

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

October 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 Mgr.), Bruce England (SWN), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Sharon Kurfuerst (Christiana Care/Union), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Steve Overbay (OED Director), Robert Palsgrove (Citizen), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC), Richard Starr (OED Coordinator), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancercenter)

ABSENT

Maureen O'Shea Fitzgerald (Agribusiness Coordinator), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Michael Lara (Northrop Grumman), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Morgan Miller (CCPL)

GUESTS

Debbie Brown (CC Chamber of Commerce), Michele Burch (Exit Realty), Bill Coutz (CC Council), Scott Flanigan (CC Director, DPW), Jeanne Miner (Town of Elkton), Nicole Parr (CCPS), Sharon Pelham (APGFCU), Jack Schammel (TEDCO), Dan Schneckenburger (CC Dir. of Admin), Jeff Sellers (SB Real Estate), Alan Sexton (SWN), Toni Sprenkle (BDC), Scott Sturgill (PBKC)

Call to Order & Welcome – Mike Ratchford

- Meeting called to order at 8:01 a.m.
- September 1, 2021, meeting minutes approved

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Reformating Subcommittees - Adding ag & small business subcommittees; Consider finance subcommittee
 - Will meet to discuss and keep members posted
- EDC Meetings – will continue in virtual format but also plan some face-to-face meetings in 2022
 - North East Library could be an option for a meeting or visit?

Director of Administration – Dan Schneckenburger

- County has executed wastewater agreement with Triumph Industrial Park
 - All users, all tenants in park unanimously agreed
 - Will bring into 21st century, allow for prosperity and economic growth of businesses

Director's Report - Steve Overbay

- MD 5 Star at Fair Hill
 - Thank my team for their tremendous effort in preparing for the 5 Star
 - 5 Star will be opportunity to showcase Cecil County, its business community, its representative leadership, and deliver a world-class event
 - Tremendous transformation at Fair Hill
 - Infrastructure investment of >\$20M
 - Small city being built of tents and chalets
 - OED's task – full utilization of this opportunity with our business community
 - Have groups represented that understand what 5 Star can be for our community

- Have conversations with potential developers, builders, investors, etc.
- Allow Cecil County to give it's best first impression to folks unfamiliar
- Many of our business partners will be represented (College, Library, CCPS, etc.)
- Range of Tickets available, reasonably priced
 - General Admission allows cost-effective options through Tier One entertainment package (includes high-end meals, adult beverages, prime seating)
- Have participants from around globe, some were featured at the Olympics
- Hotel reservations difficult to come by

Tourism at the MD 5 Star Update / Sandy Maruchi-Turner

- Will have 30x40 tent at main entry way
- Will have displays to give look and feel of County to make first impression on visitors
- Chances to win to gain info on visitors (who, where from, staying overnight?)
- JoAnn Dawson doing book signing
- Having food samples
- Began marketing for 5 Star in Spring – May/June (eventing) and Sept/Oct (general public)
- Cecil County Tourism partnered with MD Sports & Entertainment Corp and MD Office of Tourism to create marketing grant

Director's Report (continued) – Steve Overbay

- Ribbon Cuttings:
 - AUI Power – World Class Training Center
 - On own property; in-house training & certification of personnel in conjunction with State Dept. of Labor Licensing and Regulation
 - Investment in their business and in the County
 - Alo Yoga / Bella Canvas, North East Gateway
 - Will be hiring up to 400 people; 718,000 sq. ft. facility
 - SWN met with them early re workforce
- OED thanks SWN; considers them an extended member of OED team
- Triumph Industrial Wastewater Connection – incredible economic development opportunity
 - Wonderful to see ownership making reinvestment in facilities
 - Has building sizes sought out
 - Larger shells for smaller businesses to grow into (retention & growth)
- Bainbridge - Systems going full ahead
- Administration/Directors Staff Retreat @ North Bay
- Strengthening Partnerships:
 - Met with Cecil Transit – valuable tool
 - Looking at ways to address workforce, access to employees
 - Not just transportation for seniors/disabled population but huge impact to business community
 - Library Business Resource Partners – interact with OED and community re business start up
 - Provide data analysis counseling coaching session
 - Toured new North East Library
 - TEDCO – looking for critical elements to be checked off before a business can move on to next series of stages

