



UPPER SHORE Regional Council

FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

August 16, 2019

MACo Summer Conference

Council Members in Attendance:

Bill Coutz, Cecil County Councilman
Jackie Gregory, Cecil County Councilwoman
Bob Meffley, Cecil County Councilman
Al Miller, Cecil County Councilman
Bob Jacobs, Kent County Commissioner
Ron Fithian, Kent County Commissioner
Tom Mason, Kent County Commissioner
Chris Corchiarino, Queen Anne's County Commissioner
Jack Wilson, Queen Anne's County Commissioner
Jim Moran, Queen Anne's County Commissioner

Guests:

Jim Massey, Cecil County Council Manager
Charlotte Davis, Rural Maryland Council Executive Director
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Development Representative, Dept. of Commerce
Jean Fabi, Queen Anne's County, Economic Development Office
Jamie Williams, Director, Kent County Economic Development Office
Shelley Heller, Administrator, Kent County

Staff:

Susan O'Neill, USRC Executive Director
Janice Palmer, USRC Executive Assistant

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Meffley called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone and asked for self-introductions. There were 18 in attendance, 9 of which were voting members. A quorum was declared.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the June 12, 2019 Full Council Meeting. Commissioner Jack Wilson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bob Meffley. Motion passed, all in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

New Member Confirmation: Chairman Meffley requested that Rich Taylor, Mayor of Chesapeake City, be nominated as the municipal representative of Cecil County on the Council, replacing Mayor Joe Zang of Cecilton. Commissioner Jack Wilson seconded, motion passed, all voted in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

- **PNC Foundation Grant:** Susan reported that USRC did not meet the requirements of the PNC Foundation Grant, specifically, USRC has never been audited. The Tri County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore (TCCLES) will work with USRC to resubmit the application, and basically be a pass through for the application on behalf of Cecil, Kent and QA's counties.
- **End of Year Reports:** Susan is preparing the FY19 End of Year Reports for the Department of Commerce and will present them to the Executive Board at the next Executive Board meeting.
- **SLF Workshop:** USRC, in partnership with the Cecil Extension Office and Cecil Office of Economic Development put on a workshop regarding the Spotted Lantern Fly. Video of the workshop continues to be edited and will be placed on the USRC web page when completed, as well as distributed to regional partners.
- **IP Workshop:** Susan is working with the Cecil County Small Business Librarian and will partner with Washington College to present an Intellectual Property Workshop, scheduled for November 7, 2019 at Cecil College. The Kent County Office of Economic Development is also presenting an IP Workshop scheduled for September 19, 2019 at their Hot Desk location.

NEW BUSINESS

- **County Updates:** Chairman Meffley opened the floor for county updates:
 - Queen Anne's County continues to see an increase in traffic now that the 301 bypass has been opened. There have been 4 accidents at the Rt. 405 & 301 intersections. 301 has now become

the preferred route for Hazardous material. QA's Department of Emergency Services will need to upgrade their equipment and materials to be prepared for a HAZMAT incident. Several "J turns" have been implemented and are working well.

- Kent County is dealing with the closure of Price Road. Councilman Meffley reported that Price Road may be extended to 301 along with the installation of a gate. Only local farmer's and Emergency Vehicles will have access to the gate. It was suggested that Wilson Road may be closed in order to catch the State Highway of Delaware's attention.
- Cecil has had a fatal accident at one of the at grade cross overs. It was reported that two school buses cross over 301 twice a day.
- It was reported that the Wilmington Port is undergoing a renovation which should also result in an increase in traffic on Rt. 301.
- Commissioner Jack Wilson suggested that the Rural County Coalition take the Rt 301 traffic issues on as a priority for the 2020 Legislative Session. Nine of the 16 county members are on the Eastern Shore. A coalition of the Eastern Shore Counties would have an impact and catch the attention of the media. It was suggested to bring the idea of a coalition up at the Joint Council Luncheon, following the board meeting.
- A motion to bring the idea of a creation of an Eastern Shore Coalition up at the Joint Council luncheon was proposed by Jack Wilson. It was seconded by Chris Corchiarino. Motion passed, All in Favor.
- It was also suggested to partner with MML, who has an Eastern Shore Chapter, on the 301-traffic issue.
- Shelley Heller reported that a portion of our Eastern Shore population has a distrust of the federal government and may not be available for the 2020 Census count. The Complete Count Committees are reaching out to faith-based communities, ag communities and county fairs to encourage all to be counted. Our population numbers effect grant money, and vaccination preparedness. John Watson of Easton is our Census representative.
- Shelley also updated the board on the Transportation Task Force, a committee of employers, nonprofits, and transportation representatives. The task force is tasked with adequate, reliable and affordable transportation for Kent & QA's counties.
- Jack Wilson reported on Project Bright Future: Project Bright Future is a committee of Eastern Shore representatives tasked with community outreach for the implementation of a regional CTE School. An information night has been scheduled for September 25th at Chesapeake College. Senator Rosapep has agreed to sponsor legislation similar to last year's bill.
- Bob Meffley reported on the Cecil Farm Museum. The Cecil Farm Museum, in partnership with the Cecil School of Tech, has converted a barn into a classroom, with the intention of making it a regional museum. Kent County and QA's Farm Bureau's have agreed to work with the Cecil Farm Bureau. Paul Rickert of the Extension Office is working on grant applications. USRC will also be supporting the regional effort.
- Jackie Gregory reported concerns with the long-term sustainability of local Fire Companies and the inability to collect reimbursement money for opioid overdoses and victims with no insurance. Open discussion resulted in suggestions for grant writers and connecting with Steve Schuh for guidance.

End Year Review: At the request of Chairman Meffley, Director Susan O'Neill reviewed the accomplishments for FY19. Several, but not all accomplishments include:

- Board meeting attendance has greatly increased.
- Addition of a new board member - Charles Rhodes – municipal representative for Queen Anne's Co.
- Our regional partners have included us in planning meetings: Rural Maryland Council, Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, Maryland Department of Commerce, and Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Our branding efforts have improved with the implementation of our new logo and new website.
- We now have legal counsel, as well as webpage maintenance and accountants on retainers. Our accounting firm, Weyrich, Cronin & Sorra have reviewed our financials, and aligned our accounting reports with our workplan.
- We have two loan acceptances through our Ag Equity Incentive Matching fund in partnership with MARBIDCo.
- Upper Shore Regional Council has supported tourism in each of the three counties as well as economic development support through EMSi database access.
- We have supported Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore with sponsorship support for the Taste of the Eastern Shore event.
- Worked with local dairy farmer to provide cheese for the T.O.T. E. S. event.
- Advertising support for the Kent County Hot Desks.
- Grant support for workforce development through the Susquehanna Workforce Network.
- Support for QA's outreach for a CTE program.
- Partnered with Cecil Ag and MD Extension Office to host a workshop on the Spotted Lanternfly.
- Partnered with Rural Maryland Council to increase awareness of rural needs during the 2019 Legislative Session.
- Assisted Kent County United Way with transportation study.

STAFF UPDATE: The staff update was placed inside the back cover of the BOD book for review.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further discussion, a motion was requested for adjournment. Bill Coutz made the motion. Councilwoman Jackie Gregory seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:49 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Palmer

USRC Executive Assistant