



UPPER SHORE Regional Council

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 20, 2022

Hybrid: Virtual & In Person

Chestertown Visitor's Center Conference Room

Council Members in Attendance: Ron Fithian, Kent County Commissioner (In Person)
Tom Mason, Kent County Commissioner (In Person)
Chris Corchiarino Q.A.'s County Commissioner (Virtual)
Jack Wilson, Q.A.'s County Commissioner (Virtual)
Bob Meffley, Cecil County Councilman (In Person)

Guests: Jim Massey, Cecil Council Manager

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

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- i. Board Chairman Chris Corchiarino welcomed everyone.
- ii. Each board member received a packet containing the Meeting Agenda, February 23, 2022, Executive Board Meeting Minutes, Treasurer's Report, and a copy of the power point presented in this meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- i. Chair Corchiarino requested a motion for the approval of the February 23, 2022, Executive Board Meeting Minutes. Ron Fithian motioned approval: Bob Meffley provided a second. All were in favor.

III. CHECK FRAUD

- i. Executive Director Susan O'Neill provided a power point outlining a timeline of events regarding the fraudulent use of USRC checks. The timeline showed the first contact notifying Susan of a fake check, steps taken by Susan and Shore United Bank to protect the USRC checking and bank accounts. As of this report, we are aware of 18 checks mailed to people, most connected to Craig's List and eBay purchases. Photos of fake

checks were shown for comparison. The local Sheriff's office and Secret Service have been notified. The USRC board discussed several actions, and the following resolutions were voted upon:

A motion by Jack Wilson was made to approve the actions taken by Executive Director Susan O'Neill including closing the compromised account and opening a new account. A second was provided by Tom Mason. All were in Favor.

During the pandemic the use of a second signature on all checks was waived. It was agreed upon that reinstating the use of a second signature on all checks was warranted. Both board officers Bob Meffley and Ron Fithian have signature approval. Further discussion resulted in no need for a resolution to reinstate two signatures.

IV. ICS SERVICE

Executive Director Susan O'Neill provided information on Insured Cash Sweeps (ICS); a service used by banks that are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Financial institutions that offer the service can place the deposits received from customers in excess of \$250,000 into interest-bearing accounts at other FDIC-insured banks in the ICS network. Susan recommended that USRC join this program through Shore United Bank. A motion to utilize the ICS service by Shore United Bank was offered by Jack Wilson and seconded by Ron Fithian. All were in favor.

V. MARYLAND RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

Susan reviewed the known parameters of the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund, along with a preliminary timeline provided by the Department of Commerce. Each Tri County Council will receive \$10 million to drive significant economic impact to rural communities. Commerce expects to have more details out to the Tri County Council's the first week of May. Although there are many unknowns, some decisions can be made now in hopes of laying the groundwork on how the process will work. Director O'Neill provided several recommendations; each were discussed and approved by the board:

- Motion made by Jack Wilson to set the distribution of \$2.9 MM per county and \$1.3MM for regional projects. The motion was seconded by Ron Fithian. All were in favor.
- Motion by Tom Mason clarifies that requests made by municipalities and non-profits would be handled by the respected Counties. It was also agreed that Counties will present proposals to USRC through their Economic Development Offices. A second was provided by Jack Wilson. All were in favor.

Parameters/questions for those seeking money will be flushed out in the next USRC Board meeting scheduled for May 18, 2022.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- i. FY23 Budget: Director O'Neill reminded the Board that the budget will need to be finalized and voted upon at the June 15, 2022, Executive Board meeting. Jack Wilson

asked if any preliminary numbers were available. Susan will get them prepared as soon as possible and distribute them out to the board members. All suggestions, requests and recommendations are due to Susan by May 19, 2022.

- ii. Employee Contract: Susan reminded the board that her three-year contract ends at the end of June. The board asked for Susan and Janice to leave the room so that they could discuss contract renewals. Per the executive board, Susan O'Neill and Janice Palmer will each receive a three-year contract renewal and a 6% raise.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Susan received a report from the Log Steam Vacuum project late today and will update everyone at the next board meeting.

VIII. TREASURERS REPORT

- i. Susan summarized the treasurer's report and asked for a motion to pass. Jack Wilson motioned, and Bob Meffley seconded. All were in favor.

IX. UPDATES

All counties reported working on and wrapping up their FY23 budgets. Queen Anne's is also wrapping up their Comprehensive Plan.

X. ADJOURN

- i. With no further discussion, Chris Corchiarion requested a motion for adjournment. A motion to adjourn was offered by Ron Fithian. A second to the motion was offered by Bob Meffley. The meeting adjourned at 5:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Janice Palmer
USRC Executive Assistant