



# UPPER SHORE REGIONAL COUNCIL

Cecil County  
Kent County  
Queen Anne's County

## Executive Board

Robert Buckey  
Chair  
Queen Anne's  
Commissioner

Ron Fithian  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair  
Kent County  
Commissioner

Joyce A. Bowsbey  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair  
Cecil County  
Councilwoman

Jack Wilson  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair  
Queen Anne's County  
Commissioner

William W. Pickrum  
Treasurer  
Kent County  
Commissioner

Bob Meffley  
Secretary  
Cecil County  
Councilman

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)

**Date and Time:** Thursday, February 23, 2017; 5:00-6:30 p.m.

**Location:** USRC Office, 122 N. Cross Street, Chestertown, MD 21620

**Participants:** Robert Buckey, Chair, Queen Anne's County Commissioner; Gregg Todd, Administrator, Queen Anne's County (proxy for Jack Wilson); Shelley Heller, Administrator, Kent County (proxy for Ron Fithian); Bob Meffley, Cecil County Council; James Massey, Cecil County Council Manager (proxy for Joyce Bowsbey); and Doris Mason, Executive Director. (Mr. William Pickrum presented for an excused absence due to illness)

Chairman Buckey called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and determined there was a quorum of the Executive Board.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the previous Executive Board meeting of November 16, 2017. Chairman Buckey made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Secretary Meffley and approved unanimously.

Ms. Mason provided copies of the USRC bylaws and shared those areas where she thought changes may need to be made. Ms. Heller reviewed more possible issues. Most are highlight below:

- 1) Page 2, Section 5  
Issue of interpretation of maximum of two proxy votes  
Does this mean that a non-officer may carry 2 proxies at single meeting or that a non-officer may only vote by proxy twice in one year.
- 2) Page 2, Section 5b)  
Suggest to change 5 days notice of non-officer to vote by proxy to 24 hours notice.
- 3) Page 2, Section 8  
Consensus to leave procedure to fill vacancy as is.
- 4) Page 3, Section 3  
Consensus to leave officers term and re-election as is
- 5) Page 4, Article 8  
Consensus to leave evaluation of Executive Director by three members of board as appointed by Board as is.
- 6) Page 5, Article 9, Section 3

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Listing of council members disagrees with listing on page 2, Article 5, Section 1. Consensus was to leave off Executive Director as voting member. Committee also discussed that counties should reaffirm their municipal appointments in case these need to be changed. Need clarification if Eastern Shore Municipal Association representative. Ms. Mason agreed to send letters to all board members to ascertain their interest to continue on USRC.

Suggestion to make chamber of commerce non-voting member to reduce quorum number needed.

7) Correct reference to Annotated Code citation. There was discussion that the Annotated Code and COMAR should be amended to indicate that Cecil County's representatives are Council Members, not Commissioners.

Chairman Buckey made a motion to ask Ms. Heller to work with Ms. Mason to prepare bylaw amendments for next meeting. Motion was seconded by Mr. Todd, who also agreed to participate and passed unanimously.

Chairman Buckey welcomed Councilman Bob Meffley from Cecil County who was appointed to take the place of Councilman George Patchell, as Secretary. Mr. Meffley provided comments on his interests and aspirations.

Ms. Heller made a motion to ratify the membership of Bob Meffley, which was previously held by Mr. Patchell. The motion was seconded by Mr. Todd and approved unanimously.

Ms. Mason presented the financial report. The FY 2017 budget of \$464,437.46 was approved by the board. Revenue received to date is \$195,883. Expenses to date are \$172,040.13. Chairman Buckey requested that Ms. Mason prepare a specific financial report using Quick Books Budget and agreed to show her how this report can be generated immediately following the meeting. Discussion of large expenses with Freddie Bell Jones and Loblolly Multi-Media Production were explained by Ms. Mason as research assistance with CEDS and USDA grant, and maintenance and content for two websites. Ms. Mason also re-distributed the fiscal policy of USRC. The group discussed whether the fiscal policy addressed budget modifications.

After discussion, Chairman Bucky suggested that any expenses over \$2,500 should have prior approval of the board, as opposed to the policy as outlined in the fiscal policy.

Ms. Mason discussed the use of two interns from Washington College and their duties. She also stated that Washington College interns assist in updating the Harvest Directory.

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The board reviewed a proposal by Matt Mullin, High Street Strategies to provide lobbying assistance to USRC. After discussion, Chairman Buckey suggested that we decline this proposal because of the cost.

Ms. Mason stated that the application for USDA grant looks very positive, which will fund \$65,000 expanded Harvest Directory project including two Delaware counties. The grant will also provide training for small businesses to develop their websites and presence in social media. Currently, there are 400 businesses that have been assisted by this program (and 210 which had no web-presence at all prior to joining the Harvest Directory).

Ms. Mason reported that a quarterly report was filed with the Department of Commerce, which funds the largest share of USRC budget at \$200,000. She also reported that the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Grant has provided \$111,000 to USRC for grants.

She reported that the METS Guild has supported 48 students for two semesters in the areas of mathematics, engineering, technology and science. Students have worked on GIS, website development, and gaming (3-D virtual technology). Next year, she stated that they will expand the program to 75-80 students. Chairman Buckey asked Ms. Mason to prepare a list of programs that he could share with his county. Ms. Mason also reported that she was serving on the MHCC workgroup on rural health delivery.

Under new business, Ms. Mason reported on her progress with developing CEDS, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, which could qualify USRC for federal funding in the "special needs" category. Examples of our qualification include opioid impact, loss of manufacturing, and negative (out for work) migration rates. Ms. Mason will request each county to support this program and listed possible "priority projects" in each county submitted so far which could benefit from the CEDS/EDA support. Ms. Mason agreed to send the CEDS strategy overview, as written thus far, to board members for their review.

Ms. Mason provided her self-evaluation and resume in the board packet, as it is the time of year, once more, to complete it.

Gregg Todd requested Ms. Mason leave the room and Chairman Buckey asked to go into closed session.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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