington

The Tawes Crab & Clam Bake is on July 20. The Tri-County Council is partnering with Somerset County Economic Development, Maryland Department of Commerce, June 22, 2016

Worcester County Economic Development and Maryland Broadband in a tent again this year. Tickets will be available for Tri-County Council members.

D. Smith Island Trip – Mike Pennington

In years past the Tri-County Council has organized visits to places of interest to the members such as Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Wallops Island and Dover Air Force Base. Mr. Pennington asked the members if they would be interested in visiting Smith Island in September rather than the usual quarterly meeting. Following discussion, the Tri-County Council members asked Mr. Pennington to organize a visit to Smith Island.

Other Business

Mr. Boston noted that Donnie Drewer with the State Highway Administration will be retiring in October after 55 years of service. Somerset County is asking for the support of the Tri-County Council to get a section of highway or a bridge named in his honor.

Following discussion, the Tri-County Council agreed to support this effort. The suggested areas to name in Mr. Drewer's honor were: Route 413, bridge on Route 13 crossing the Pocomoke River, Route 50 Bypass and Route 113 expansion

Mr. Pennington will contact the State Highway Administration and find out what the process is to do this.

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Boston, seconded by Mr. Laird, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.