

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

Executive Board Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2005

Louise Gulyas, Chair, called the meeting of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland Executive Board to order on Thursday, October 6, 2005, at the Greater Salisbury Committee office in Salisbury at 6:10 p.m.

Members in attendance: Sam Boston, Mike McCready and Charles Massey, Somerset County; Chip Dashiell and Marvin Long, Wicomico County; Tom Cetola and Jerry Mason, Worcester County; Delegate Bennett Bozman; Renee Stephens, DBED; Mike Pennington and Kristie Eberly, Tri-County Council. A quorum was present.

The following guests were also in attendance: Bob Hawkins, Pocomoke City Council, Gary Comgys, Salisbury City Council; Beth Whitelock, Tri-County Council; Rob Hart, Shore Transit; Melanie Pursel, Lower Shore Workforce Alliance.

On a motion by Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Dashiell, the minutes of the previous Executive Board meeting of July 28, 2005, were approved as written.

Old Business

Shore Transit Update

Mr. Hart reported that there were over 100 attendees at the Public Hearings. In the past there were usually only a couple of people at each hearing.

Mr. Hart reported that the Transit Subcommittee, appointed at the September 8 Tri-County Council meeting, has met. They are recommending that Shore Transit make some reduction in service, raise fares to \$1.50 and end the discount on student fares. The fares increase will take effect on October 17. Also on October 17 the express buses to Ocean City will end for the season. Other route reduction will be implemented on November 28. Some routes could be cut sooner due to a shortage of drivers. Shore Transit will review the effectiveness of these changes and report its finding to the Tri-County Council at their February meeting.

Mr. Hart also noted that there will be no fare changes for Demand Response service and according to ADA regulations ADA passenger attendants can not be charged a fare.

On a motion from Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Boston, the Executive Board unanimously approved the implementation of the recommendations from the Transit Subcommittee.

Mr. Hart noted that the price of fuel is still of great concern. Depending on the price increasing more or only slightly decreasing there could be a \$200,000 deficit in the fuel budget for the year.

Mr. Hart reported that for FY06-07 Shore Transit is considering asking the counties to decide how much Demand Response service they want. Fixed Routes would remain the same in order to service all counties equally. A feasibility study is being done for a centralized regional transit operations center. The City of Salisbury has asked that the transfer point located beside the call center be moved to another location.

Mr. Hart reported that he has received many requests to reinstate Route 15 in Berlin. This is under review and will depend on the budget and the route's rider and income viability.

Mr. Hart reported that Nextel is quoting on a real time vehicle tracking and camera system for the buses. Currently the buses are using radios which do not work in all areas of the region.

LSWA Update

Mrs. Pursel, reported for Mr. Corbin, that the Youth Services program is being redesigned due to funding cuts and increases in performance standards. Programs will now be at the One Stop Job Market rather than the programs being run by Shore-Up and the counties' Boards of Education. Funding and program responsibility will be removed from Shore-Up on December 31, 2005, and from the counties' Boards of Education on June 30, 2006.

Mrs. Pursel noted that 98 people had received Occupational Skills Training since July 1.

Mrs. Pursel reported that Mobile One Stop Job Market is currently in Gulfport, Mississippi helping with hurricane relief for the disabled. The MOS's expenses for this trip are being paid by the Federal Government.

Mrs. Pursel distributed copies of the Career Guide and talked briefly about the career information it contains.

Human Resources

Mrs. Whitelock reported that she is having trouble finding qualified drivers to fill weekend and part-time shifts. Drivers need a CDL Class B with passenger endorsement license. She has met with Wor-Wic Community College, who currently has a training program for CDL Class A, about possibly starting a new training program.

Mrs. Whitelock reported that in conjunction with Healthy U, employees have access to a general health screening program.

Mrs. Whitelock suggested that the Tri-County Council appoint three of its members to a Human Relations Committee. The Human Relations Committee would handle such items as salary issues, retirement issues, benefit issues and the Executive Director's annual review. Following discussion, on a motion from Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Boston, the Executive Board unanimously voted that a Human Relations Committee was not needed. All Human Resources
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issues are to be brought before the Executive Board and if a decision is needed before the next Executive Board meeting then the Chair is to be consulted.

Mrs. Whitelock reported that in response to the increase in gas prices the IRS has increased the mileage reimbursement rate to .485 per mile until December 31, 2005. The Tri-County Council currently pays .40 per mile. On a motion from Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Long, the Executive Board unanimously approved raising the mileage reimbursement rate to .48 per mile.

Joint Meetings with Other ES Regional Councils

Mr. Pennington reported that the Upper Shore Regional Council has taken the lead on this year's meeting which will be held at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club in Stevensville on December 5. The Tri-County Council will hold its quarterly meeting from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Following lunch Congressman Wayne Gilchrest will address the group and there will be a question and answer session with the State Legislators. The Executive Board meeting scheduled for December 8 is cancelled and if there is a need the Executive Board will meet prior to the Tri-County Council meeting on December 5.

New Business

Citizenship Award

Mr. Pennington reported that the nominees for this year's Citizenship Award are Three Lower Counties Community Services (TLC), Peggy Bradford of MAC and the Salvation Army. Following discussion, on a motion from Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Long, the Executive Board unanimously chose Peggy Bradford as the recipient of the 2005 Citizenship Award.

The 2020 Rural Maryland Prosperity Advancement Fund

Mr. Pennington reported that Steve McHenry of the Rural Maryland Council is asking for the Tri-County Council's support of this item. Following discussion the Executive Board agreed they are interesting in supporting this but it needs to go before the Tri-County Council for a decision.

Maryland Rural Summit

Mr. Pennington reported that the Maryland Rural Summit will be on October 27 and 28 at WISP Resort in Garrett County.

Legislative Reception

Mrs. Gulyas reported that the Legislative Reception will be held on February 2, 2006, at the Loew's Hotel in Annapolis. The Tri-County Council meeting will be held prior to the Reception at 3:00 p.m. She noted that we are still working on being able to serve real oyster fritters to the members of the Legislature.

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Other Business

Mr. Pennington noted that the structure of the Wicomico County government will be changing after the 2006 election with the addition of a County Executive. The legislation to create the Tri-County Council and the by-laws do not allow for the Wicomico County Executive to be a member. Following discussion, the Executive Board asked Mr. Pennington to research the Tri-County Council's options for handling this change and report back to the Executive Board.

Mr. Pennington reported that the Nominating Committee met prior to the Executive Board meeting and will be presenting the following slate of officers for 2006 to the Tri-County Council.

Chair – Mike McCready

1st Vice Chair – Chip Dashiell

2nd Vice Chair – Tom Cetola

3rd Vice Chair – Sam Boston

Secretary – Marvin Long

Treasurer – Bud Church

At-Large – Delegate Bennett Bozman

On a motion from Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Long, the Executive Board unanimously approved the nominations for officers for the Tri-County Council for 2006.

There being no further business, on a motion from Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Cetola, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.