Hodge Re-Elected Chairman of Tri-County Council

Gary V. Hodge, Charles County Commissioner, was unanimously re-elected Chairman of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland for 2009 at the organization's quarterly meeting at the Waldorf Jaycees Center on December 17.

Other officers elected for 2009 were Calvert County Commissioner Gerald Clark, First Vice-Chairman, Delegate John L. Bohanan, Jr., Second Vice Chairman, and Charles County Citizen Member Harry Shasho as Third Vice-Chairman.

The meeting featured presentations on the fiscal and economic crisis facing federal, State and local government, and the impact on Southern Maryland. Congressman Steny H. Hoyer, Majority Leader of the U. S. House of Representatives addressed the crisis from the national perspective, and plans for a major federal economic stimulus package to create jobs and begin to address the nation's pressing infrastructure needs.

Former Director of the Department of Fiscal Services of the Maryland General Assembly, William Ratchford, described the dimensions of the crisis at the State level, the revenue shortfalls and mounting deficits, and budget cuts that would be required to balance the State's current and fiscal year 2010 budgets.

Calvert County Commissioner Wilson Parran, President-Elect of the Maryland Association of Counties, covered the impact of the crisis on County government, including the impact that state budget cuts could have on County revenues and services.

The Council's agenda at the meeting also included a report by Chairman Hodge on the Council's efforts to present the region's urgent infrastructure priorities for consideration in the proposed federal economic stimulus package being considered by Congress and the incoming Administration of President-Elect Barack Obama.

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Maurice “Butch” Long of Hughesville, Chairman of the newly re-established Southern Maryland Workforce Investment Board, introduced the slate of private and public sector leaders nominated for appointment to the WIB's Board of Directors, which the Council unanimously confirmed.

The meeting also included a status report by St. Mary's County Commissioner Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., who is chairing a special Tri-County Council committee on the needs of veterans returning to their homes in Southern Maryland from military service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Council welcomed Michael Sanderson, newly appointed Executive Director of the Maryland Association of Counties, who commented briefly on the challenges facing the Maryland General Assembly when it convenes in early January to begin work on the State's fiscal year 2010 budget.

On his re-election, Hodge commented "It is an honor to be chosen by my elected colleagues to lead the Tri-County Council and continue our work to make the Council an effective instrument for regional cooperation and an effective advocate for priorities that will make a difference in the lives of our citizens."

For further information, contact George Clarkson at 301-885-1329.

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