

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
September 6, 2017

PRESENT

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (URP), D'Ette Devine (CCPS), Bruce England (SWN), Paula Gilley (Citizen), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Michael Lara (Orbital ATK), Grove Miller (Citizen), 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), Dan Schneckenburger (County Council), Dr. Rich Szumel (Union Hospital), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancenter), Jason Zang (Economic Development Coordinator)

ABSENT

Walter Buck (Citizen), Linda Burris (Delmarva Power), Scott Holland (i-Lighting), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism), Morgan Miller (CCPL), Rupert Rossetti (Citizen)

GUESTS

Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Tammy Edwards (Dept. of Commerce), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Scott Flanigan (Cecil County DPW), Brad Kroner (Cecil Whig), Kathy Kunda (IXIMD), Alan McCarthy (Cecil County Executive), Melinda McGuigan (Edis Company), Bob Meffley (Cecil County Councilman), Stephanie Palko (Cecil Guardian), Sharon Pelham (APGFCU), Alan Sexton (SWN), David Strouss (McCrone)

Call to Order & Welcome

- The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m.
- Introductions were made by all in attendance.
- Minutes from June 7, 2017 meeting were approved.

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Updates since our last meeting
 - 4 Star Equestrian approved – now goes to International Council
 - If approved, will be a significant, signature event for County
 - Fortress Steel has purchased 60,000 sq. ft. facility in the County
 - LIDL moving along on schedule
 - Amazon has increased employment from 700 to 1,000 employees
 - Upper Shore Regional Council has new Executive Director, Robert Buckley, Queen Anne County Commissioner
 - County exploring fiber optic loop – would be an economic boost
- Looking ahead for EDC:
 - Will keep same format
 - Meeting will be on first Wednesday of each month at 8:00am, Cecil College
 - Chris & Staff working on getting outside speakers
 - Looking at how to get more towns/municipalities engaged

- Couple towns are having their own Economic Development Committee
- Congrats to Alan McCarthy for leadership and bringing people together
- Refreshing Economic Development (ED) Strategy
 - Discuss findings, make recommendations, looking for strengths and weaknesses – chartered course for EDC and OED – makes sense to revisit
 - How best to engage the EDC – will be forthcoming
- Alan McCarthy voiced support for EDC
 - Looking to group to move the County forward, bring fresh ideas and offer advice to County officials

Director's Report – Christopher Moyer

- Have a lot of great projects in cue – great things to share in next few months
- 4 Star – Opportunity for Cecil County to show we are ready to host event in 2019 is by showing interest in 3 Star
 - Encourage businesses to sponsor and attend; great place to take clients or family
 - Number that attend 3 Star will be closely looked at
 - International body has until November to make decision
 - 4-day event
 - One thing that put us over top is Virginia had a race weekend and no one attended – thinking it was seen by USEF
- Workforce Summit last week included a lot of business partners: SWN, Cecil College, CCPS, etc.
 - Opportunity for businesses to meet with County
 - Would like to open Summit up to larger areas of business
 - Remind businesses of services right in back yard
 - Leverage strengths of everyone in community
- Working with Dept. of Commerce on tech transfer program with APG
 - Great opportunity to grow jobs
 - APG has 5 tech officers on base
 - Can extract technology

A presentation of Recent Distribution Workforce Hiring was presented by Bruce England, Executive Director, Susquehanna Workforce Network (SWN)

- SWN helps employers with recruiting efforts and training of workers, helps individuals find employment, and conducts youth job fairs (ages 18-24) for summer employment.
- 3 centers – Elkton (Cecil), Aberdeen and Bel Air (Harford)
- Cecil County currently has 1,134 available jobs while Harford County has 3,678 available jobs.
- Employers looking more for talent rather than experience.
- Labor force comprised of people who are currently working but want a different/better job, people who want to work, or people looking for work.
- Labor force is getting tighter.
 - Conclusion: Have the ability to supply workers for an expanding distribution industry.
 - Amazon: Planned to hire 700, increased number to 1,000
 - Average wage \$13/Hour w/shift differential
 - Work four 10-hour days, 2 shifts per day

- Lidl: Plan to hire 400
 - Mentality: Want to be the employer of choice
 - Plan to pay workers more than others
 - Will work 2 shifts, family/community friendly
 - European style culture

A copy of the handout from this presentation is available on our website.

Subcommittee Reports:

Education/Workforce – D’Ette Devine

- Looking at logistics for what students need in high school to mesh with what is needed at college.
- State does not have any programs
- At School of Technology, trying to match students with jobs employers are looking to fill
- CCPS students showed greatest advancement in reading and math scores across the State

Technology – Danny DeMarinis

- Have come up with set of activities– sent to Chris Moyer for approval.
- 1st Step of Virtual Incubator: Conferences and Seminars – Committee invited to participate

Land Use – Rupert Rossetti

- No report

Finance – Bob Palsgrove

- Revolving Loan Funds – \$5,000-\$75,000 loans intended to help small businesses.
- New program coming soon under new name “Cecil Catalyst”.

Communications – JoAnn Dawson/Jason Zang

- Working with North Star on branding initiative
- Have sent out community-wide survey on perceptions of Cecil County, etc.
 - Survey open to anyone who lives or works in County.

Council – Dan Schneckenburger

- Infrastructure on Rt. 40 in real discussions - get people connected, how to incentivize
- Anirban Basu spoke at MACo
 - Charts rank counties – includes job growth
 - Would like to see Cecil as most improved
- Thank stakeholders who helped with Amazon and Lidl

Council – Bob Meffley

- People thanking us for what we are doing – other counties have approached us at MACo
 - Want to know what we are doing to attract companies to Cecil
- Seeing more students go into trades
- Workforce – finding skilled labor is the problem
- Unemployment – always going to have ones that do not want to work
- Glad to see something happening in Cecil County

Important Upcoming Events

September 14	NMTC 25th Anniversary World of Wine
September 28	Cecil Chamber & OED Manufacturers Appreciation Luncheon
October 18 th or 25 th	11 th annual Harvest Dinner to be held at Chateau Bu-De; date finalized ASAP
October 20	Cecil Chamber Business Hall of Fame
October 23 – 27	Maryland Economic Development Week
October 26	Cecil County OED and Elkton Alliance workshop

The report will be made available via OED website.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:15a.m.

Our next EDC meeting will be on October 4, 2017 at 8:00 a.m. at Cecil College, Room TC208.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant