

Economic Development Commission

The County Commissioners of Kent County

400 High Street

Chestertown, MD 21620

February 3, 2016

Board Members Present: Bob Ampula, Kate Gray, Aaron Bramble, Cindy Genter, Bob Jacob, Shreyas Suresh, and Jim Luff

Board Members Absent: Dan MacLeod

Also in Attendance: William Short, Commissioner, Kay MacIntosh, Economic Development and Marketing Coordinator, and Manager, Arts & Entertainment District, Town of Chestertown, Bernadette Bowman, Director, Tourism Development, Tammy Edwards, Regional Business Development Representative, Maryland Department of Commerce, Ron Hawkins, RBI Business Mentor, Maryland Technology Development Corporation, Michael Harvey, Professor, Washington College, Nina Fleegle, Chair and Conner Fleegle, Member, Young Professionals of Kent County and Milford Murray, Owner, M & M Shuttle Service.

At 3:00 p.m. the meeting convened. Mr. Luff called the meeting to order.

Mr. Luff requested a motion to approve the minutes from the January 6, 2016 meeting and the closed session minutes from the January 21, 2016 meeting. On motion by Mr. Ampula and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Board unanimously approved the minutes from the January 6, 2016 meeting and the closed session minutes from the January 21, 2016 meeting.

Ms. Williams introduced Mr. Murray as an invited guest. Mr. Murray was the first recipient of the Greater Chestertown Initiative, Open for Business loan. Mr. Murray shared he has a shuttle service that officially began on January 1, 2016. Mr. Murray holds an interstate license and travels in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and Virginia. M & M Shuttle Service currently transports Washington College students to and from the surrounding airports, train and metro stations. The day starts at 4:30 a.m. transporting nurses from Millington to the Hospital in Chestertown. Mr. Murray shared he currently has two vehicles and is contemplating a third. Mr. Ampula stated it is a much needed service in Kent County.

Mr. Luff shared that APEX was not ready to present to the EDC. The economic impact study was completed on February 1, 2016 and the representative needed time to review the results. The Commissioners' February 2, 2016 packet included a Petition to Intervene, in the matter of the application of Mills Branch Solar, LLC for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. APEX is currently scheduled to present at the March EDC meeting.

Mr. Ampula shared the need of the Commission to better communicate the Kent County's economy. The purpose of the report is to provide a reasonable picture of Kent County's economy, to educate the citizens, use as a basis for discussion in planning, and develop a base for measuring performance. The main source of data is the U.S. Census Bureau, 2012

February 3, 2016

Page 2

EDAB Minutes

Economic Census. Agriculture data was obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the 2012 Census of Agriculture. Educational data was obtained directly from the institutions. Mr. Ampula went through the data and why some information is withheld, as well as where some industry sectors are represented. Public education and county government were discussed and the Board requested the data be shown. The net workers commuting into/out of the County was shared and reasons were discussed. Kent County is one of only six counties with a positive net number of employees coming into the County. Agriculture was shown by the types of farming operations. Agriculture land use accounts for 90.86% of land, and 13.45% of assessed value, residential land use accounts 7.20% of land and 74.42% assessed value and commercial land use accounts for 1.42% land and 12.12% assessed value. Ms. Genther expressed the need to add some key “take-aways” from the data collected. The Commission reviewed the graphs to be included in the presentation. The Commission was in agreement that Mr. Ampula and Mr. Luff would present the information to the Commissioners.

Ms. Williams shared the feedback received on the Kent County, Economic Development, Mission Statement and requested any missing components be identified so that a Mission Statement can be finalized in order to progress with the strategic plan. Commissioner Short asked if there was a seal or logo for Kent County, Economic Development.

Ms. Williams shared that the Economic Development plan states, support the three business associations. Economic Development should be a member of the business associations, attend meetings, and provide volunteer hours at functions as means of supporting the associations. Ms. Genther offered that Commission members attend and represent Economic Development to support Ms. Williams in fulfilling this commitment. Ms. Genther is a member and attends the Greater Rock Hall Business Association meetings regularly.

The Commercial Property Database is progressing and some brokers have been enlisted to provide feedback. The State database is also available and we now have access to enter properties on Commerce’s website. Carla Gerber, GIS Specialist, Planning, Housing, and Zoning is working on interactive GIS maps for the Commercial Property Database.

Ms. Williams shared that nine bids were received for the Design and Construction of a Fiber Optic Broadband Network in Kent County. Mr. Boone has convened a Broadband Committee to review the bids, there are seven members including Ms. Williams. Jim Wright, County Engineer is vetting the vendors prior to the committee receiving the proposals.

Ms. Gray asked about an email from Jason Depp, Webmaster, Information Technology about a forum for Economic Development. Ms. Williams shared this was a vehicle to share ideas on the upgrade of the Economic Development website to ensure we are providing information that is easily accessible and relevant to our customers.

Ms. Edwards introduced herself and shared her background with the State and the Department of Commerce. Ms. Edwards shared she has been out in the Counties for the past eleven years, and she enjoys going out and visiting businesses and is always amazed at the diversity of businesses in Maryland.

February 3, 2016

Page 3

EDAB Minutes

Ms. Williams shared that Mr. Hawkins is resigning from TEDCO and thanked him for his service to our local businesses, having just visited Red Acres most recently.

Mr. Luff shared that the Commission needed to elect officers for the calendar year 2016. Mr. Ampula motioned that the current chair and co-chair be renewed for 2016, Ms. Gray seconded and the Commission unanimously nominated Mr. Luff and Mr. Jacob. The bylaws state that the Commission can determine the length of term for the officers. Mr. Luff recommended the term be one year. On motion by Mr. Luff, seconded by Mr. Jacob, the Commission unanimously agreed to one year terms. On motion by Ms. Gray and seconded by Mr. Ampula, the Commission unanimously appointed Mr. Luff as chair and Mr. Jacob as co-chair for the calendar year 2016.

Commissioner Short requested that text amendments be followed by the Commission members and provide recommendation to the Commissioners. The Commission members were in agreement.

A motion was made by Mr. Ampula, seconded by Ms. Gray, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:25 p.m. The Board agreed to meet again on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams
Coordinator