

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

Tri-County Council Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2006

Mike McCready, Chair, called the meeting of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland to order on Thursday, February 9, 2006, at the Loew's Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland at 3:05 p.m.

Members in attendance: James Ring, Somerset County Commissioners; Gail Bartkovich, Marvin Long, Stevie Prettyman, Wicomico County Council; Sonny Bloxom, Judy Boggs, Tom Cetola, Bud Church, Louise Gulyas, James Purnell, Virgil Shockley, Worcester County Commissioners; Charles Massey, County Administrator, Somerset County; Ted Shea, Administrative Director, Wicomico County; Gerald Mason, Chief Administrative Officer, Worcester County; Danny Thompson, Crisfield City Councilman; Bob Hawkins, Pocomoke City Councilman; Mike Pennington, Tri-County Council Executive Director; and Kristie Eberly, Tri-County Council Office Manager. A quorum was present.

The following guests were also in attendance: Rob Hart, Shore Transit; B.J. Corbin and David Donohoe, Lower Shore Workforce Alliance; Jo-Ellen Mason-Foley, Anne Scott and Beth Whitelock, Tri-County Council; Jim Rzepkowski, Renee Stephens and Emily Tobias, DBED; Robert McCready, Town of Princess Anne; Dr. Memo Diriker, BEACON at Salisbury University; David Jenkins, Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland; Brad Miller, Senator E.J. Pipkin's Office; Steve McHenry, Rural Maryland Council; Jerry Redden, Worcester County Economic Development; Butch Walters, Deal Island/Chance Volunteer Fire Department.

On a motion from Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Shockley the minutes to the previous meeting of December 5, 2006, were approved as written.

## **Old Business**

### **Shore Transit**

Mr. Hart reported that the 5 Year Transportation Plan has been completed. The feasibility study for the transit operations center has also been completed. The feasibility study shows that the best locations for the operations center are in the City of Salisbury or south of Salisbury near the Somerset County line. Approximately 5 acres are needed for both the building and bus lot. Following discussion and questions, on a motion from Mr. Shockley, seconded by Mr. Cetola, the Tri-County Council unanimously approved that Mr. Hart proceed with a search for property in the areas recommended in the feasibility study for the transit operations center.

Mr. Hart reported that expenditures are on budget through December 2005.

## **LSWA Update**

Mr. Corbin introduced the Mr. David Donohoe, Chair of the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance Board.

Mr. Corbin distributed a summary on possible program reductions which will be necessary if the WIA funds are cut \$300,000 as projected. The intensive programs, such as GED and ESOL, have been eliminated in earlier funding reductions. Now the CORE programs, such as assessment testing and resume assistance, will need to be cut in order to continue to fund training. Some local match from the counties will probably be needed.

The rent for the One Stop Job Market is about \$14,000 per month. The One Stop Job Market partners are going to be asked to pay the rent for the common areas rather than LSWA paying all of it. LSWA is considering purchasing the One Stop Job Market building.

## **Human Resources Update**

Mrs. Whitelock distributed a handout which outlined the progress of the Human Resources department over the last two years. Staff for all divisions of the Tri-County Council has increased over 60%. An employee Safety and Health Committee and an Accident Review Board have been formed. An Employee Wellness Program was formed and a Wellness Expo was held at the annual Tri-County Council Employee Meeting. Employee training and development has increased in all divisions. Some results of these initiatives include Worker's Comp premiums have been reduced, preventable accidents and "at fault" accidents have been reduced, health insurance premiums have been reduced and employees are more physically active and more conscious of their health.

## **Committee Updates**

### **Regional Healthcare Committee**

Mrs. Gulyas reported that committee met in January at which time Wor-Wic Community College announced that it had signed an agreement with the University of Maryland Dental School to begin a dental hygiene training program on the Eastern Shore in the Fall of 2006. The Healthcare Committee will be considering ways to help with the nursing shortage at their next meeting.

### **Water & Sewer Committee**

Mrs. Bartkovich reported that the Water & Sewer Committee held a Bio-Solids Conference in January that had about 30 attendees. As a result of this conference she has requested the sludge reports for the region's wastewater treatment plants and some other data from the

Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Once this information is received, committee members will determine what steps they want to take next.

### **Telecommunications Committee**

Mr. Shockley reported that the Lower Shore Broadband Cooperative has 13 of 19 antennas up and functioning and about 150 customers on the system. He is meeting with representative of DBED this evening to discuss the broadband bill currently in the legislature.

### **CEDS Committee**

Dr. Memo Diriker reported that BEACON had been contracted with to completely restructure and update the CEDS document for 2006. A small group of committee members has been working with BEACON for several months to determine what information should be included in the CEDS document. As the first draft has been completed and copies are available for Tri-County Council members, he reviewed a few of the major changes.

### **GIS Committee**

Mr. Pennington reported that the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Center (ESRGC) has been extremely busy working on jobs for all areas of the Eastern Shore. The GIS Committee will be meeting again in March.

### **Foreign Trade Zone Feasibility Study**

Mr. Pennington reported that the Foreign Trade Zone Feasibility Study has been completed and the executive summary was included in the meeting packet. He has met with the counties' economic development directors about the results of the study and for now they plan to use the study information as a marketing tool.

## **New Business**

### **2006 Legislative Agenda**

Mr. McCready reviewed the 2006 Legislative Agenda which includes the following:

- Public Transportation Funding
- Fully Fund Highway Maintenance
- Workforce Program Funding
- Protect Aging Department Funding
- Broadband

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There being no further business, on a motion from Mr. Cetola, seconded by Mr. Church, the meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m.