

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
January 6, 2021

PRESENT

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), Linda Burris (Delmarva Power), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (URP), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Sandra Edwards (OED Economic Development Mgr.), Bruce England (SWN), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Maureen Fitzgerald (O'Shea) (OED Agribusiness Coordinator), Woody Jackson (Citizen/Tourism Committee), Sharon Kurfuerst (Christiana Care/Union), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Morgan Miller (CCPL), Steve Overbay (OED Director), Robert Palsgrove (WSFS), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Richard Starr (OED Economic Development Coordinator), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancer)

ABSENT

Michael Lara (Northrop Grumman), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC)

GUESTS

Debbie Brown (CC Chamber of Commerce), Michele Burch (Tourism Committee), Deb Carter (Buttonwood Beach/Tourism Committee), John Ford (Tourism Committee), Andrew Griffin (MD Chamber of Commerce), Danielle Hornberger (Cecil County Executive), Jayci Mitchell (CCPS Student/Intern), Sharon Pelham (APGFCU), Brigitte Peters (MD Commerce), Jessica Price (Elkton Alliance/Tourism Committee), Rupert Rossetti (Tourism Committee), Jack Schammel (TEDCO), Dan Schneckeburger (CC Director, Administration), Alan Sexton (SWN), Scott Sturgill (Quest End Capital)

Call to Order & Welcome – Mike Ratchford

- Meeting called to order at 8:00 am
- December 2, 2020 meeting minutes approved

Chairman's Report / Introductions & Welcome to Steve Overbay – Mike Ratchford

- Welcome the following individuals:
 - County Executive Danielle Hornberger; look forward to working with your administration
 - Dan Schneckeburger, Director of Administration, previous County Council member and EDC member
 - Dr. Sharon Kurfuerst, Chief Operating Officer, Christiana Care/Union Hospital. Sharon will be our new contact person with the departure of Dr. Rich Szumel
 - Dr. Kurfuerst is responsible for development and execution of core enterprise business processes for Christiana Care; also named 2020 Women in Business honoree by Delaware Business Times
 - Steve Overbay the new director of OED; Steve served as Deputy Director of Harford County's Office of Community and Economic Development, Deputy Director of Harford's OED, as well as Sr. Business Development Associate and BRAC Coordinator in Regional BRAC Office

Director's Report - Steve Overbay – Plans/Update for OED

- Cecil has great attractions, so much to offer; appreciative to be part of shaping Cecil County's future

- Acknowledge OED team – dedicated professionals, highly committed to business community and Cecil County
- Looking for EDC members to serve as advocates; use as sounding boards for OED programs, concepts, initiatives
- OED will take very customer focused approach to economic development, being responsive and engaged with business community; agriculture will play a crucial role in diversifying economy
- COVID has taken major toll on some small businesses; others have thrived due to pivoting their business models
- Looking at growth and attraction opportunities for all new and existing businesses
- Provide full support of agribusiness in County
- Continue Tourism excellence
- Forge partnerships with extended business teams to better serve businesses
- Administering grants
 - Original CARES money – assisted 546 applicants = \$4.9M
 - December 31 deadline met; since extended
 - Have received additional funds – Hotel grants \$267K; Restaurant grants \$398K
 - Hoping to expand footprint to include bed and breakfasts and restaurant criteria
- Looking at ways to infuse technology into farming community to create new business opportunities
- Launched Upper Shore Micro Ag Grant – will run Jan. 1-31, grants of \$250-\$5,000
- Ag symposium (virtual), “Rooted in Our Community”, March 2021, info to follow
- Introduce and Welcome Jayci Mitchell, ag intern, to OED
 - Senior at North East High and SSCT in X Science Program
 - Serve as Future Farmers of America President
 - President of 4-H Club
 - Actively involved in Cecil County Fair Board
 - Thrilled to be helping farmers and to bring more agriculture industry to Cecil
- Tourism will be moving to North East; more centrally located in County
- Winter Lights – Cecil Nights
- Encourage folks to come to downtowns to support local businesses thru restaurants, shops, and planned events; runs January - February
- Working with Bassmasters to host 2-year event – Bassmasters Kayak Fishing Event; Summer of 2021 and Summer of 2022
- Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill
 - Received confirmed status as 5 Star Event; added to international calendar for next 5 yrs.
- Ongoing Prospecting and development activity
- News re Bainbridge, Great Wolf Lodge, Penn National Hollywood Casino; Enterprise Zone expansion approved
- Two reports to be presented to County Executive – Economic Development Transition Report and Broadband Committee

A Preview of 2021 Maryland Legislative Session was given by Andrew Griffin, Sr. Policy Analyst, MD Chamber of Commerce

- Largest state line business advocacy organization; over 5000 member businesses of all sizes
- 2021 Legislative Priorities:
 - Liability Protection
 - Unemployment Insurance
 - Economic Sustainability

- 2021 Anticipated Critical Issues:
 - COVID-19 Response and Recovery
 - Business Regulation & Operations
 - Civil Liability
 - Cyber & Technology
 - Education & Workforce Development
 - Energy & Environment
 - Health Care & Biopharma
 - Labor & Employment
 - Taxation
 - Transportation & Infrastructure
 - Workers Compensation & Unemployment Insurance
- Important to reach out to your representatives and make your voice heard
- Gov. Hogan announced economic stimulus package to include funding for businesses and individuals
(A copy of the handout detailing the above was distributed via email)

Subcommittee Reports:

Workforce Update – Bruce England

- December high activity month for businesses hiring and individuals seeking jobs
- Hiring Event held in December with eight businesses – over 300 people registered
- Renewed interested in returning to work and those looking for new opportunities
- Hot Jobs Report comes out every Thursday
- 1st Quarter – many businesses “right size” their workforce
 - SWN has rapid response team to assist employers downsizing
 - Work with OED to try to avert layoffs
 - Work with company to get people reemployed – connect them to services (healthcare, employment, housing, etc.)

Technology Subcommittee – Danny DeMarinis

- County Executive asked D. DeMarinis to head up Broadband Committee.
- Members are: Dave Warnick, David Black, Steve Overbay, Melissa Mishra
- Drafted report ready to present to County Executive

Finance Subcommittee – Bob Palsgrove

- Latest stimulus package included another round of PPP funding
- Businesses must show 25% decrease in revenue in any quarter of 2020 to qualify

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m.

EDC Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2021 has been distributed. Will continue to meet virtually. Our next EDC meeting will be (Virtual) on February 3, 2021 at 8:00 am. Details to follow.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
 Administrative Assistant