



# UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Cecil County  
Kent County  
Queen Anne's County

## Executive Board

Dr. Alan McCarthy  
Chair  
Cecil County Council  
Commissioner

Ronald H. Fithian  
1st Vice Chair  
Kent County  
Commissioner

Robert Buckey  
2nd Vice Chair  
Queen Anne's County  
Commissioner

Joyce Bowsbey  
Cecil County  
Councilwoman

James J. Moran  
Queen Anne's County  
Commissioner

William W. Pickrum  
Treasurer  
Kent County  
Commissioner

Representing the General  
Assembly:

Senator Stephen S. Hershey  
Delegate Jay A. Jacobs  
Delegate Steven J. Arentz  
Delegate Jeff Ghrist

Maryland General Assembly

Doris S. Mason  
Executive Director  
[dmason@kentgov.org](mailto:dmason@kentgov.org)  
[www.linkedin.com/in/dorismason](http://www.linkedin.com/in/dorismason)

## Executive Board Meeting Minutes--DRAFT

**Date and Time:** Thursday, June 18, 2015, 3:30 pm – 4:14 pm

**Location:** Good Guy's Sports Bar  
219 Water Street  
Centreville, MD 21617

**Participants:** Dr. Alan McCarthy, Councilman of Cecil County; Robert Buckey, Queen Anne's County Commissioner; Joyce Bowsbey, Cecil County Councilwoman; Jim Moran, Queen Anne's County Commissioner; Jamie Williams, Proxy for Commissioner William Pickrum of Kent County; Doris S. Mason, MSW, Executive Director; Ummu Bradley Thomas, Consultant, Freddie Bell Jones, Inc.; Elizabeth Stackowitz, USRC Washington College Intern.

### Welcome/Purpose of Meeting

Chairman McCarthy opened the Executive Board meeting at 3:40 PM. *Review and Vote on March, April, and May Executive Board Minutes*  
Executive Director Mason presented the March, April and May Meeting Minutes which were previously distributed electronically to the Board and shared at a former Executive Board meeting which lacked a voting quorum (and included in the meeting packet for review).

\*Commissioner Moran entered a motion to approve the three Executive Board Meeting Minutes for the months of March, April and May 2015. Councilwoman Joyce Bowsbey seconded the motion. The minutes for the months of March, April and May 2015 were approved unanimously.

As the Full Council meeting had previously ended with a the presentation by Lotte Bowie, Loblolly Multimedia on Shorevines.com, Chesapeake Wine Country and the Vintage Atlantic Trails at 3:30 pm, Commissioner Moran inquired as to whether USRC paid fees for Ms. Bowie and if so, whether the Executive Director Mason could share with the Board how much the USRC had spent on the project over the last three years. He suggested that perhaps the project operated long enough for it to become self-sustaining. He would like the breakdown to include the number of jobs, number of wineries, and amount of revenue that they generate.

Executive Director Mason indicated that the USRC does indeed contract with



# UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Cecil County  
Kent County  
Queen Anne's County

Loblolly, LLC, regarding the marketing and outreach work with the Shorevines site and for Chesapeake Wine Country. The most recent contract regarding her work on the same had been reviewed and approved by the Board during the February 12, 2015 meeting.

Councilwoman Bowsbey added that the wineries and vineyards were receiving a lot of assistance, and that there are perhaps other areas that could use the Council's support (such as farms) and may be perceived as forgotten. Executive Director Mason indicated that the Harvest Directory (for which more funding has been expended) is a similar project in nature and supports the agri-businesses and farmers. Executive Director Mason further indicated that the Chesapeake Wine Country's initiative also supports our strategic plan goal related to youth retention. It encourages the farmers to diversify with grapes (as the earnings are higher per acre with grapes than that of grains) and the next generation of farmers appear to gravitate towards this diversification.

The Executive Board discussed whether there were more projects that the USRC could support in order to spur economic development in other areas suggesting that perhaps the wineries have been supported by the organization long enough. Executive Director Mason indicated that it would be up to the Executive Board to make that determination.

Proxy Jamie Williams shared that she views the Upper Shore Regional Council as an Economic Development Organization and that there is not only a need to think about the farmers and wineries, but also aqua culture in Kent. Chairman McCarthy asked the Executive Board to consider "what else is going on in the region that can impact pockets of poverty?"

### ***Budget/Fiscal- Review for FY 2016 Budget***

Director Mason presented the Upper Shore Regional Council's Funding Sources for FY 2016. The total allocation for FY 2016 is projected at \$236,000.00 which includes the anticipated amount of \$50,000.00 from the USDA for the Eastern Shore Harvest Directory Grant.

Commissioner Buckey inquired as to whether or not the USRC had purchased Quickbooks. Executive Director Mason indicated that initially the QuickBooks were to be purchased through the Kent County Government's IT Department to ensure compatibility with the computer system, but that she was informed that the USRC should purchase its own QuickBooks directly. \*Commissioner Buckey entered a motion to direct Executive Director Mason to purchase QuickBooks. Chairman McCarthy seconded the motion. The vote to charge Executive Director Mason to purchase QuickBooks on behalf of the USRC was passed unanimously. Proxy Jamie Williams and Commissioner Buckey shared that they could assist in the set-up of the QuickBooks to USRC's system once purchased.

# UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL



Cecil County  
Kent County  
Queen Anne's County

Commissioner Moran asked Ms. Mason to discuss the 12,500 increase in amount allotted for contracts in the FY2016 budget from the last FY, and asked for a breakout of the proposed contracts. Executive Director Mason reminded the Executive Board that she consistently provided the Board with a breakdown of contracts and had done so in the previous meeting. Commissioner Moran asked that the breakout list of the proposed contracts be emailed to the Board, so that the budget can be approved at the next meeting. Executive Director Mason asked the Executive Board if they would like to approach and vote on the Budget in the August meeting.

A discussion ensued regarding writing into the organization's policy manual a detailed procedure around our check writing processes. The board recommended that two signatures be included on all checks over 10,000. The Board also indicated a need for a local signature in order to enable executive directors to get signatures expedited and whether a Kent County Commissioner such as Treasurer Pickrum shall provide a second signature. Executive Director Mason suggested that the Executive Board share with her language on the check writing policy. Chairman McCarthy recommended that the draft language be presented at the next meeting. Exec. Director Mason agreed to present the draft and allow the board to tweak it.

Commissioner Moran inquired as to whether or not Executive Director Mason signed her own payroll checks. Executive Director Mason shared that a payroll company (via contract) processed payroll and sends her check in the mail. She further indicated that the payroll company has access to the account and makes the necessary withdrawals for payroll and employment tax expenses.

Chairman McCarthy inquired about the line item in the proposed FY 2016 budget for "Accounting" in the amount of \$7,300.00 stating that the sum can be moved due to the number of checks written on the account and that the accounting services can be handled through the County's Finance Department. Executive Director Mason inquired as to whether or not the money can be used towards contracts. Chairman McCarthy stated that just because the money was available, it did not mean that it should be spent however, the contracts would have to be reviewed and approved.

### ***Review and Approval for FY 2016 Scope of the Work for DBED and USDA Grant***

Executive Director Mason shared with the Executive Board the proposed FY2016 Scope of Work --- the plan presented to DBED which is the same strategic plan except the inclusion of the EDA plan and timeline as presented earlier in the Full Council Meeting.



# UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Cecil County  
Kent County  
Queen Anne's County

\*Commissioner Moran made the motion to approve as presented the FY2016 Scope of Work. Councilwoman Bowsbey seconded the motion. The FY 2016 Scope of Work was approved unanimously.

Executive Director Mason shared that a copy of the USDA Rural Business Development Grant for Phase III of the Harvest Directory was in the Executive Board's packets. The plan for the grant is to add Agricultural Businesses in the other 6 Eastern Shore Counties to the Directory. The grant was submitted in May.

Executive Director Mason further reminded the Board that when we set up the annual meeting list, we did not plan a July meeting, and that there will be a joint meeting in August with the other regional councils at the summer MACO conference.

Secretary Thomas Perez of the U.S Department of Labor has been invited to attend on September 24, 2015 which is the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning session. A brief Full Council meeting can be done if needed at the end of the meeting.

Jamie Williams shared that there was an audience that would like to hear from the Secretary of MD DBED, Michael Gill. Executive Director Mason shared that she had indeed invited Secretary Gill to participate in the strategic planning event in September.

Commissioner Buckey shared that Queen Anne's County had sent a letter to Verizon requesting the location of their towers in the county. Verizon indicated that the information was proprietary. Queen Anne's County would like to know about future towers and plans, as well as where are dead spots in the county.

Jamie Williams shared the challenges surrounding the collapse of Wave Vision and the concern that Kent residents could potentially lose high speed internet service. She further shared that she will provide Executive Director Mason with contact information for the Delmarva WiFi ISP, as the Cecil County participants requested the information. Some Cecil County residents were also impacted by the Wave Vision matter.

\*Chairman Buckey made the motion to close the meeting at 4:14 PM. The motion to close the meeting was seconded by Chairman McCarthy.