



# UPPER SHORE Regional Council

## FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**MACo Winter Conference, Hyatt Regency, Windjammer Room**

January 4, 2023

**Council Members in Attendance:**

Chris Corchiarino (Chairman), Q.A.'s County Commissioner  
Bob Meffley (Treasurer) Cecil County Councilman  
Jack Wilson (3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair) Queen Anne's Commissioner  
Ron Fithian (Secretary) Kent County Commissioner  
Jackie Gregory (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair) Cecil County Councilwoman  
Al Miller, Councilman, Cecil County  
Rebecca Hamilton, Cecil County Councilwoman  
Patrick McLaughlin, Q.A.'s County Commissioner  
Albert Nickerson, Kent County Commissioner  
John Price, Kent County Commissioner

**Partners & Guests:**

Dave Culver, Cecil Council Manager  
Danielle Hornberger, Cecil County Executive  
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Director, Commerce  
Steve Overbay, Director of Administration, Cecil  
Jamie Williams, Economic Development Director, Kent  
Heather Tinelli, Economic Development Director, Queen Anne's  
Bill Mackey, Director, Planning & Zoning, Kent  
Charlotte Davis, Executive Director, Rural Maryland Council  
Alyssa Hastings, Representative for Senator Van Hollen  
Shelley Heller, Administrator, Kent County  
Charlie Rhodes, Commission President, Town of Church Hill

**Staff:**

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

## **I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Board Chairman Chris Corchiarino welcomed everyone opening the meeting at 1:15 pm. All in attendance introduced themselves. Each board member received a packet containing the Meeting Agenda, August 19, 2022 Full Council Minutes, spreadsheet of the voting breakdown of each of the five Tri County Councils, 2023 Meeting Dates, Financial Report, Slate of Nominees for Election of 2023 Board of Directors, and the Staff Report.

## **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A.** Chair Corchiarino requested a motion to approve the August 19, 2022 Full Council Meeting Minutes. Ron Fithian motioned approval. Jackie Gregory provided a second. All were in favor.

## **III. RURAL MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND**

### **A. Overview/Review/Process**

Director Susan O'Neil reviewed The Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund, a fund for infrastructure projects supporting economic development activity, stimulating private investment, and growing jobs in the state's rural counties. Susan reviewed the application process outlined by the Maryland Department of Commerce as well as the process the USRC Board took to divide the allocated \$10 million:

- Cecil County - \$2.9 million
- Kent County - \$2.9 million
- Queen Anne's County - \$2.9 million
- Regional Projects - \$1.3 million

The Department of Commerce sent a press release and the \$10 million in mid-December. A new bank account has been opened for this money. USRC also released a press release. Susan is working with the Attorney General to write MOUs for each county. The MOU provides steps to draw down on each county's allocation after a quarterly report has been submitted. This is the same process USRC uses when drawing down grant money from the Department of Commerce.

Chris Corchiarino asked for a motion to accept the process Susan requested. Jack Wilson motioned and a second was provided by Ron Fithian. All were in Favor.

## **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A.** A new member booklet was provided to four new board members. The booklet contained the following information: A current list of all voting and non-voting members, ethics forms review, USRC enabling legislation, programs, a breakdown of the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund, CTE rack cards and the FY23 Budget.
- B.** Susan asked that everyone review the 2023 Meeting Dates. Discussion followed on the June Budget meeting and if it should be changed to another location. It was decided to

keep it at Fisherman's Inn. Chris asked for a motion to accept the dates. Jack Wilson motioned to accept the dates, Ron Fithian provided a second motion. All were in Favor.

- C. Susan reviewed the USRC voting membership. Cecil County requests that our statute be changed to update Cecil Commissioners to Cecil Council Members. The Cecil County Administration would like to be included in the voting membership. It was decided that Cecil County will decide internally how the vote breakdown of three votes shall be distributed. They then will request the changes be made through their Delegation. These changes will be written up by the Department of Legislative Services and be submitted by the Cecil County Delegation by the second week of February. Both Kent and QA's County will write a letter of support for the legislation. A motion for Cecil County to internally decide the three-vote distribution and submit to their Delegation was requested by Jack Wilson. Ron Fithian provided a second. All were in Favor.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. Susan and Janice were bonded, each for \$500,000 at a cost of \$1500 each. This will be reviewed for renewal each year.
- b. Check Signatures: Susan reviewed the recent attempts at hacking our USRC checks and the reinstatement of two signatures required for all checks. USRC has also instituted Positive Pay, a fraud control program at Shore United Bank. The fraud control has been very successful in thwarting and catching new attempts of fraudulent checks. Susan requested that we go back to one signature for checks written under \$10,000. A motion to accept the request of one signature under \$10,000 was made by Jack Wilson and a second motion was provided by Jackie Gregory. All were in Favor.
- c. CTE Scholarships: Susan notified the board of recent CTE Equipment Scholarships provided to 11 students over the last few months. Scholarships were awarded for students in both Cecil and QA's counties, some in culinary programs, automotive and welding. USRC has reached out to Kent HS in hopes of providing scholarships to Kent students as well. A social media campaign is also being pushed.
- d. Heather Tinelli submitted the USRC Micro Ag Program to be recognized by MACo, and the program will be highlighted at tonight's Welcome Banquet & Awards Ceremony.
- e. Financial Report: Chris Corchiarino requested a motion to accept the Financial Report. Jack Wilson provided a motion which was seconded by Ron Fithian. All were in Favor.
- f. Susan reminded everyone that the staff report was at the back of their packets.

## **VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Having no questions regarding the slate provided, Jack Wilson motioned for the approval of the new Executive Board of Directors. The motion was seconded by Jackie Gregory, all were in Favor. The new Executive Board Officers for 2023 are:

Chair	Ron Fithian
First Vice Chair	Jackie Gregory
Second Vice Chair	Jack Wilson
Third Vice Chair	Albert Nickerson
Secretary	Chris Corchiarino
Treasurer	Bob Meffley

The meeting was turned over to Chair Ron Fithian, who thanked Chris Corchiarino for his tenure as Chair over the last two years.

## **VII. UPDATES**

Chris Corchiarino welcomed Patrick McLaughlin to the Council.

Patrick thanked the Kent County Commissioners for the comradery and the opportunity to share information.

Steve Overbay thanked Susan and Janice for the grant support over the years.

Jackie Gregory introduced Rebecca Hamilton and welcomed her to the Council.

Ron Fithian noted that the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund money was a once in a lifetime opportunity and was very pleased with the way the USRC BOD worked so well together for the betterment of the upper shore.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further discussion, Ron Fithian requested a motion for adjournment. Jackie Gregory provided a motion, and Jack Wilson provided a second. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janice Palmer  
USRC Executive Assistant