

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

June 7, 2023

PRESENT

Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Sandra Edwards (OED Mgr.), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Ed Jones (Northrop Grumman), Kimberly Justus (SWN), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Robert Palsgrove (Citizen), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Bill Sorenson (OED Director), Richard Starr (OED Coordinator), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancenter)

ABSENT

Danny DeMarinis (Mitre Corp), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Jeff Emmons (Delmarva Power), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Morgan Miller (CCPL), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC)

GUESTS

Alicia Calhoun (Elkton Alliance), Ashley Cottrell (MD 5 Star), Christie Griest (Tourism), Scott Flanigan (DPW), Maureen O'Shea Fitzgerald (USRC), Rebecca Hamilton (CC Council), Megan McRay (CC Chamber of Commerce), Marissa Melzer (MD 5 Star), John Ness (WCHC), Jeff Newman (MD5 Star), Kim Ray (Tourism), Alan Sexton (SWN), Maura Van Syckle (SBDC)

Call to Order & Welcome – Mike Ratchford

- Meeting called to order at 8:01 am
- Meeting minutes for May and March approved

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Appreciate legislative wrap up from MD Chamber
- Presenters from MD 5 Star today
- MD 5 Star terrific event that puts Cecil County on the map –best face forward

An update on Maryland 5 Star Activities was presented by Jeff Newman, President & CEO, and Ashley Cottrell, Marketing & Communications Manager, MARS Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill

- MARS MD 5 Star scheduled for October 18-22, 2023
- Thank you for assistance to date – Great experience working with businesses and great people in Cecil County
- Continue to use event as platform to showcase what's great about Maryland and Cecil County
- Work for Sport & Entertainment Corp of MD – part of MD 5 Star, MD Cycling Classic, and AAU Junior Olympic Games
- Voted by MD Tourism Coalition as best large event of 2022; best returning event by Press Box
- **Eventing:**
 - 1st Phase – Dressage; 2nd Phase – Cross-Country; 3rd Phase – Show Jumping
 - Men and women compete equally
- **Competition:**
 - 185 Horses, 10 Countries represented; \$325,000 prize money; International competition with riders from all over the world

- 3Star (CCI3*-L) & USEF 3 Star Eventing National Championship
- **Attendance:**
 - 2022 Total Attendance = 25,207
 - Generated ≈ \$5M; Direct Spending Impact \$12M+
- **Broadcast & Livestream:**
 - 32+ hours of live coverage -- mpt, USEF, Horse & Country – regional/national/international
- **Media & Promotion:**
 - Facebook, Instagram, YouTube
 - Hired social media company to grow followers
 - Articles in The Baltimore Sun, Practical Horseman EXTRA, and Inside Maryland
- **What to Expect:**
 - Thrilling Competition, 5-Star Hospitality, Picturesque Tailgating, Live Entertainment, Corgi Racing, Equestrian Demonstrations, Unique Sponsor Opportunities, Retail, Food & Beverage Offerings, Beer, Wine & Spirits Showcase, Fresh Food Festival, Dog Friendly Activities, Curated Event Merchandise, and More
- **Hospitality & Tailgating:**
 - VIP Hospitality, Private Chalets, Sawmill Waterfront Club
- **Experiences & Activations:**
 - Building on food options; Building on kid activities
- **Horse Industry Demographics:**
 - MD has more horses per square mile than any other state
 - MD has more eventing competitions than any other state
- **Partnership Opportunities:**
 - Sponsorships critical
 - Speaking with Hollywood Casino, M&T Bank, Christiana Care, 1st Farmers Holdings, Chick-fil-a, Chesapeake Gold
 - Talking to local dealerships - Hope to have a car for a raffle
- **Branding Opportunities:**
 - Can brand obstacles; great signage opportunities
- **How Your Company Can Get Involved:**
 - Different sponsorship levels: Title Sponsor; Presenting Sponsor, 5 Star – 1 Star Sponsors, Ribbon Sponsor; \$5,000 minimum sponsorship
 - Everything can be customized
- **How Cecil County EDC Can Help MD 5 Star:**
 - Support & Awareness – businesses become supporters, events in community, preferred vendors
 - Volunteer – encourage businesses to promote volunteer opportunities
 - Get Connected – Retail vendors, special events, storage options, dog rescues
- **How Can MD 5 Star Help EDC:**
 - Assets, Accommodations & Access, Information
- **Things We Are Working On:**
 - Creating awareness of event
 - Creating “Supporter” category for companies that can’t be involved due to other commitments but can still support event

- Getting local business community involved
- Encourage businesses to buy tickets (group rates for packages)
- Local activities during 5 Star – love to add to calendar so attendees can attend/check out
- What to do in area while visiting event – Great Wolf Lodge, The Wellwood, etc.
- Vendors: Food, Retail, Pop-up Shops, Dog Rescue – Dog Adoptions
- Volunteer – opportunities for businesses, high schools, etc.
- Special Event: Beer, Wine & Spirits Showcase – need more distilleries, breweries, wineries to participate
- MD 5 Star is an asset – how can they help move EDC forward?
- **What We Need:**
 - Use of Parking Lots: Last year Cecil College, W.L. Gore & Cecil Parks & Rec provided lots
 - Need help with storage
 - Need Operations help – assist with many items
 - Want to grow attendance – 50,000+ goal
 - Make event local, regional, and international
 - Thank Sandy Turner & Tourism for promoting and allowing coordinating events; business for 5 Star brochures
 - Engage equine industry – Harford County, Pennsylvania, Delaware
 - Host field trips for students; SWN to work with CCPS for career opportunities; Promote talk at Career Center @ Cecil College
 - 5 Star accepting interns – Cecil College Career Center will post opportunities

Director's Report – Economic Development Update – Bill Sorenson

- Co-hosted with Elkton Alliance visit with Brooke Lierman, Comptroller of MD – Main Street Walk & Tour of Elkton, ribbon cutting @ Sonny's Deli
- 10:00 this morning – Bond Hearing on Sportsplex in Elkton; hope to address travel sports issue in Cecil
- Saturday – Ike Fishing Tournament
 - 3rd Year Upper Bay Tournament; Top Prize new boat & motor
 - Kids Zone – thanks to Town of North East, and various partners & sponsors
 - 100 kids come & learn to fish; activities in park
 - Each child leaves with tackle box from Ike Foundation and other gifts
 - Lunch provided by Ray Logging
 - Each child receives a fishing pole from Integrity Real Estate
- Bond Rating – meeting with reviewers; currently AA+ rating, like to get to AAA+
- Thank Terri for all the work she does for organization
- June 14 – Virtual Small Business event to learn about state procurement opportunities
- Maureen has left OED for new position with USRC; she will be managing \$10M grant from State

Cecil College Update – Dr. Mary Bolt

- Graduation May 21 – over 200 graduates walked, 343 graduates total
- Athletic Gold Tournament held -- sold out
- June 13 – Ribbon Cutting for Turf Field (soccer/lacrosse)
- "Sweat" (play) opens at Milburn Stone Theater this weekend

Cecil Chamber of Commerce Update – Megan McRay

- Katie Lewis has resigned after 14 years with Chamber
 - Open House on June 13 to honor Katie
- June 20 – Marketing Network @ Perryville Library; Bainbridge & Hollywood Casino presenting

Elkton Alliance Update – Alicia Calhoun

- Co-Hosted Comptroller Brooke Lierman visit last Friday; met with Historical Society & some local businesses
- This Friday – Jump Into June event & Car Show; lots of family fun events, 5-7pm
- Next Friday – Dog Days of Summer; will have bandanas, paw waxing, pup cups, great family activities

Miscellaneous

No formal EDC meetings in July or August; back in September

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 am.

Next EDC Meeting will be on September 6, 2023, at 8:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant