

# **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**December 1, 2021**

### **PRESENT**

JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (Mitre Corp), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Sandra Edwards (Acting Dir., OED), Bruce England (SWN), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Maureen O'Shea Fitzgerald (Agribusiness Coordinator), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Rachel Wright for Morgan Miller (CCPL), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Steve Overbay (Acting Dir. of Admin.), Robert Palsgrove (Citizen), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC), Richard Starr (OED Coordinator),

### **ABSENT**

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Sharon Kurfuerst (Christiana Care/Union), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancenter)

### **GUESTS**

Debbie Brown (CC Chamber of Commerce), Bill Coutz (CC Council), Scott Flanigan (CC Director, DPW), Danielle Hornberger (CC Executive), Ellie Jones (CCPL), Laura Metzler (CCPL), Jeff Sellers (SB Real Estate), Alan Sexton (SWN)

### **Call to Order & Welcome – Mike Ratchford**

- Meeting called to order at 8:08 a.m.
- November 3, 2021, meeting minutes approved

### **Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford**

- After 1-2 yrs. of virtual meetings, thought appropriate to get everyone together to celebrate that we and County have survived and discuss accomplishments
- In addition, take tour of NE Library – jewel in community
- Congratulations to Steve, Sandra, and entire OED team

### **Administration Update – Steve Overbay**

- Thank you for support of economic development in Cecil County
- Happy to announce CC OED has several accomplishments to report on
- List of projects still underway – quality and quantity equal one another – will pay dividends for County
- Support of business community, support of leaders that provide feedback make our jobs easy
- Very lucky to have inherited OED team firing on all cylinders – tourism, ag, business development, administrative -- reason we can do what we do
- Sandra in new role as Acting Director
- My new role as Acting Director of Administration – opportunity to get to know other directors and see how each department interacts
- Took this job almost year ago, Mike Ratchford first call I made
  - Mike agreed to stay on as Chair of EDC; great sounding board; great ideas; great leader

**County Executive - Danielle Hornberger**

- Thank you for partnerships in Cecil County whether its CCPS, Council, County Government – all running in same direction
  - During Covid – been bouncing things off each other – communications integral part
- Doing exciting things here in Cecil County

**An Update on the Cecil County Library system was presented by Rachel Wright, Associate Director**

- Excited to host EDC at North East Library
- Celebrating six months open
- Have welcomed over 50,000 visitors – excellent numbers especially during pandemic
- Not possible without support of local and State government, business community, local community
- Offering tour of facility at end of meeting
- Specialized spaces; i.e., Creative Commons sponsored by W.L. Gore
- Receive funding to cover books and basic technology – had to call in partners and raise funds to outfit second floor
- Business Information Commons – Laura Metzler, Sr. Business Partner
- Cooperation Spaces; Digital Media Lab (Specialized technology) – Ellie Jones, Instructor
- Upstairs: Literacy Center, specialized teen room
- Updates:
  - Pandemic slowed us down but did not stop us
- Awards Received:
  - Maryland Association of Counties Rural County Innovation Award for Innovation & Recognition of Business Information Center – impact on advancing small business & entrepreneurship in business community during pandemic
  - Delaware Chapter of Associate Builders & Contractors Award of Excellence (Contractor: Wohlsen Construction Company, Wilmington, DE)
  - Delaware Contractors Association Construction Excellence Award (Contractor: Wohlsen Construction Company, Wilmington, DE)
- Partnerships:
  - Worked closely with Health Dept re: access to technology for business community, staff reach out by phone, vaccination clinics, rapid testing kits
  - All library buildings open to public – no limited capacity
  - Contactless pick up still available; outdoor programming
- Workforce Availability:
  - People starting businesses: Summer busy, October slow, November picked up a lot and been steady
  - Ellie to meet one-on-one to meet with people re polishing up resumes – have had great response
  - Start ups for business run gamut (restaurants, retail, etc.)
  - Chamber refers calls to Library/Business Information Center for assistance
  - CCPS – problems filling hourly positions due to local competition; no problem filling degree/certificate positions (more competitive)

**Acting Director's Report – Economic Development Update and Year in Review – Sandra Edwards**

- Recap of PowerPoint Slides:
  - County Executive & New OED Director Overbay visit Conowingo Power Station
  - Jan / Feb – Tourism held Winter Lights / Cecil Nights campaign -- huge success

- Won Maryland Tourism Travel Summit Award for Best Product/Event Award – Medium Category
- Started making in-person business visits again!
- Terumo Medical's New Product Development Lab Ribbon Cutting
- Elena Kessi, Aquafin CEO Named President of International Concrete Repair Institute
- First Rooted in Our Community Event – Planning underway for 2022
- Cecil County Tourism's New Office Grant Opening & Ribbon Cutting
- 1<sup>st</sup> Year of Upper Shore Micro Ag Grant Program
- Cecil College showcased new Bioproduction degree program
- Brookbend opens Chesapeake City store -- expanding to 3 locations in County
- Elkton Dunkin' Donuts Renovation/Re-opening Ribbon Cutting
- New DataStory completed
- Northrop Grumman's Hypersonic Center of Excellence Groundbreaking
- Great Wolf Lodge Groundbreaking
- Trammel Crow's Elkton Commerce Center Groundbreaking
- Southfields: Planned Unit Development – single family residential, multi-family residential, sports complex, commercial, hotel
- Cecil County Fair – launched Cecil Grown logo, hosted Ag Showcase
- Highline Warren Grand Opening in Elkton
- MACo is back!
- CCPS - Cecil County School of Technology – launched new program for manufacturing
- Cecilton Cuts Ribbon Cutting
- Enzo's Pizza Grand Opening
- Access to Opportunities Webinar with APG, State of MD, and Local Government
- AUI Power Training Facility Grand Opening
- Alo Yoga + Bella Canvas Ribbon Cutting
- Harvest Dinner 2021 at The Wellwood
- Inaugural Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill
  - Fresh Food Fest at the Maryland 5 Star
- Clene Nanomedicine Expanding in Upper Chesapeake Corporate Center in Elkton
- Manufacturers Leadership Breakfast – Plasticoid Celebrating 75 years in business
- Maryland Economic Development Week
- Belvidere Road Interchange – on track for completion in 2025
- Grants, Grants & More Grants
- Bainbridge Development Corporation Transfer Phase 1 to MRP Industrial
- Advertising Again!
- Cecil County Tree chosen for Christmas in NYC at Rockefeller Center
- Thank You to EDC Members & Business Resource Partners for making 2021 a year to remember!!
- Success can only be accomplished by team effort – double down and continue the momentum!

***Acting Director of Administration – Steve Overbay***

- Pictures worth a thousand words -- Millions of square feet of development in County; thousands of jobs.
- Quality of Life pieces mean great deal. Business Partners tremendous asset.
- Very lucky to have so much happening in just a year
- So much coming to Perryville to join Hollywood Casino, Great Wolf Lodge.

**County Executive – Danielle Hornberger**

- Important to have facilities here to draw people/families to Cecil County
- Broadband another piece of the pie – providing access to Countians; supports economic development
- Redistricting – Cecil staying part of the Eastern Shore

**Presentation of Awards:**

- Danny DeMarinis – Access to Opportunities Webinar
- Dr. Carl Roberts – Bainbridge Development Corporation
- CCPL / Morgan Miller (Rachel Wright & Laura Metzler accepted for Morgan) – Leadership Role as Executive Director, which includes Business Information Center
- CCPS / Dr. Jeff Lawson – Leadership Role as Superintendent
- Sandy Turner / Tourism – Winter Lights – Cecil Nights Campaign
- USRC / Susan O'Neill – Support of Initiatives, Programs and Events in Cecil County (ABSENT)
- Mike Ratchford – Exemplary Leadership of 10 Years of Cecil County EDC

**Good of the Cause:****Council Update – Bill Coutz**

- Hoping to have new council member on board soon to represent District 4
- Economic Development perfect example of Quality of Life people are looking for in Cecil County
  - Will create jobs → fill with County employees
  - County makes investments into businesses → gets quality workforce → pays dividends
  - Thank you to all in this room – we, as leaders, here to support you

**Chamber Update - Debbie Brown**

- Very successful First Responders Appreciation Dinner – almost 200 attendees
- Gearing up for Government Relations work – advocate on behalf of local community and businesses; collective voice for things impacting Cecil County; welcome input
- 2022 Community Guide – theme “Growing Together”; feature story on Bainbridge

**CCPS Update – Dr. Jeff Lawson**

- Numbers of positive Covid cases are up (tripled)
- Do not anticipate closing schools; virtual deemed too unproductive

**Communications Update - JoAnn Dawson**

- Film turned out well – show in 8 locations around County; showcases County
  - Should be out February-March timeframe
  - Premiere at Senator Theater in Baltimore
  - Will try to have screening in County later in year

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 am.

Next EDC Meeting will be on January 5, 2022, at 8:00 am. Details to follow.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel  
Administrative Assistant