

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 4, 2016**

**PRESENT**

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), Walter Buck (Citizen), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Dr. D'Ette Devine (CCPS), Bruce England (SWN), Norman Gaither (NorArk Executive Group), Scott Holland (i-Lighting), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Michael Lara (Orbital ATK), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism), Doris Mason (USRC), Grove Miller (Citizen), Susan O'Neill (Economic Development Manager), Robert Palsgrove (WSFS), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Associates), Joanne Richart-Young (Ag Coordinator), Dr. Carl Roberts (Chamber Government Relations), Rupert Rossetti (Citizen), Dan Schneckenburger (County Council), Lisa Webb (Director of Economic Development), Jason Zang (Economic Development)

**ABSENT**

Linda Burris (Delmarva Power), Denise Davis (CCPL), Danny DeMarinis (URP), Paula Gilley (Citizen), Lauren Johnsky (APG), Jeanne Minner (Town of Elkton), Mike Travers (Cecil Dance Center)

**GUESTS**

Scott Flanigan (DPW), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Jim Ford (SBDC), Kathy Kunda (Elkton Alliance/Boys & Girls Club), Cheryl Mattix (Cecil Whig), Dr. Alan McCarthy (County Council), Melinda McGuigan (Edis Company) James Newby (Student-Cecil College), Stephanie Palko (Cecil Guardian), Jen Parsons (Best Vacations), Sharon Pelham (APGFCU), Alan Sexton (SWN), David Strouss (McCrone)

**Call to Order & Welcome**

- Mike Ratchford called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.
- Introductions were made by all in attendance.

**Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford**

- Minutes from EDC Meeting on April 6, 2016 were approved.
- Through Primary Election. Alan, Congratulations! Dan, we appreciate you running and bringing up the important issues and appreciate your continuing to serve both on the Council and on the EDC.
- Have had conclusion of Legislative Session
  - In 2017 – question of paid leave will be particularly impactful for small businesses; most large employers have policies already in place and will be ok if legislation is passed. Believe we need to continue dialogue with legislators.
    - Dr. Roberts said Delegates believe it will pass next year. Chamber will run a seminar on how to look at current policies for small businesses. Small businesses need to be prepared for it.
- OED Budget Hearing held on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Appreciate subcommittee chairs attending and for the support for the Incubator Center. Technical Subcommittee has done a great job; and because of it, there is more understanding about it now.
- Attended Maryland Economic Development Association's Annual Conference. Vernon Thompson received the Hall of Fame Award with his 14-year old son in attendance at the ceremony.

**A Presentation on Susquehanna Workforce Network (SWN) was given by Bruce England, Executive Director.**

- Non-profit organization, mostly funded through Federal Government
- Administer workforce funds for this region by working with business and community organizations
- Operate 3 Workforce Centers – busiest center is Cecil County on Rt. 40 – Connect job seekers to employment and training services
  - Serve Harford and Cecil Counties
  - Serve diverse group of job seekers
  - Served over 19,000 job seekers last year – will surpass that number this year
- Types of Services Offered:

Job Listings & Job Fairs	Career & Personality Assessment	Career Advising	Specialized Programs (Veterans, ROW, Laid Off
Labor Market Info	Proficiency Testing	Skill Enhancement & Training Opportunities	Workers, Manufacturing, etc.)
Seminars	Resource Room	Occupations in Demand (LMI)	Youth Services (General & Specialty)

- Business Solutions & Engagement:
  - Cecil County has 1900 businesses
  - Help businesses recruit workforce
  - Provide training for workforce
    - Work in conjunction with Office of Economic Development (OED) training grant
    - Pay 50% of workers' wages for on-job training
  - Work with businesses experiencing mass layoffs
  - Hold rapid response meetings (have on-site State Unemployment reps & State Health Coverage reps available to answer employees' questions)
  - Provide resume building classes
  - Hold job fair for laid-off employees to help find other employment
  - Continue to work with laid-off employees
- Hold recruiting events at Susquehanna Workforce Network Centers
- Work with OED regarding prospects (businesses looking to start up or relocate in Cecil County)

**Cecil County will be holding a Job Fair on Thursday, May 12, 2016, from 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Singlerly Fire Company Banquet Hall in Elkton. Expected to have a record number of employers there.**

***Please help SWN attract job seekers – there are over 3,000 unemployed or underemployed individuals in Cecil County***

***A copy of this presentation is available on our website.***

Mike Ratchford stated that we would have a change up in order of presentation today. Our subcommittees with report first and then our department updates will follow.

***Subcommittee Reports:***

***Education/Workforce – Mary Bolt/D’Ette Devine***

- State has contributed \$3M for Library parking and we are moving ahead with the Gilpin Project.

***Technology – Norman Gaither***

- On 4/26 went to Delaware Tech Center; they are willing to work with us toward a regional approach to an Incubator Program.
  - Pledged access to a DuPont database
  - Ex-professionals that may want to start a business
  - Important to “vet” the occupants
  - May have found a Director for the Center
  - Looking very promising

***Land Use – Rupert Rossetti***

- Nothing to report

***Finance – Bob Palsgrove***

- Submitted response for VLT RFP
  - Applied for \$2M
    - 50% of funds have to go to minority-owned business in Harford or Cecil Counties.
    - VLT Manager funded through this \$2M, not through Cecil County budget
  - May have questions to respond to and/or respond to an oral presentation

***Communications – JoAnn Dawson***

- James Newby, Tech in the Visual Communications Lab of Cecil College, presented a variety of possible OED logos that he has been working on.
  - Color can be added to any of the logos
  - We would welcome/appreciate any feedback from the EDC Members and will email out a request.

***Council Report - Dan Schneckenburger***

Administration introduced a bill:

- Good News: Revenue from income tax trending over budget
- Bad News: Fixed to put money to pay down health care costs that we don’t want to pass on to employees
- Upside is that at least economy is growing well; seeing strong growth in revenues.

***Director’s Report – Lisa Webb***

- County Council Budget Hearing

- Rural Counties Legislative Update
- Coordinated Prospect Meetings w/State Agencies
- Meeting with major development group
- State VLT meetings/proposal submission
- NMTC Partner Strategic Planning
- Chamber's Legislative Update
- Bainbridge Update Meetings
- University of Delaware/Deltekpark Incubator Meeting
- Met with several existing businesses looking to expand in county
- Alliance, EAGB, WIB Board Meetings
- Cecil College Advisory Board Meeting
- MEDA Annual Conference

***Department Update – Susan O'Neill***

- Attended pre-proposal conference for VLT RFP
- Meet with Cecil County Dept. of Finance to discuss VLT RFP
- Meet with Finance Committee chair to discuss VLT RFP
- Submitted VLT Fund Manager proposal to MD Dept. of Commerce
- Attended Cecil County Chamber breakfast
- Attended MEDA Annual Conference
- Attended Business Engagement meeting
- Met with CBRP
- Met with Elkton Alliance Economic Competitiveness Committee
- **Continue planning for Business Appreciation Week of May 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**If you know of any business that would like a visit from OED or the County Executive, please call and let us know.**
- **Coordinating workshop for Business Appreciation Week – Will have Sec. of Minority Affairs and others as speakers**
- Attended County Council Budget hearing
- Continue working with DHCD regarding CDBG funds

***Agriculture Coordinator – Joanne Richart-Young***

- Final vendor coordination for Cecil County Farmers' Market – North East
- Finalized application for and received permit for CC Farmers' Market – North East
- Preparing/coordinating Farmers Market advertising
- Meetings with local farmers to follow-up on MDA/SHA Ag Sign Program participation
- Coordinated/attended MDA training for Farmers' Market vendors
- Update visits with Galvinell Meat Company, Painted Sky Alpaca Farm, and Priapi Gardens
- Coordinating Cecil Leadership Institute visit to Warwick Mushroom Farm
- Made annual Agriculture presentation to Cecil Leadership Institute
- Continue follow-up with prospect for potential agricultural operation in County
- finalized nomination of Mount Harmon for a Maryland Preservation Award
- Attended MARBIDCO meeting in Annapolis

- Attended Rural Maryland Council Directors meeting
- Attended Chamber Government Relations Legislative Wrap Up Breakfast
- Attended Union Hospital meeting
- Attended CC Farm Bureau Directors meeting

**Tourism Update - Sandy Turner**

- Represented Cecil County with booth at Philadelphia Inquirer Travel Show
- Developed "Tourism Month" promotion for May - Cecil's Choice Awards. Social media campaign to encourage locals and visitors to vote for their favorite Restaurant, Attraction, and Shop
- Tourism Strategic Plan edits continue
- Speaker at the Port Deposit Chamber meeting
- Attended Mid Atlantic Public Relations Alliance and MD Destination Marketing Organizations meetings
- Hosted annual "Partner Appreciation Breakfast" at Hollywood Casino
- Award recipients as follows:
  - Cornerstone Award - Fair Hill Natural Resources Management Area
  - Tourism Partner of the Year - Town of North East
  - Tourism Business of the Year - A&M Tent Events
  - Co. Executive / Co. Council Tourism Award - Bassmaster Elite Committee
  - Tourism Marketing Award - Hollywood Casino
  - Economic Impact Award - Chesapeake City
  - Tourism Volunteer of the Year - John Ford, Integrity Real Estate

**Coordinator Update - Jason Zang**

- Assisted in Business Appreciation Week promotion and development
- Connected retail freight-liner prospect with State representative to initiate filing of tax credit documents
- Compiled edits for OED marketing brochure and delivered them to designer
- Met with sports tourism/entertainment business planning to expand their footprint in Cecil County
- Met with prospect looking to expand current manufacturing operation into Cecil County
- Attended Tourism Appreciation Breakfast
- Participated in training program for County's new website
- Secured advertising space in and delivered advertisements to industry publications
- Prepared promotional material for MEDA Annual Conference
- Began work on Office of Economic Development Newsletter for May
- MEDA Conference slogan was "Creating a Sense of Place" – getting out and telling a story about each business. This will be our focus for our next newsletter with our upcoming business visits during Business Appreciation Week.

**2016 Important Upcoming Events**

May	Tourism Month
May 2nd - 3rd	MEDA Conference

**2016 Important Upcoming Events (Continued)**

May 5th	Asian Heritage Month Celebration 6pm-8pm Cecil County Admin. Bldg.
May 6th	Cecil County Farmers Market Open - North East 2pm-6pm Perryville Farmers Market Open - Perryville 3pm-7pm
May 16th - 20th	APG Military Appreciation Week
May 23rd - 27th	Cecil County Business Appreciation Week
May 28th	Fair Hill Races
June 17th	SWN - WIB Annual Meeting

**Summary**

In July, we will be visiting the Cecil County Fair. The EDC will take the month of August off and return in September.

Norm Gaither added:

The Meeting Ground organization will be holding its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Wine and Food Tasting Fundraiser on Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m. at Elk Forge Bed & Breakfast Inn, 807 Elk Mills Road, Elkton, MD. Tickets are \$50 each. Proceeds from this event are used to help individuals and families transition from being homeless.

The report will be made available via OED website.

**Adjournment**

Mike Ratchford adjourned the meeting at 9:17 a.m.

***Our next EDC meeting will be on June 1, 2016 at 8:00 a.m. at Cecil College, Room TC208.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel  
Administrative Assistant