



UPPER SHORE Regional Council

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2020

Chestertown Visitor's Center Conference Room

Council Members in Attendance: Bob Meffley (Chairman), Cecil County Councilman
Tom Mason (2nd Vice Chair), Kent County Commissioner

Via Conference Call: Jack Wilson (1st Vice Chair), Queen Anne's County Commissioner
Chris Corchiarino (Secretary), Queen Anne's County Commissioner
Jackie Gregory (3rd Vice Chair), Cecil County Councilwoman

Guests: Jim Massey, Cecil County Council Manager

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

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Meffley called the meeting to order at 4:08 pm. He welcomed everyone and declared a quorum.

II. REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the November 20, 2019 Executive Board Meeting. Jack Wilson motioned for the minutes to be approved, Tom Mason seconded the motion. All in favor.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Datastory demo:** Susan gave an overview of Datastory, a company in Baltimore that can help with data imaging to be used as a recruitment tool for economic development. USRC just signed a contract for three licenses, one for Kent, Queen Anne's and USRC. (Cecil County already has a license). Susan introduced Andy Furtado via a "Zoom Meeting" platform. Andy gave a quick review of the Datastory platform, highlighting MapDash, a tool with exceptional layers of data

that can be used for research with an end result of connectivity between people, places and businesses.

B. Cecil Farm Museum: Susan explained that a vote is required of the board members to change the Cecil Farm Museum budget allotment to a reimbursable grant. If money is held and not spent within the fiscal year the state will not look kindly on the delay. USRC would like to have a MOU written up by our lawyer and signed by the Cecil Farm Museum representatives. This gives them more time to document their spending requests. Bob Meffley offered to speak with Mel Bacon and see where they are in their endeavor to tap into water lines. A motion was made by Jack Wilson and seconded by Chris Corchiarino to enter into an MOU and change the funding to a reimbursable grant.

C. EDA Meeting: Susan will be attending a conference call with Alma Plummer to review the USRC's CEDs history, and whether or not any of the past study can be used going forward. Both Cecil and Kent County have shown interest in the study, in hopes of going after federal funding.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Upper Eastern Shore Coordinated Transportation Plan:** The Upper Eastern Shore Coordinated Transportation Plan was approved and voted upon at the USRC Annual Meeting on December 4, 2020. Dan Dalton of KFH Group requested that the minutes of the meeting be included along with a letter of approval from USRC. Susan did not want to keep the KFH Group waiting and asked that the Executive Board ratify the Full Council minutes rather than wait until the next Full Council meeting in June. A motion to ratify the minutes and send a letter was made by Tom Mason and seconded by Jack Wilson. All were in favor. Susan will send the minutes and letter this week.
- B. Upper Shore Industry Cluster Report:** Susan reported that the report has been finalized and shared with the Economic Development Directors of Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's Counties. We will post the report to our website. A copy of the report can be printed and sent to any who request it.
- C. Maryland Rural Summit:** Janice reported that the RMC's Rural Maryland Summit was a big success with many breakout sessions. USRC was a Casselman Bridge Sponsor (\$1000).
- D. Ethics Forms:** Janice reminded board members that their ethics forms are due April 30, 2020. USRC board members are required to file ethics forms with the state. The commission has reached out to USRC to help keep our board members in compliance. We will send reminders to our board members when each filing is due.

V. FINANCIALS

Two statements are enclosed in today's packet. A profit and loss statement for the FY20 period as well as a profit and loss for the period December 1, 2019-February 19, 2020.

- VI. **Letters of Support:** Susan informed the board that a letter of support was sent to Senator Guzzone regarding SB397 Sales and Use Tax and Personal Property Tax Exemption for Data Centers. Susan discussed SB540/HB999 the Rural Broadband for Eastern Shore Act of 2020. Motion was made by Tom Mason and seconded by Jackie Gregory to send a letter of support regarding the bills. Jackie Gregory suggested we send letters of support for HB1485 and HB1491 both asking for reimbursement of local firefighters transporting patients to hospitals. Discussion followed on how many bills were written regarding this reimbursement, and if several of them would be combined. More research is required prior to sending letters of support.
- VII. **Staff Reports:** Staff reports were placed, along with an acronym key, in the back pocket of the board books.
- VIII. **County Updates:**
- A. Queen Anne's County: Jack Wilson announced that Project Bright Future will be receiving an award from MEDA at the MEDA Annual Conference in May. Chris Corchiarino will be testifying tomorrow on the local bill requesting permission to handle traffic in Queen Anne's county during peak travel times.
 - B. Kent County: Tom Mason informed Susan that the Kent County Fairgrounds Committee will be presenting to the commissioners on March 3 at 6pm. He asked if USRC could help with funding requests for the construction of new buildings. Susan was asked to get in touch with Josh Phillips.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion, Tom Mason made a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Chris Corchiarino seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Palmer

USRC Executive Assistant