

# DUBLIN/DARLINGTON COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD

April 15, 2015

Conowingo Visitor Center

**Members Present:** Don Thomas, *Chair*  
Rich Norling  
Joni Nugent\*  
Brendan Patton  
Bob Riley  
Paul Seadler  
Don Thomas  
J. Alan Thompson  
Shirley Thompson

**Guests:** Annie Kovach\* (*HCPL*)  
Cynthia Lince (*for Richard Slutzky*)  
Andrew Tress (*for Barry Glassman*)  
Jonathan White (*for Chad Shrodes*)

\*(*membership pending*)

Don Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Guest Speaker:** In lieu of guest speakers, this meeting of the DDCAB was more of an informal get-to-know-you session between the new members of the Board and anticipated regular attendees representing various government offices.

**Discussion of bylaws:** Andrew Tress – a regular attendee of past Dublin/Darlington Community Council meetings on behalf of then Council President Billy Boniface – will continue attending DDCAB meetings now as the representative for County Executive Barry Glassman. Mr. Tress distributed printed copies of the CAB’s bylaws to council members. He said that there is “nothing too different” in the new bylaws, and the main change is the name of the Board. He suggested thinking of taxi cabs as a way to remember the new name (Community Advisory Board = “CAB”).

Development Advisory Boards (DABs) actually preceded Community Councils and served as a more direct outlet for the community to relay information or questions to the County Executive and County Council. The original CABs were strictly development-related, whereas the new CABs’ functions are broader.

Mr. Tress indicated that there was confusion between “Community Councils” and the County Council in the past, and this new naming convention will help to prevent any further mix-ups. Also, the term “advisory board” is more accurate, as the boards are a means to get messages to the County Executive.

One important highlight in the bylaws involves attendance; if a Board member is absent for three (3) meetings, they can be terminated from the group, but this is not “set in stone”.

Joe Schmitz of HCPS is seeking student board members at this time – one for each CAB. It appears they will serve 1-year terms and be voting members of the CAB. Nothing is final on this front, and Mr. Tress will follow up with the Board.

Shirley Thompson asked if Board members must reside in the Board’s region, to which Mr. Tress replied that it is “ideal” that they reside in the Dublin/Darlington area, but not “in stone.” For example, a member of the Joppatowne CAB lives in Bel Air but works in Joppa and wanted to serve on the Joppatowne Board, which is fine. As for a student member for DDCAB, Mr. Tress noted that both Havre de Grace HS and North Harford HS lie in the DDCAB region. There is no age requirement for the student member, but they must be in high school at an HCPS school. Submit any names you have in mind to Mr. Tress moving forward.

The County's CABs will operate using Robert's Rules of Order, and handheld books will be distributed to Board members soon.

All Board members can participate in meeting discussions, and each should be given ample time to speak when requested.

As for voting, the Board must vote to approve any correspondence to the County Executive; the monthly minutes from each meeting; and the selections of Vice Chairman and Secretary.

Barry Glassman, Billy Boniface and the County Council are all accessible through the CAB.

All meetings are open to the public. Advanced notice should be given, and the chairman "runs the show". Maximum length of each meeting is 1.5 hours (90 minutes) and there cannot be more than 12 meetings per year. The scheduling of these 12 meetings is up to the Board (summer meetings? Off-site meetings? Etc.)

**Andrew Tress for County Executive Barry Glassman:** Andrew Tress continued with a report from the County Executive. He mentioned that the FY16 Proposed Budget for county government was posted to the Dagger News today, and distributed a related press release to members of the Board.

Several highlights in the Operating Budget are:

- No tax increases
- Record funding for education, including funds for teacher salary increases
  - There are seven (7) categories in the budget, and the CE put \$3.1 million into "instructional salaries". While this is more direct than has been done in the past, it is still up to the Board of Education to apply the funds to teacher raises.
  - Administrative raises are not included; the Board of Education will have to "get creative" to fund them
- The Library system and Sheriff's Office were budgeted for \$500 salary increases, with the hope that each agency will match the \$500 to provide equitable \$1,000 raises to deputies and library staff
- An effort to "right-size" County government through retirement incentives and possible other means has allowed for \$1,000 merit-based salary increases for all County employees in this budget, based on performance reviews
  - Early retirement incentives were accepted by 67 County employees (goal was "low 100s")
  - CE is looking to outsource more of County Government
  - Phase II of the "right-sizing" is currently underway
- Classroom technology upgrades totaling \$250,000 are also in the budget; impacted schools TBD
  - Hickory Elementary School and other elementary schools "need it", per Mr. Tress
- \$50,000 budgeted for EMS foundation (set aside for ambulances)
- \$50,000 in scholarships budgeted for EMS training in exchange for public service

Capital Budget highlights include:

- Lowest capital spending in 10 years, but ongoing capital projects will not be stopped (ex. Youth's Benefit Elementary School)
- \$6 million for stormwater management improvements (more than last 8 years from County combined)
  - Funded via recordation tax, as the Stormwater Remediation Fee ("rain tax") was repealed
  - To meet MS4 permit requirements from MDE and EPA
  - So far there has been no response or backlash from MDE or EPA

- Legislation sponsored by Maryland Senate President Mike Miller (SB863) passed the legislature on April 14, removing the “rain tax” requirement from the 10 affected jurisdictions
- Watervale Road bridge replacement is on track in this capital budget
- \$1,350,000 for Parks and Recreation
- \$600,000 for Volunteer Fire Companies
- \$3,112,500 for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (includes server upgrades, website improvements, and more)

Aside from the budget, Planning and Zoning has launched “TrackIt”, a program to track the development process and the status of projects in one place, with interactive information, maps and plans. There never used to be a single source to find such information. In May, Planning and Zoning Director Bradley Killian will present to the DDCAB about HarfordNEXT, the County’s new all-encompassing master plan.

In downtown Bel Air, the old Office of Economic Development space will be replaced by a new permit center, where all permits can be applied for at the same location. In the past, folks had to travel from floor-to-floor and office-to-office to get all required permits. This should simplify the process and serve as a “one-stop shop”.

The Office of Economic Development has opened a new business incubator in Havre de Grace near their new offices on Route 40, in the “heart of business” in Harford County.

Andrew Tress or his supervisor, Ben Lloyd, will represent the County Executive at most CAB meetings moving forward. Jane Walker, a 30+-year County employee, is retiring from their department and will be missed.

Mr. Tress offered suggestions for future CAB presentations, including:

- Dale & Janelle Johnson: to discuss litter crews, mulching/composting/recycling programs in the County
- Meeting at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC): Bob Thomas is happy to host at this “impressive” and “state-of-the-art” facility at any time
- Water & Sewer Chief Dick Rex: there are lots of wells/septics in Dublin/Darlington, but W&S can do “efficiency checks”. Mr. Rex is “nice” and “knowledgable” and could present to DDCAB
- Office on Aging’s Karen Winkowski: runs all County senior centers and programming

Brendan Patton suggested an overview of the County’s stormwater management plans, and how that money will be spent. He suggested inviting a sediment control specialist to participate, which was met positively by the CAB.

Rich Norling asked about the plans for a Harford County Agricultural Resource Center at Route 1 @ Route 136. Mr. Tress indicated that this was early in the process. Mr. Norling thought this a good topic for the DDCAB to hear about.

Mr. Tress communicated that the County owns a 30-acre parcel outside of Palmer State Park and plans to construct a kayak/canoe launch in memory of Ben Boniface, son of Director of Administration Billy Boniface. It is currently in the budget, with \$100,000 from the Ben Boniface memorial fund and a \$100,000 grant from the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway (to be finalized in June). Rich Norling indicated that the Deer Creek Association would be “happy to help” as well.

Brendan Patton asked for an update regarding the park plans near High’s in Darlington. Originally, a soccer field was planned for that location, but it may now become a “Darlington Park”. Mr. Tress will update the CAB.

Alan Thompson asked about HCSO representation at future meetings. Mr. Tress said he will speak with Donnie Gividan, who is a classmate of his at the Harford Leadership Academy and is “big on public safety engagement”. Outside meetings with SWAT teams and other branches of the HCSO are also possible.

Rich Norling was asked about stepping down as chair of the DDCAB and said it was time for “new leadership and new ideas” and thanked Don Thomas for taking the reins.

**Jonathan White for County Councilman Chad Shrodes:** Jonathan White reported for Chad Shrodes and introduced himself to the CAB, most of whom were already familiar with him from his past attendance. When regular CAB meetings begin in May 2015, both he and Cynthia Lince will provide much more substantive updates from the County Council. As this was an introductory meeting, Mr. White and Mrs. Lince deferred to Andrew Tress to take charge of this meeting.

**Cynthia Lince County Council President Richard Slutzky:** Mrs. Lince will now represent the Council President (Richard Slutzky), serving in the role previously filled by Mr. Tress, who now works for the Administration. Business cards were distributed by both Mrs. Lince and Mr. White.

**Old Business:** Brendan Patton asked about adding a Media Policy to the CAB’s bylaws. Andrew Tress will check.

**Good of the Board:** Chair Don Thomas asked the Board if they would like to stick with the meeting schedule as it currently exists: meeting on the third Wednesday of each month. A motion was made by Rich Norling, seconded by Alan Thompson. The motion was carried unanimously.

A decision of whether to meet in July and August was tabled until the May meeting. The chair noted that meetings can be called at any time, but communication must be strong as to when meetings are scheduled. A July meeting may be held at a different location, but this will be decided at the May meeting. It was mentioned that due to vacation schedules during the summer months, it may be best to start the CAB calendar in September each year.

Jonathan White will look into the traffic signal at Route 1 @ Route 136, which has gotten worse since Dollar General opened, per Board members. Several Board members believed that this has been brought up in the past; Mr. White will look through his records and report to the Board in May.

The agendas going forward will maintain the same categories as in the April meeting.

The Election Board is looking for judges. If you are seeking a little extra money and willing to spend one “long day” working the polls at a future election, it is worth considering applying to become an election judge.

Joni Nugent mentioned that the 21034 Newsletter is maintained and published by Jane Howe each month. Nancy, who has helped Jane with the newsletter in the past, is moving out of the area soon. If you know of anyone who can help with the newsletter moving forward, let the CAB and especially Jane Howe know. This is a good way to get news out from the CAB.

Annie Kovacs distributed copies of the HCPL catalog for 2015 to Board members.

Joni Nugent indicated that she would like to serve as an official Board member. Andrew Tress will look into facilitating this request.

One member asked about the Havre de Grace High/Middle School capital project with the current spending freeze implemented by County Executive Glassman. Andrew Tress said that it is in the six-year plan, but that he could make “no promises”.

Jonathan White, Cynthia Lince and Andrew Tress will communicate any interesting County-government-related events to the DDCAB going forward.

Andrew Tress mentioned that the Abingdon/Emmorton CAB was created as a new Board under CE Glassman’s reorganization, combining the prior Bush River and Abingdon Community Council areas. The Churchville/Creswell CAB – which existed prior to County Executive David Craig – was also reinstated.

Andrew Tress indicated that Cindy Mumby at the County Executive’s Office is a good contact to get stories to the media from the DDCAB. Board member Brendan Patton advised Board members to stay away from the media except for the Chairman and only after getting permission from the Board for any message. Mr. Patton also offered to serve as an APG liaison, as he has worked at the base for 25 years.

In order to get messages from the DDCAB to the folks in the community and vice versa, Chair Don Thomas suggested using the 21034 newsletter, the local library, Apple Festival, and Post Office. Information gained from these sources can help “feed the Board”.

Lastly, the Board decided to table until May whether or not to keep Town Hall meetings going, which had been taken over by the Dublin/Darlington Community Council after the closure of the Community Association.

**Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved by majority vote at 8:15 PM.

**Next Meeting: May 20, 2015, 7:00 PM** at Conowingo Visitors Center, 4948 Conowingo Road, Darlington, MD 21034

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan White