

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

June 1, 2022

PRESENT

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (Mitre Corp), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Sandra Edwards (Acting Dir., OED), Jeff Emmons (Delmarva Power), Bruce England (SWN), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Maureen O'Shea Fitzgerald (OED Agribusiness Coordinator), Ed Jones (Northrop Grumman), Sharon Kurfuerst (Christiana Care/Union), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Steve Overbay (Acting Dir. of Admin), Robert Palsgrove (Citizen), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC), Richard Starr (OED Coordinator), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancer)

ABSENT

Woody Jackson (Citizen), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Morgan Miller (CCPL)

GUESTS

Debbie Brown (CC Chamber of Commerce), Michele Burch (Realtor), Bill Coutz (CC Council), Scott Flanigan (CC DPW), Laura Metzler (CCPL), John Ness (WCHC), Susan O'Neill (USRC), Brigitte Peters, (MD Dept. of Commerce), Jack Schammel (TEDCO), Jeff Sellers (SB Realty), Alan Sexton (SWN), Toni Sprenkle (BDC), Scott Sturgill (The Peoples Bank), Maura Van Syckle (SBDC)

Call to Order & Welcome – Mike Ratchford

- Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.
- May 4, 2022, meeting minutes approved

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Economic Summit on May 18th
 - Rosewood Farms great location, jewel in County
 - Great panelists and speakers
- Hoping to have social event for EDC in July (late afternoon)

Update – Dr. Carl Roberts

- June 22 - Government Relations Committee hosting Primary Candidates Forum, Milburn Stone Theater, 6pm

An update on Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund was presented by Brigitte Peters, Sr. Bus Development Rep, MD Dept. of Commerce, and Susan O'Neill, Executive Director, USRC

Timeline:

- 2/18/22 – Gov. Hogan announces inclusion of Rural MD Economic Development Fund in first Supplemental Budget
- 4/11/22 - Rural MD Economic Fund becomes approved by Gov. Hogan's budget and General Assembly
- 4/20/22 – MD Dept. of Commerce releases first set of guidelines, FAQ, and application
- 5/17/22 – Tri-County Council letter to Commerce requesting extended deadline and clarification

- 5/25/22 – Commerce extends deadline from Aug. 2, 2022, to Sept. 2, 2022, and provides details

Program Description and Purpose:

- Rural MD Economic Development Fund seeks to fund infrastructure projects that will support economic development activity, stimulate private investment, and grow jobs in the state's rural counties

Application Requirements, Award Amounts & Terms:

- Regional councils formally endorse projects
- Each county submits letter of support
- Max funding request is \$10,000,000
- No limit on funding for any project except limit of \$10M
- All grants funded must be expended within 24 months of grant award date
- Progress reports on project(s) required with parameters
- Need to request demographic/MBE info for all contractors and vendors selected to perform work under grant

Grant Funding Criteria:

- Regional project which fosters collaboration between multiple counties encouraged.
 - Multiples projects can be included in one application – identify/describe separately
 - Awards do not require matching funds.
 - Eligible costs include planning and feasibility studies plus “hard” project costs
 - May include NEW administrative costs associated directly to oversight and implementation of funding (up to 3% of total award)
 - Existing projects that have received investment from MD Dept. of Commerce should be identified

Commerce Application Process/Submission Window:

- Application form available to regional councils ~ May 2, 2022; deadline extended to Sept. 2, 2022
 - Submit application to Lori Ratzburg at lori.ratzbur@maryland.gov
 - Dept. of Commerce may contact applicants with questions after receiving application
 - Regional councils will be notified of application status by Sept. 30, 2022
 - Dept. of Commerce to enter into grant agreement with regional councils in October 2022

Award Amounts & Funding Criteria:

- % of funds spend on regional projects and individual county projects
\$2.9MM Cecil; \$2.9MM Kent; \$2.9MM Queen Anne's; \$1.3MM regional projects
- % for municipalities
 - Internal decision by county
- Role of nonprofits
 - Internal decision by county
- Non-regional requests should be decided by respective county and included in county proposal
- USRC requirements beyond Commerce requirements
 - Is funding available elsewhere?
 - Why is this best use of Fund?
 - How does proposal fit into economic development strategy? Comprehensive plan?

To be decided

- Submission date for Counties proposals to USRC
- Review of regional projects

Director's Report – Update on Economic Development – Sandra Edwards, Acting Director

- May 10 – Budget hearing with Council
- Video – Simpatico selected – Prepare 3 videos for OED use
- May 18 - Economic Development Summit successful – approx. 100 attended
- Upper Shore Micro Ag Grants closed, 3 extended because of supply-chain issues; submitted 4 applications to MARBIDCO for reimbursement
- 24 certified in Cecil Grown program
- Updated farmers/farm market brochure – ordered 2,000 (give out Cecil County Fair, Fresh Farm Fest, towns, venues, etc.)
- Tourism:
 - May 11 - Partner Appreciation Breakfast @ Fairwinds Farm
 - Mike Iaconelli fishing tournament this weekend
 - EDA grant for marketing
 - Summer ads in full swing and new food video
 - Ribbon Cutting for FIN Outdoor Recreation in Chesapeake City (bike rental)
 - Grand Opening Turkey Point Tasting Room at vineyard
 - Grand Re-opening at Patriots Glen Golf Course Clubhouse
 - Cream of Crop movie premiere at Milburn Stone Theater – Congrats to JoAnn
- May 20 – Towns/County Partners meeting (virtual every other month)
- Prospect interest remains strong
- Impact Analysis Study of Events still delayed
- Aug 17 – MACo at DRY 85, 7-9pm – Celebrating Cecil's economic success

Administration Update – Steve Overbay, Acting Director of Administration

- June 7 – FY23 Budget Council hearing
 - OED's next year budget looks strong coupled with grant application announcements, \$2.9M
- Conowingo Dam – large debris field came down from North; removed; do not want to impact boating community/Tourism industry – great business partner
- Health Dept. – Plans and permits review process if building in County
 - Reviews delayed 6-8 wks. due to staffing shortage
 - Looking at creative solutions with State Health Dept.
 - FY23 budget – additional positions in LUDS
- Thank You to Sandy and Tourism team – great job on Partnership Appreciation Event
- Great Wolf Lodge – enormous structure; moving ahead of schedule
 - Working with State Highway Admin. coordinating transportation improvements
 - Additional 8 pad sites at Chesapeake Overlook
- Brokers Event (Summit) – great event, a lot happening in Cecil County, hear other perspectives
 - Great job by OED team
- Cecil Soil Conservation District (CSCD) tour – ag focused, impacts economic development
 - CSCD plays role in economic development (small farms to large scale business parks)
 - Area to continue growing for economic development; zoned for ag business
- June 4 – Reviewing application for VLT funding; monies for nonprofit communities

Good of the Cause:

Council Update – Bill Coutz

- Exciting presentation this morning – getting close to funds and identifying projects
- Go to final vote on FY 23 budget next Tuesday
- 8 County schools do not have safe entrances completed; promises for funding after budget process; want all schools to be compliant.

Carl Roberts Comment on Schools – All entrances of all school buildings are locked and under surveillance. 8 schools mentioned do not channel people coming into door into main office. However, all schools have a secure entrance.

College Update – Dr. Mary Bolt

- Great graduation
- Successful gala – great way to raise scholarship monies
- Summer Camps appear to be exceeding 2019 numbers.

Chamber Update - Debbie Brown

- June 22 – Candidates Forum, Milburn Theater, 6pm
- June 4 – Chamber Members Appreciation Picnic, Chamber grounds
- June 15 – Business Card Exchange, Bohemia Overlook, Blue Elk Vineyard

Communications Update – JoAnn Dawson

- Thank everyone who turned out for screening of movie
- Cream of the Crop accepted in Cannes Film Festival in France
- Offering Fairwinds for July meeting (if having one)

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 am.

EDC will follow summer schedule – look for email from Terri on social event.

Next EDC Meeting will be on September 7, 2022. Details to follow.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant