

Letters to the Editor

Crisfield Coalition member perplexed by council's vote

As a relatively new resident of Crisfield, I was initially perplexed as to why this community was not thriving. We have heritage, friendly folks, we are surrounded by natural beauty, the best marina in Maryland, a top flight State Park, outstanding seafood and much more. These questions were answered in full at the City Council meeting of August 24th. Before an overflowing audience of supporters, members of the City Council rejected the application for a letter of support for The Greater Crisfield Action Coalition.

Keep in mind that we were only asking for the City, in principle, to give a stamp of approval to our mission — not any specific projects. We asked the Council to support the following statements:

"Our Board members are passionately committed to transforming Crisfield into a vibrant and thriving community where everyone has the opportunity to succeed in an outstanding and meaningful way.

Sound Off!

QUESTION: Gov. Hogan, how about an Executive Order telling colleges and universities they've got to start school after Labor Day?

Our Vision is for Crisfield to be the number one unique tourist destination on the Eastern Shore. We will realize our vision for the Crisfield community by executing meaningful actions that conform to our Core Values."

We felt that this was the first step in developing a working relationship with the City and community. The community showed its support with a turnout that old timers say they have never before seen. Some said there were a few occasions where aroused citizens came to protest a measure but NEVER in support of something. This is very heartening!

Since then there have been personal attacks mounted by a current City Councilman (which is unseemly and petty at best) concerning our motivations and agendas. This I take seriously. He stated that there is a money trail or a "yellow brick road" that leads back to GCAC. If this is true, everyone in Crisfield and the surrounding area is entitled to know what that trail looks like. I challenge him to clearly spell out the basis of his accusation.

As a board member I can say with confidence that there is NO financial or personal gain to be had as a Board member of GCAC. It is clearly stated in our bylaws that we cannot in any fashion benefit from our service and that NO ONE in our family can benefit from our service. If our efforts lead to increased property val-

ues, better jobs for our citizens and a more financially successful community, then I guess we will profit and are guilty as charged.

It was also suggested that the City should control any and all money that comes into the City. I guess this is a new policy that is reserved only for GCAC. As an example, the City did not and does not control the money in 2 of the 3 grants held by "It Takes a Village", by any grants held by SOMOS, nor did the City control how the funds were used by the Long Term Recovery Committee. Not a very balanced approach.

Please take a moment and think about what the City has done over the last decade to revitalize the community. I truly believe that most have tried their best to improve conditions, but the weight of responsibility in the City can wear down the best and brightest. When you have a municipality that is shrinking yearly along with the tax base, 40% of the land area in the City is not taxable and 40% of residents who are incapable of contributing to the tax base, plus a deteriorating infrastructure you have a recipe for disaster (see Detroit).

This is the part that I find perplexing. The City is turning down help from a self-funded group of professionals from many fields who may be able to contribute and help the City, free of cost. If this were just about the City, that would be one

Crab Derby addendum

In last week's edition, the results from events held during the 69th National Hard Crab Derby did not include the weight of crab meat picked during the Crab Picking contest.

The winner, Angel Conner, picked 2.065 lbs. in 15 minutes. In second place was Nakia Gale, picking 1.810 lbs. There were six competitors in all this year.

thing, but we are the GREATER CRISFIELD Action Coalition, so our goal is to have a positive effect on the lives of everyone in the area. The Council's vote disenfranchised our Somerset County neighbors.

For 40+ years, Crisfield has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to develop a plan to move Crisfield forward...each and every one of those plans are now gathering dust, and we are worse off than ever. We at GCAC may not have all of the answers, but I can confidently say that no action will continue to condemn us to poverty, lack of jobs, abandoned houses, a shrinking tax base and hopelessness. If this is the future that you want then by all means support the members of the City Council who want no progress, but if you are willing to take this ride with us, we will diligently work on your behalf to improve everyone's life (without pay!).

**Paul Regester, Vice President
Greater Crisfield Action Coalition Inc.**

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