

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

November 2, 2022

PRESENT

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (Mitre Corp), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Sandra Edwards (OED Mgr.), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Ed Jones (Northrop Grumman), Kimberly Justus (SWN), Sharon Kurfuerst (Christiana Care/Union), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Maureen O'Shea Fitzgerald (OED Agribusiness Coordinator), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Robert Palsgrove (Citizen), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC), Bill Sorenson (OED Director),

ABSENT

Jeff Emmons (Delmarva Power), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Morgan Miller (CCPL), Richard Starr (OED Coordinator), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancenter)

GUESTS

Debbie Brown (CC Chamber of Commerce), Bill Coutz (Co. Council) Scott Flanigan (CC DPW), Christie Griest (Tourism), John Ness (West Cecil), Susan O'Neill (USRC), Steve Overbay (Director of Administration), Dan Schneckenburger (Uppershore Workforce Investment Board), Jeff Sellers (SB Realty), Alan Sexton (SWN), Toni Sprenkle (BDC), Maura Van Syckle (SBDC), Andrea Vuncannon (APGFCU), Karen Zuccardi (TEDCO)

Call to Order & Welcome – Mike Ratchford

- Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.
- October 5, 2022, meeting minutes approved

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Congratulations to OED/everyone involved in this year's MD 5 Star at Fair Hill – spectacular event!
- Tourism Visitor Tent well manned, wonderful tastings, welcoming atmosphere
- Delighted to welcome Bill Sorenson as new Director, OED as of Oct. 11
 - Bill was Director of Regional Business Development, MD Dept. of Commerce & Jurisdictional Rep for Howard County
 - VP North American Services @ Dell EMC Corp
 - Managing Director of MidAtlantic Sales at Hewlett Packard Enterprises
 - Holds degrees in Economics and Mathematics from Towson Univ.
 - Resides in Harford County

Director's Report – Update on Economic Development – Bill Sorenson, Director OED

- Came into great team and great County
- Shout out to Sandra and the team for the fantastic 5 Star event; thank Sandra for great handoff in transition
- Maryland 5 Star 2022 – great event; hoping for great numbers; chalet great for networking
- Economic Development Week:
 - County Exec gave Proclamation
 - Oct. 25 - Hosted all-day Digital Marketing Workshop at North East Library
 - 28 attendees, potential for 26 grants of at least \$1,000 each; funded by USRC

- Recognized businesses for milestone anniversaries:
 - Crouse Auto Body 40 yrs.; Serenity Salon Spa & Tanning 15 yrs.; Painted Sky Alpaca Farm & Fiber Mill 10 yrs.; Plumpton Park Zoo 35 yrs.; Milburn Orchards 120 yrs. – Inform us of business milestone anniversaries for recognition
 - Grand Openings/Ribbon Cuttings: Barstool Sportsbook Restaurant and Clearway Pain Solutions
- Videos: wrapping up footage; expect videos for review next month
- Tourism:
 - Wrapped up ad campaign for Maryland 5 Star: targeted digital ads, billboards, radio, print, movie theatre video, social media
 - Tourism 5 Star tent fantastic – great food samples, great volunteers
 - Planning phase for “Winter Lights, Cecil Nights” 2023 - USRC providing grant funding
- Agriculture:
 - Successful Fresh Food Fest at MD 5 Star
 - Ag-related conference season – Maureen attending several conferences
 - Micro Ag Grant Applications open January 2, 2023
 - Rooted in Our Community scheduled for March 4, 2023, Cecil College
- Budget process starting 2 weeks earlier this year

An update on Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund was presented by Susan O’Neil, Executive Director, USRC

- Recap – Gov. Hogan put in budget \$50M, \$10 per regional council to be distributed to Counties
- Money is for infrastructure, economic development activity, stimulate private investment, grow jobs
- Projects must be completed within 24 months
- Each regional council handled funding in own way, \$2.9M per county, \$1.3M for regional projects
- Counties submitted applications to USRC–USRC vetted for criteria–submitted to Commerce (246 pgs.)
- Cecil had 3 projects, Kent had 3 projects, Queen Anne’s had 11 projects, 8 regional projects -submitted to USRC Executive Board
- Application in Governor’s office for approval - Once approved, USRC will receive funding, MOI or grant agreements to funnel money to counties
- Cecil County Projects – outlines how much money going to each project
- \$37K set aside ≈ 1.5% of 3% for administrative costs
- Cecil divided into two groups: County Exec and County Council
 - \$1.9M Belvidere Road Improvement Project
 - Council – Cecil County Farm Museum Regional Agricultural Center (ADA bathroom, commercial kitchen),
 - Paris Foundation (Create culinary employment for homeless individuals)
 - Unique projects – no duplications
- Comprehensive economic development strategy established
- Regional Project: - all 3 counties decided to put money into regional projects
 - No approach for marketing for business attraction - each county has own DataStory but no marketing piece
 - Helps with business attraction but honors each county’s needs and geography
 - USRC put together career technology liaison (Project Bright Future) for Queen Anne’s County
 - Hired person – Get high school kids interested in trades - goes between businesses teaching them between internships to gaining employment

- Need career tech liaison for Cecil and Kent
- Goal: Kent person will run regional program; each county individualized to meet needs
 - Regional marketing pieces, regional advertising/website; obtain mobile labs (future)

Director of Administration Update – Steve Overbay

- Welcome infusion of money for economic development projects in Cecil County
- Bulk of money will go to Belvidere Road Interchange
- Becoming more logistic-focused - direct access to I-95 and Rt. 40 even more important
- Ensuring projects support business community; bring in great jobs; maintain quality of life
- FY2024 Budget - Meeting with internal and outside agencies County provides funding for
- No legislative meetings in November; packed schedule for December
- Thank you to Councilman Coutz – tremendous economic development supporter
- Thank OED team for fantastic 5 Star – truly great showcase for County
- Business Appreciation Week – important to celebrate business anniversaries
- Underway with tournament season at Calvert Regional Park – special thanks to Parks & Rec for dedication and hours invested
 - Calvert Regional Park now has pickle ball courts – fastest growing sport in U.S.

Cecil College Update – Dr. Mary Bolt

- Thank you for grant application assistance for marine trades

Cecil County Public Schools – Dr. Jeff Lawson

- Appreciate work with Susan and USRC
- Excited to partner with Susquehanna Workforce Network to best support our kids

Chamber Update - Debbie Brown

- Please fill out survey – want your priorities for top issues
- Nov. 16 - Annual First Responders Appreciation Dinner, Minker Hall

Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) Update – Karen Zuccardi

- Manager for Rural Business Innovation Initiative at TEDCO
- TEDCO advances entrepreneurship through technology
- Role is to bring resources and opportunities at TEDCO to rural communities
- Welcome opportunity to meet with businesses

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 am.

Next EDC Meeting will be IN PERSON AT NORTH EAST LIBRARY on December 7, 2022, at 8:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant