

Economic Development Advisory Board

The County Commissioners of Kent County

400 High Street

Chestertown, MD 21620

October 7, 2015

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

Board Members Absent: Bob Jacob

Also in Attendance: Shelley Herman, County Administrator and Doris Mason, Executive Director, Upper Shore Regional Council.

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 September 2, 2015 meeting. On motion by Mr. Ampula and seconded by Ms. Gray, the Board unanimously approved the minutes from the September 2, 2015 meeting.

Ms. Williams shared that she attended an Enactus Business Advisory Board meeting at Washington College. The Enactus members shared the current projects. Mr. Suresh gave an overview of each project. The Shore Marketing project would develop an online database for businesses in Chestertown and possibly all of Kent County. A website where businesses have their own page that included, contact information, online coupons, reviews, etc., that are similar to Yelp. Mr. Ampula asked if there would be a means to track coupons offered and redeemed. The website is being developed for the business and analytics would be a tool for the local businesses. The next project is a healthy living project, targeting exercise and healthy living education. Ms. Gray asked if Enactus had explored the possibility of partnering with the Kent Family Center, as many of their programs target families and healthy living. The final project is Soap for Hope, the original goal was to improve sanitation in Haiti, that goal has evolved to have a local impact. Enactus has a partnership with the Kent Center and a new process has been developed that is safe for Kent Center members. Mr. Suresh shared that the soap is sold at the Farmer's Market, on Campus, and they are currently exploring the option of online sales. Ms. Genter encouraged Mr. Suresh to get the media involved as the projects progress and offered her assistance in making those connections.

Ms. Williams shared that two applications for the revolving loan fund (RLF) were received. SCORE mentors have visited with the applicant and Ms. Williams and advised them of what is needed in the application process to move it forward to the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC). Mr. Ampula stated it needs to be clear in the RLF eligibility and application guidelines that they must provide three years of profit and loss projections, cash flow statements, and three year's tax returns. Mr. Ampula requested we add that the primary business owner must appear before ESEC's Loan Review Committee. Ms. Gray requested another bullet be added to the exclusions that indicate the list is not all inclusive. The Board

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discussed allowing an applicant that owns several businesses being eligible for more than one loan. The consensus was one active loan per applicant, as the applicant is guaranteeing the loan. Ms. Williams will add a Required Attachments Checklist to the document.

Ms. Williams shared that the Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC) held the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning session. Kent, Cecil, and Queen Anne's Counties and the USRC do not currently qualify as an Economic Development District (EDD) with the Economic Development Administration (EDA), US Department of Commerce. Three out of the five regional councils in Maryland have received that designation. The purpose of applying to be an EDD is access to federal funds for economic development projects. Ms. Williams shared the identified needs, workforce and transportation, high speed internet and broadband (last-mile build out), small business and agri-business development, and youth retention and aging out dilemma. The economic development directors from Cecil and Queen Anne's Counties will be meeting with Ms. Williams to determine which projects should be priority for our region. Ms. Mason shared some recent projects that have utilized EDA funding. Ms. Mason shared that the EDA wants to know of the public and private commitment to the project and favors partnerships. There is no deadline for projects, as the CEDS is an ongoing process and will be updated regularly. The goal is to have projects ready for implementation when the application is submitted during the spring of 2016.

Ms. Williams shared the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) has been renamed and restructured, effective October 1, 2015. The new name is the Maryland Department of Commerce. Michael Gill was named Secretary and the departments that now fall under the Department of Commerce are; the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs; Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Department of Transportation, Department of the Environment, Department of Planning, and Department of Housing and Community Development. The Department of Commerce will also work closely with other state partners such as the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO) and the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO), with Secretary Gill serving in an advisory role to both. The changes are designed to make it easier to do business in the State of Maryland.

Ms. Williams shared that Maryland's Eastern Shore, Economic Development, 2016 Edition is in process. Content has been submitted and the sales representative for advertising is actively reaching out to potential advertisers which include; businesses, power companies, banks, etc. Mr. MacLeod asked where the magazine is distributed. The magazines are offered to employers to assist with recruitment, handed out at meetings, the visitors' center, and welcomed other suggestions for distribution. The Chamber, Libraries, and Real Estate offices were additional ideas.

The Major Employers information for Kent County was submitted to the Maryland Department of Commerce. There was a discussion about where the data came from and how to assure we had the most accurate list possible. There is plenty of room for errors and omissions. The criteria used to determine the number of employees and how employers are listed was discussed. The Board agreed the information is a moving target.

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Mr. Ampula asked about County revenue and the tax base based on industry sectors. Ms. Williams shared her conversations with Mindie Burgoyne about economic impact and how to quantify the industry sectors that drive the economy in Kent County. Ms. Burgoyne shared that tax revenue and jobs are the drivers for economic impact. The Board will continue researching the best way to determine economic impact.

There were two presentations on September 16, 2015, by Urban Design Associates, regarding the Stepne Development Project; one for the Town of Chestertown followed by a one for the County. Commissioner Short, Commissioner Fithian, Mr. Luff, and Ms. Williams attended for the County. Ms. Gray shared that the project is still in the conceptual stage. Washington College is reviewing their needs with the arrival of President, Sheila Bair.

Delaware Valley Development Company intends to submit an application to the MDHCD for a project by the name of Laurel Grove located at 900 High Street. They are proposing to construct a new 80 unit family community with 5 units being accessible to the physically disabled and 13 units for Persons with Disabilities (those with physical and mental disabilities). The property will have a community building containing a meeting room, kitchen, computer lab, space for the provision of supportive services, on-site management office and maintenance.

Ms. Mason and Ms. Williams attended The Startup Maryland, Pitch Bus visit to Washington College. There were five presentations; two existing businesses and three new business proposals. Doris shared participants can access up to \$10,000.00 if they continue to win and progress. The participants receive videos to promote their business. Washington College will host the kick off in Maryland for the Pitch Bus in 2016.

Washington College, the Town of Chestertown, and Kent County have determined that the RISE Zone application should be tabled at this time and pursue the Enterprise Zone. There are additional benefits with the Enterprise Zone that are not available through the RISE Zone designation.

There will be training for the 2015 Residential Energy Code on October 21, 2015, from 10 a.m. to noon. All code officials, builders, and trade contractors are welcome and the training is free. The session has also been offered to surrounding counties.

The Federal Laboratory Consortium for Technology Transfer (FLC), the Eastern Shore Economic Development Offices, and Washington College's Center for Environment and Society's GIS Program will be hosting a mapping, satellite, and sensor technologies forum on October 15, 2015. The training is offered to anyone interested in the monitoring of agriculture production, soil and water quality, reclamation and restoration of forests and wetlands, atmospheric conditions, climate change indicators, and sea level rise.

Ms. Williams shared a report from Amy Moredock, Director, Planning, Housing, and Zoning on current projects. There was a discussion on the Planning Commission's preliminary

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review of PharmKent's concept plan, the medical cannabis license process, the regulations, timeframe, etc.

Mr. Ampula asked for an update on the visit from Henry Dierker and his concerns with his property on the 301 Corridor. Mr. Luff, Ms. Genter, and Ms. Williams met with Mr. Dierker and discussed the property. Delegate Steve Arentz, Commissioner Short, Ms. Moredock, Buck Nickerson, Extreme Measures Land Surveyors, and Mr. Dierker met to discuss what is permitted on the property compared to the perceptions being conveyed. The 301 corridor is designated for future growth and infrastructure for the area is currently being explored.

Chapter 21. Economic and Tourism Development proposed amendments were discussed. Mr. Luff reviewed specific items and the Board formed a consensus based on those dialogues. On motion by Mr. Ampula and seconded by Mr. Bramble the board unanimously approved proposed Article 21 amendments after consultation with the County Administrator, and a vote via email by board members.

Mr. Ampula shared that during a SCORE meeting the need for Tour Bus Services, in the region, was identified, now that the Dorsey's have retired. Ms. Gray suggested school bus operators be given the opportunity to provide those services and earn extra income. Ms. Williams will follow up with superintendent and identify the appropriate contacts to explore that possibility.

There was some discussion about updating the Economic Development Plan dated October 2013. The Board agreed that an update is necessary and future meetings will shape the plan. Ms. Genter explained that the Economic Development Plan is an umbrella plan that the entire County should be working under.

Ms. Genter shared the Cecil County Brokers' Tour noting they use Enterprise Zones heavily to market commercial properties. The other take away was a business fast track process to assist businesses. Ms. Gray shared the Town of Chestertown's permit process is very smooth. Mr. Ampula shared creating an intake sheet to ensure businesses are getting all the assistance possible. It was also suggested that new business perspectives be assigned mentors.

A motion was made by Ms. Gray, seconded by Ms. Genter, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 p.m. The Board agreed to meet again on Wednesday, November 4, 2015, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams
Coordinator