

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 1, 2017

PRESENT

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), Walter Buck (Citizen), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (URP), Bruce England (SWN), Scott Holland (i-Lighting), Michael Lara (Orbital ATK), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism), Morgan Miller (rep. CCPL), Christopher Moyer (Director of Economic Development), 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), Dr. Rich Szumel (Union Hospital), Jason Zang (Economic Development)

ABSENT

Linda Burris (Delmarva Power), D'Ette Devine (CCPS), Paula Gilley (Citizen), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Doris Mason (USRC), Grove Miller (Citizen), Dan Schneckeburger (County Council), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancer)

GUESTS

Deb Carter (Buttonwood Beach), Erin Coulter (Buttonwood Beach), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Christie Dougherty (Cecil County Tourism), Tammy Edwards (Dept. of Commerce), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), John Ford (Integrity North East), Carla Geiersbach (Fair Hill International), Bonnie Grady (Cecil County Chamber), Terry Hasseltine (Maryland Sports), Kathleen Kunda (IXIMD), Melinda McGuigan (Edis Company), Stephanie Palko (Cecil Guardian), Alan Sexton (SWN), Jim Waters (Triumph Industrial Park)

Call to Order & Welcome

- Mike Ratchford called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.
- Introductions were made by all in attendance.
- Minutes from February 1, 2017 Meeting were approved.

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Maryland legislature continues to toil away
- Carl Roberts reported on legislative front:
 - Earned Sick Leave Bill which requires employers to provide earned leave for sick leave expected to pass the House; see no reason it won't pass Senate
 - State Budget – elephant in the room – major deficit, a lot of priorities to get through

Director's Report – Christopher Moyer

- Retail coming into immediate scope of priorities
 - ICSC conference in May
- Cecil County has a lot of needs as it relates to retail
- Meeting with developers, brokers, and retailers
 - Met with Cordish Company, own Big Elk Mall & North East Plaza
 - Vacancies at Big Elk Mall -- say space will be 100% filled by end of year

- Like to attract a Steak House chain.
 - Plan to put a Sushi House in.
 - Pet Smart already coming there.
- Meeting with other brokers as well.
- As employment base grows and residential base grows, our retail base needs to grow as well.
- If anyone has any thoughts or suggestions as to companies to solicit or retail opportunities, please let OED know.
- The pad site around Hollywood Casino in Perryville is a possibility for retail development; the owner is well aware of the needs in the County.
- Susan O'Neill and I had a meeting with Amazon and Bruce England (SWN)
 - Dr. Bolt hosted meeting at Cecil College
 - Amazon still coming to Cecil
 - Plan to start hiring this summer; do not like to start hiring process too early
- Toll Bill SB1090 calling for no new investments into the toll booths; to relocate them or do away with them
 - Build small work group to build around toll issue
 - Big obstacle for economic development in Cecil County
 - Need to get our voices heard in Annapolis and Baltimore
 - LIDL – not been as forthcoming as Amazon with their plans
 - Still coming to Cecil
 - Have not revealed their hiring plans as of yet; Bruce (SWN) has spoken with some of their recruiters; when they are ready, they will be ready

An Update on the Fair Hill International 4 Star Event was presented by Carla Geiersbach, Executive Director, Fair Hill International, and Terry Hasseltine, Executive Director, Maryland Sports Commission.

MD Horse Industry Board commissioned MD Stadium Authority and Populous to put together a Horse Park Study in 2015. Said Maryland a fantastic horse park state. Industry over \$1.5B. Put in a horse park system, across the state venues that would link together – Fair Hill designated as Field Event Zone. Put together a horse park study task force comprised of members from all areas.

