

**East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB)**  
Eastern Montgomery Regional Center  
3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904

**Wednesday, December 2, 2015**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Members Present:** Fatmata Barrie, Peter Myo Khin, Fisseha Adugna, Jerold Samet, Teddy Wu, Melissa Daley, Samantha Blizzard, Anthony Ramirez, Faustina Smith Neil, Fred Stithnoth, Jeremiah Pope, Sharon Brown, Len Newman

**Guests Present:** Ed Weiler, Mensah Adjogah, Mara Parker, Brigit Smith, Brian Anleu, Rob Richardson, Dan Wilhelm, Lender Dincer, Michelle Ngwafon, Officer Reynolds, Margaret Poore, Paul Bassel, Barbara Braswell

**Staff Present:** Jewru Bandeh and Chiffon Smith

**Citizens' Forum:** Issues raised/comments made included: Need for home owners association boards to take mandatory trainings and the difficulty in getting volunteers on these boards; Complement to the 311 system from the Calverton community– traffic islands/lights replaced, signs and other community problems addressed, including speeding; thanks to Councilmember Tom Hucker's office for help with the replacement of traffic cameras; need for now having speed limit between Powder Mill and US 29 to be no more than 35 mph, speed bumps between Cherry Hill and Galway to slow traffic; residents in the Burnt Mills area of White Oak are concerned about growing white tail deer population and resulting impacts-we could see at least a 40% increase by spring, and the community cannot afford to have a higher deer population as the land and tree species are being destroyed.

**Special Guest Presentation: Paul Bessel,** Chairperson, Montgomery County Charter Review Commission made a presentation highlighting the following:

- Summary of the Montgomery County's Charter, specific to the Legislative and Executive branches of government, Finance, Merit System, Conflicts of Interest and General provisions of the Charter. Other major highlights/talking points included:
- Montgomery County charter is looked at every 4 years by the commission, which is made up of 11 people and no one party dominating – appointed by County Council and County Executive;
- Commission looks at issues such as property taxes and legal process for raising tax limits;
- The commission makes recommendations to the Council;
- Charter Review Public hearing date is established for 1/20/16 at 7:30 pm;
- As an advisory board, ECCAB can put forth recommendations the body might have and wants considered;
- Charter should be a living document – something to make the county happy with the government;
- The Charter Review Commission gets input and provides feedback on the issues – referendum item to be put on the ballot;
- Any member of the public can put something on the ballot – 10K people sign a petition and it goes on;
- Charter review commission issues will be implemented if passed.

**Chuck Crisostomo**, Acting Director, Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (OEMHS) made a presentation focusing on Montgomery County Emergency Preparedness/Management System. Major highlights of the presentation included:

- OEMHS mission which is to assess, forecast and plan for a wide range of hazards in order to protect, respond and prevent the loss of life and property and quickly recover;
- OEMHS office staff (of about 12 people) and structure;
- History of disasters in the area – 2012 and 2010;
- Presidential policy directive for emergency preparedness – and the ability to adapt to changing conditions and withstanding and rapidly recover from disruption due to emergencies;
- Resilience profile as an approach/exercise – we bend but don't break. Absorb stress or destructive forces through resistance or adaption.
- The need to prepare operational plans, organize equipment, train, exercise, evaluate – preparedness cycle.
- Having an Emergency Management Strategic Plan: (DHHS Core Capabilities list modified for the needs of the county), Hazard Mitigation Plan (conducts hazard vulnerability analysis, take action to reduce or eliminate the vulnerability), Debris Management Plan (green waste, building materials, other debris, collect, recuse and dispose), Continuity of Operations Plans (agency specific plans for essential operations – what happens if leadership succession is needed – 5 levels deep to reconstitute the county leadership in an emergency), Shelter Plan (for selection and set-up of human/pet shelters), Public Information and Outreach Plans (web site, education, seminars and alert Montgomery), Facility Emergency Action Plans (agency and facility specific emergency procedures – had to make sure that the county employees know what to do in county buildings, Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan (long term plan – have to do it before it happens – the community has to be involved in the recovery effort), Emergency Operations Plan (all hazards response plan – what we are going to do in 16 recovery areas, who the lead agency is, support agency and what everyone's role is under various hazard conditions;
- Continuation of Operation (COOP) Plan for essential county operation during a major disaster;
- We have brochures on pets, seniors, families, businesses preparedness and something to teach the kids on what to do during disasters;
- OEMHS's website provides a workbook on emergency preparedness and is available online.
- Our County is a partner in mutual aid with Prince Georges and Fairfax counties in assisting during emergencies;
- The National Guard comes in when the resources from mutual aid is not enough.
- The County's Hazard Plan in the works for cybersecurity in case the system goes down. Cyber needs to be its own even though it's now under communications.
- Emergency management accreditation program – we are the 12<sup>th</sup> county (of 15) to receive that accreditation.
- Tested the county's emergency alert system. Just went through the assessment. Now applying to get the wireless service so people don't have to sign up for the notification.
- Personal emergency preparedness – it is the ability to survive for 72 hours without anyone getting to you and you can't get out. Need a battery operated radio, a generator, etc.;
- The national capital region (19) jurisdiction consisting of fire chiefs, emergency managers meet monthly;
- Make sure your important documents are safe, communication plan for your family no matter where you are – have a central person who everyone should call to make sure people are safe.

**Approval of Meeting Summary** – The ECCAB November 4, 2015 meeting summary was approved.

**East County Regional Services Center Director’s Report:** Jewru Bandeh provided a brief report highlighting: the flyer for the FY 2017 operating budget forum on 1/6/16, 7pm – 8:30pm; 12/17/15, Maryland State Health Commission will make a decision on Washington Adventist Hospital’s Certificate of Need Application to relocate to White Oak from Takoma Park-the examiner for the Commission recommended approval. Construction may start after the ground breaking in the Spring if approved.

**Chair’s Report:** According to the Chair, we are still recruiting for a few new members for the board.

**Council Staff Updates:** Council staff Updates highlight included:

- Burnsville crossing – Met with EDENS about Burtonsville Crossings Shopping Center – encouraging them to meet with community to get as much input to see what should go in the Burtonsville shopping center. Met with Jewru and other stakeholders to see what we can do with that location. Part of the park and ride lot is owned by the state not the county and so it can complicate things;  
A board member stated that community comments should be part of the plan from EDENS and the county should demand that as the county awarded them the RFP;
- Council agenda – the past Monday was the local delegation hearing – issue of privatization of liquor stores in the area which went until 1:00 am. Other alcohol issues – license for alcohol stores near a church/religious institution;
- Student Loan Refinancing Authority proposal is under consideration– allow the county to refinance a person’s student loan at a lower rate;
- Introducing some vacant property legislation. Want to increase penalty on banks for not registering foreclosed property from \$1K to \$5K;
- Council meeting schedule;
- Council elections were held and Nancy Floreen is now President, Roger Berliner is Vice President;
- Costco appeal for a gas station in Wheaton was rejected – appeal was the longest in the county’s history – if Costco loses, then it will have to reapply with the 500 ft. rule but if they win then its grandfathers to the 300 ft;
- Gaithersburg, Rockville & Montgomery County council meeting on bus rapid transit. Many of their redevelopments are predicated on the plans.
- County Council will discuss how to deal with the severely mentally ill in the criminal justice system;
- A (MCPS School Board) bill being introduced to expand voting to minors 16 and older, non-citizens & felons – only for the county school board – rationale is that you should have a say in what the school board leadership is and what they do because you have kids who attend the school system.
- Prostitution Prohibited Bill (Human trafficking bill) passed unanimously and the Council is now looking at victim rights;
- Supervised visitations – custody or domestic violence cases related to custody Public safety committee will request funding from the county for visitation/exchange sites. They are looking at different county locations but are hesitant to use police stations.

## **Committee Reports**

- **Planning and Economic Development Committee:** discussed need to look at ways to increase more business assistance resources/services. Committee wants to get more input from businesses.
- **Quality of Life/Services Committee** –Discussion continue on safety issues regarding panhandling and people walking in the medians and intersections. Discussion also continue on the East County fireworks proposal through a taskforce and outreach plan to engage civic associations/groups, community leaders, stakeholders and advocates by January 2016. Concerns expressed by some community members regarding potential gentrification resulting from the proposed development in White Oak (MOSGMP).

**Old Business:** Holding one or two ECCAB meetings in other areas of East County-Spring/Summer

**New Business:** Operating Budget Forum scheduled for January 6, 2016. US 29 traffic transportation related concerns referred to the ECRSC Director.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.