

**Economic Development Advisory Board**  
**Kent County, Maryland**

**February 4, 2015**

Board Members Present: Ron Athey, Dan MacLeod, Robert Jacob, Thomas Beckett, Robert Ampula, Cindy Genther, Zoe Schneider, and Jim Luff

Board Members Absent: None

Also in Attendance: Commissioner William Short, Ernest Crofoot, County Administrator, Scott Boone, Director, Information Technology, Amy Moredock, Director, Planning, Housing, and Zoning, and Ron Hawkins, RBI Business Mentor, Maryland Technology Development Corporation

At 4:00 p.m. the meeting convened.

Mr. Crofoot shared that with Jim Rich's term ending the Board is currently without a Chair. The options were to elect a Chair now or Mr. Crofoot would Chair until a Chair is elected at the end of the meeting when membership is discussed. The Board was in agreement to address the Chair position at end of the meeting. Mr. Crofoot introduced the new members and had each attendee introduce themselves as well.

Ms. Moredock shared that a public hearing has been scheduled for Wednesday, February 5, 2015, at 1:30 p.m. The Planning Commission will hear an application for a text amendment brought forth by Michael and Danielle Hanscom requesting to add a new category to the Special Exceptions sections in several zoning districts for a Rural Inn. This will provide some flexibility and some limitations by combining aspects of a Retreat and a Country Inn. The Rural Inn category is not proposed in the Critical Area. One major distinction is that the Rural Inn can have a restaurant to serve non-guests with seats not to exceed 40 above and beyond the number of maximum guest at the Inn.

The Board was in agreement that a designated member should attend the public hearing and express the Board's support of the text amendment. Mr. Crofoot will also invite Bernadette Bowman, Director, Tourism Development to attend and testify.

Mr. Boone shared the County is working closely with the local provider with some of the issues they have been having and keeping them involved in progress of the last mile project. Mr. Boone has met with several providers and they have all expressed interest partnering with the County on the project.

Mr. Ampula presented a power point presentation to share SCORE, Upper Shore Chapter 670's role is assisting small businesses and the mentoring process. Mr. Ampula also shared the statistics for Chapter 670 and Kent County's 2010 demographics and the 2019 forecast. Mr. Ampula stated the information was made possible through the subscription that SCORE has with

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ESRI, and the County's contribution assists with the cost of the subscription. The projections show a 2.1% decline in population, a 2.5% decline in the number of households, and the average age continues to climb in Kent County which is the highest in the State.

On motion by Mr. Beckett and seconded by Mr. Ampula the Board unanimously approved the minutes from the January 14, 2015, meeting.

Ms. Williams reported that the Journal Communications Ad is complete, and thanked Bernadette Bowman, Director, Tourism and Jason Depp Information Technology for their assistance with the design. The magazine is due to ship out in late April and the County will get 1,000 of the copies on the magazine. Journal Communications is developing the website portion.

Contacts were provided to Richard Thorp, ILSBio for Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) and Eastern Shore Entrepreneur Center. Mr. Thorp advised that ILSBio is in the final due diligence of a possible merger and working on the final build out plans for the property on Talbot Boulevard. Mr. Thorp has hired a successor and he began working in January.

Ms. Williams has been working with Mr. Depp on the Economic Development webpage. A link has been added to DBED, Mr. Depp has removed the "maintained by the Chamber" on the business directory, since that is no longer accurate and provided The Commissioners' office access to update the business directory as needed. The category and description now display on the business directory.

Mr. Depp set up an export of the email addresses in the business directory. The Commissioners' Office sent out the first email blast with the SCORE training information provided by Loretta Lodge, Executive Director, Kent County Chamber of Commerce. There were 567 businesses listed, 543 had email addresses, 500 were sent, 100 were rejected, and four businesses inquired about signing up for the training and two businesses contacted us to update their information. Mr. Ampula asked how many businesses licenses there were in Kent County. Mr. Boone will provide that information from the mapping that was done for the last mile broadband project.

DBED has requested a list of new and expanding businesses. Ms. Moredock provided a comprehensive list, and the Town of Chestertown provided three projects. Based on the criteria most projects may not qualify, the Ms. Williams will continue to work with DBED.

The Office of Finance has been contacted to determine what Economic Development appropriations are currently in the budget to prepare for the upcoming budget workshops.

Mr. Crofoot shared that we currently have one additional vacancy to fill and Ms. Kate Goodall-Gray has submitted an interest form and the County has received two recommendations from current board members. On motion by Mr. Luff and seconded by Mr. Athey, the recommendation of Ms. Goodall-Gray was approved unanimously. Ms. Williams will submit the recommendation to the Commissioners.

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Mr. Crofoot asked if any members of the board were interested in the Chair position. Mr. Luff expressed interest in becoming the Chair. On motion by Mr. Ampula and seconded by Mr. Beckett, Mr. Luff was unanimously elected Chair. Mr. Luff requested that a Vice Chair be chosen for occasions when the Chair is not present. Mr. Jacob was recommended, since Mr. Jacob had to leave early this evening, a vote was reschedule for March's meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m., and the board agreed to meet again on Wednesday, March 4, 2015, at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams  
Deputy Clerk