- Got Request for Proposal. Put together a study. Submitted proposal.
- January 18th – U.S. Equestrian Federation (USEF) announced Fair Hill International (FHI) made short list for second 4 Star Event in U.S.
 - Great Meadow in The Plains, VA is other shortlisted venue
- Maryland Sports Commission came onboard to help with proposal.
 - Will stay involved and see project through for years to come. Not just there for short term.
- What a 4Star Event means to Cecil County:
 - Approx. \$30M annual economic benefit
 - 80 to 100K attendees
 - Approx. \$240 to \$300 daily spending per attendee
 - Over 65% captured in Cecil County, 95% in region
 - Marquee Branding Opportunity – This is the SUPER BOWL of Events!!

- Opportunity for Client Engagement
- Legacy for Cecil County
- Cecil County Advantages:
 - 30-years Experience
 - Intra-State and Inter-State Partnerships
 - Delaware already committed tax dollars for 4 Star Event
 - LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION – situated between 3 of top 10 media markets
 - Accessibility
 - State Horse Park System
- What's It Going To Take to Bring It Home?
 - Strategic Partners/Alliances
 - Financial Resources
 - Advocacy
 - Positive/Optimistic Environments: CAN DO & WILLING TO DO!
 - Need EDC to Advocate
 - If Carla, Terry, or Chris call – Take the Meeting; Introduce us to people you know – Need to meet as many contacts as possible.
- We are short listed.
- Meeting with USEF on April 18th
- If everybody engages in CAN DO/WILLING TO DO, IT CAN HAPPEN!!
- A 4 Star Equestrian Event fits into the traditional use of Fair Hill Resources Management area yet will bring in revenue.
- Plan requires NO new construction; we are just fixing grand stands.
- 4 Star Requirements Dictate what a venue must have: Event must be live streamed. Changes being made will allow that.
- Fair Hill's parcel of land and infrastructure rivals property in Kentucky.
 - Has major accessibility from I-95, other competitors do not have this.
- Easier to compete at Fair Hill - right down road from major quarantine fly-in zone in the country for animal athletes
- Phase I - Grand Stand Redevelopment, Turf Course Redesign & Irrigation & Tunnel under Rt. 273 - estimated costs \$8-10M
- Overall project estimated mid \$20'sM
- Hope to raise \$4-6M each year toward budget
- 4 Star Event to take place in Fall 2019

A copy of the presentation is available on our website.

Agriculture Update – Joanne Richart-Young

- MD Ag Council hosted Annual Taste of MD at Michael's Eighth Avenue, Glen Burnie
 - Milburn Family inducted into Hall of Fame
- Painted Sky Alpaca Ribbon Cutting on March 13th
 - Will be able to buy items made with their own fiber
- Medical marijuana grower SunMed – facility underway

Subcommittee Reports:

Education/Workforce – Bruce England

- Follow-up to Labor Market Study – working to define strategies – working to support those strategies
- This Sat Work Force Center hosting Youth Summer Job Fair
- May 11 CC Job Fair – could be opportunity for introduction for Amazon, LIDL, TruAir – need to sign up early

Technology – Susan O’Neill

- At transition point; realized successful 2 phase study showing viability of incubator; board since established; board pursuing next steps – setting up presence @ Cecil College, Elkton Station to allow Phase I of implementation to start
- Committee needs to set up meeting with Chris to determine continued involvement with the Board and how to serve the needs of community from technology perspective under EDC.

Land Use – Rupert Rossetti

- Need to get on Chris’ calendar.

Finance – Bob Palsgrove

- Need to meet with Chris on loan program in County.

Communications – JoAnn Dawson

- Working with amended branding initiative with Elkton Alliance – they have selected a consultant.

Important Upcoming Events

March 24th

Farm Bureau Annual Banquet

Summary

Enterprise Zone for Perryville to be introduced March 7th at Council Work Session.

Perryville has passed theirs. County has to approve the request and send to State of Maryland.

The report will be made available via OED website.

Adjournment

Mike Ratchford adjourned the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

**** Our next EDC meeting will be on April 5, 2017 at 8:00 a.m. at the Cecil County Central Library, 301 Newark Avenue, Elkton, MD 21921.****

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant