



**Audio recordings of the Economic & Tourism Development Commission meetings can be found at Recordings Tab.**

**July 14, 2021**

Commission Members Present: Aaron Bramble, Tracey Williams, Dick Story, Rob Thompson, Chikki Shajwani, and Sandy Scott

Commission Members Absent: Suzanne Einstein and Dolores Jones

Also in Attendance: Jamie Williams, Director, Jana Carter, Tourism Manager, Katie Wright, Economic Development Manager, and Shalyn Boulden, Administrative Assistant, Economic & Tourism Development; Shelley Heller, County Administrator; Bob Jacob, County Commissioner.

At 3:03 p.m. Mr. Bramble called the meeting to order. Mr. Bramble requested a motion to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2021, Economic & Tourism Development Commission meeting. On motion by Mr. Story and second by Mr. Thompson, the June 9, 2021, minutes were unanimously approved.

Bill Mackey, Director, Planning, Housing, and Zoning provided an update of the department and projects. Mr. Mackey thanked Jamie Williams for attending the June 23, 2021, Comprehensive Rezoning Update (CRU) Task Force meeting and presenting the 2017 Economic Development Strategic Plan. Ms. Williams reviewed the Plan, its formulation and history, and plans to update. The presentation was extremely helpful. The task force was appreciative.

The County Commissioners approved a revised schedule for the Comprehensive Rezoning Update process. The Comprehensive Rezoning Update will be separated into its two largest components, the zoning text revisions, and the map changes. Each will have its own timeline. The zoning text portion will run through October 2022. In July 2022, the County will include a letter in the tax bill to alert property owners that the mapping process will begin in the fall. By October, property owners will be able to review the final text and select a new zoning district to request, if they so choose. The mapping process is expected to run from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Board of Appeals approved an application by David A. Bramble, Inc. for a Special Exception for the renewal of an existing sand and gravel pit. The Planning Commission did not meet in July. Mr. Mackey welcomed three new employees to the Department of Planning, Housing and Zoning. Allie Gorman, GIS Specialist, Mike Pelletier, Planning Specialist, and Mark Carper, Associate Planner.

Rosemary Ramsey Granillo, Director, Local Management Board (LMB) shared LMBs were created by the State and every county in Maryland has an LMB. They ensure services for children and families are provided and not duplicated by other departments. The focus is child poverty and providing access to affordable housing, emergency housing, public transit, childcare, internet infrastructure and health care access. A brochure that provides information of services

and resources to residents of Kent County was shared. The areas of focus are connection to services, leadership, board and community engagement, running a local care team with the implantation of a Systems Care Coordinator and managing an online local resource directory.

Dawson Hunter, Housing & Transportation Coordinator, explained the long-term vision for the Local Management Board. The office is managing an emergency rental assistance program for citizens who lost their job, had childcare issues, or faced any other challenge related to the pandemic. [Kent County Rides](#) was launched on June 1, 2021, to provide information on Delmarva Community Transit. Services are regrouping due to routes being shut down during COVID, rides are provided by appointment at this time. A good working relationship with Delmarva Community Transit is being established. On Housing, there are two entities within the county working on home repairs and new home builds: Rebuilding Together Kent County and Kent Attainable Housing. Mr. Hunter explained the Local Management Board is working with these groups to help build up levels of services.

Jamie Williams shared that in reviewing the 2017 Strategic Plan many things were accomplished. On Workforce Development, Connie Dean has been hired as the Career Technology Education Liaison in partnership with the Upper Shore Regional Council and will act as a conduit between students and businesses in Kent and Queen Annes Counties. On Healthcare, The Chester River Wellness Alliance was formed as a private member organization for all wellness providers. The University of Maryland Shore Medical Center received its Rural Hospital Designation and there are plans for Choptank Community Health to come to Kent County partnering with Shore Regional Health. On Transportation and Housing, Kent County hired a transportation and housing coordinator. The plan is being updated to incorporate Tourism and defining additional metrics for success. Mr. Story suggested creating a dashboard to track progress on the strategic plan once updated.

Ms. Carter provided a tourism update. Kent County hosted Jess Dutra from May 28, 2021 to May 30, 2021 as a promotion with Mix 106.5. The Mix 106.5 Make Me Maryland promotion was a successful campaign which included radio ads, social media, live radio, and prerecorded promotions. There was a digital takeover which ran from May 31, 2021, through June 6, 2021. 140 people entered to win the same Make Me Maryland Kent County experience. The Economic & Tourism Development team has access to all photos from the promotion. 106.5 sent an email blast to all 106.5 contacts. The campaign was set to deliver 100,000 impressions and delivered 118,000. Ms. Carter followed up by calling into the Kramer and Jess 106.5 morning show the following Monday.

Ms. Carter is working to complete the FY2021 Tourism grant reporting this week. The County is awaiting numbers for the FY2022 grant. A photo shoot with Jay Flemming is scheduled for July 17, 2021, with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development showcasing Kent County. The plan is a shoot at the Chestertown Farmers Market, a cruise on the Shardana, a crab feast at Waterman's and kayak and paddle boarding. Economic & Tourism Development will have access to all the photos taken during the shoot. Andover Media worked on creating a 30 second video focused on each town in Kent County. These videos will be promoted on social media, our website, and YouTube channel. The focus for FY2022 is how to expand marketing even further.

Ms. Wright advised the photo contest has ended and judging of the photo entries has begun. Economic and Tourism Development partnered with the Kent County Chamber of

Commerce on the Kent County Map project. Economic and Tourism Development is working on updating the Business-to-Business resource lists, sharing on the website and social media as they are updated. The department is collaborating with the Maryland Department of Commerce and the Chamber to celebrate business milestone anniversaries. Nancy LaJoice, Senior Business Development Representative, Maryland Department of Commerce is working with us to present three that were missed last year because of COVID. People's Bank celebrated 110 years, Eastman celebrated 100 years, and Chester River Yacht and County Club celebrated 90 years.

Nina Fleegle was introduced as the new Chestertown Mainstreet Director.

Commissioner Jacob asked about the status of the medical marijuana facility that was proposed for Massey. Ms. Williams will research and update the members on the status of the company that purchased property, MaryMed LLC.

New business included an open discussion about the Mission and Vision for Kent County Economic & Tourism Development, focusing on the purpose of Economic & Tourism Development. Mr. Story facilitated the discussion. A public meeting will be scheduled for community input in August prior to updates.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Story and seconded by Mr. Thompson, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:27 p.m. and the Commission agreed to meet again on Wednesday, August 11, 2021, at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD, Director  
Department of Economic & Tourism Development