- Webinar held by SBA/Office of Small Business Programs/URP – Access to Opportunities Program
 - Business partners and County procurement office on webinar
 - Contracting opportunities with APG for Cecil and Harford County companies
- Upcoming Events:
 - Harvest Dinner – Oct. 7th @ The Wellwood
 - Multiple-course menu – 100% locally grown and sourced products
 - Round 2 – Online Sales & Telework Grant – Applications Accepted Oct. 11-25
 - Total Grant \$85,000; Funds to be disbursed by December 1, 2021
 - Economic Development Week – Oct. 25-29
 - Manufacturers’ Leadership Summit – Oct. 27; hosting with Chamber and SWN
- EDC Subcommittees:
 - Looking at addition of Ag and Small Business Subcommittees
 - Want to best utilize limited resources we have as a group
 - Look at Finance Subcommittee - identify possible new approaches to helping business community
 - Want subcommittees to be Advisory Board
 - Will reach out to members, look at best fits, interests/willingness, modernize
- 2021 Commercial Brokers Event – being postponed until spring due to unforeseen circumstances

A presentation was given on DataStory – Telling Cecil County’s Story by Steve Overbay, OED Director, and Sandra Edwards, OED Manager

- DataStory is a tool implemented for people, prospective clients - gives a look at what Cecil County has to offer
- Prospects not always received via direct calls to OED
- Some start at State or regional level
- Decisions made before we get chance to speak with them
- DataStory can help pull them in before we meet
- DataStory uses cartography or a GIS platform put into easy-to-digest snippets
 - Identifies strengths of community and drives people back to our website
- Thank USRC for funding DataStory for upper shore regional counties
 - Each tailored to their County, their message, specific entities they are trying to attract
- Excellent tool for grant work
- Reasons to Consider Cecil County
 - Fast becoming place to be
 - Opportunity to highlight things going on now
 - Highlight companies to find safety in numbers
- Maps Change
 - Messages Changes – like to resonate with companies
 - Show Quality of Life visually vs. static map
- Location
 - Macro view – can go down to Micro view
 - Click on any - open tremendous wealth of data
 - Drive time analysis & visual
- I-95 Corridor Visual
 - Cities, airports, ports, reach of international markets, railways, Cecil Transit
 - Developable Land – Foreign Trade Zone, Opportunity Zone, Enterprise Zone

- Workforce
 - Workers by Residence – pulled from three states, 7 counties
 - Qualified & diverse
 - By Occupation
 - Most educated workforce East of Mississippi
 - Education Attainment
 - Top 100 National Universities
 - Cecil College, Cecil County School of Technology
- Quality of Life
 - Waterfront / Shoreline
 - Small Town Main Street
 - 8 Municipalities
 - Housing Options: Waterfront, condos, single family
 - Robust school system: Public & private school systems
 - Healthcare
 - Parks, C&D Canal, Heritage Trail
 - Agribusiness
- Attractions: MD 5 Star, Bassmasters, Great Wolf Lodge, Conowingo Dam, Calvert Regional Park
- Development Opportunities: Bainbridge, Chesapeake Overlook, Principio, North East Business Center, North East Commerce Center, Triumph Industrial Park, Southfields, etc.

Link for Cecil Datastory:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/1586c3df1b0c4ad98ccdbd10c86df653>

Good of the Cause:

Council Update – Bill Coutz

- Annexation and rezoning for property off Rt. 279 and Belle Hill Road
 - Opens opportunity for Town of Elkton to commercially develop property
 - Excellent location, proximity to access I-95
 - Anxious to see who tenant will be

Chamber Update – Debbie Brown

- Sat., Oct. 16 - Cecil County Farm Museum Regional Agriculture Center hosting Heritage Day, 10am-4pm; Ribbon Cutting at 11 am
- Government Relations Committee meeting every 2 weeks re issues to be addressed this coming 2022 legislative session
- Oct. 27 - Manufacturers' Appreciation Breakfast – working w/OED & SWN
- Nov. 19 – First Responders' Appreciation Dinner

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 am.

Our next EDC Meeting will be on November 3, 2021, at 8:00 am. Details to follow.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant