ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
February 5, 2020

PRESENT
Dr. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), Linda Burris (Delmarva Power), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (URP), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Bruce England (SWN), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Woody Jackson (Citizen), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Manager), Erica Jesonis for Morgan Miller (CCPL), Chris Moyer (CC OED Director), Maureen O’Shea (CC Agribusiness Coordinator), Robert Palsgrove (WSFS), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC), Richard Starr (CC OED Coordinator), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancenter)

ABSENT
Sandra Edwards (CC OED Manager), Michael Lara (Northrop Grumman), Bob Meffley (CC Council), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Dr. Rich Szumel (Union Hospital)

GUESTS
Debbie Brown (CC Chamber of Commerce), Scott Flanigan (CC DPW), Jen Lyall (CC Public Information Officer), Sharon Pelham (APGFCU), Lisa Saxton (CC Director of Finance), Jack Schammel (TEDCO), Alan Sexton (SWN), David Strouss (McCrone), Al Wein (CC Director of Administration)

Call to Order & Welcome – Bruce England (for Mike Ratchford)
• Meeting called to order at 8:04 am
• Introductions were made by all in attendance
• December 4, 2019 meeting minutes approved

Chairman’s Report – Bruce England for Mike Ratchford
• Chairman sends New Year greetings
• Legislative time – things happening at State and Local levels
  • Held Cecil Night in Annapolis in January. Dr. Roberts to update.
  • State of the County address given by Dr. McCarthy and Bob Meffley – featured economic progress of Cecil County and future priorities

Government Relations Update – Dr. Carl Roberts
• Government Relations Committee has been meeting
• Unanimous approval for new venue at Cecil Night in Annapolis (CNIA)
• Excellent afternoon program at CNIA.
• CCPS culinary students attended and given guided tour of State House at CNIA.
• Cecil County Teachers Association, BEPAC, and Government Relations Committee holding forum on February 27th, 6pm.
  • Candidates for County Council, District 5; Board of Ed; 4 candidates for County Executive
  • Government Relations Committee has been hosting this forum since 2012, every two years.
Director’s Report – Chris Moyer

- Energized by 2020 by some of the projects our team has been working on:
  - Ag and Tourism -- Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill – 3rd weekend of October
    - Been extremely busy preparing for that
  - Industrial side – Exciting prospects talking to manufacturers, logistics management firms Bainbridge – Infrastructure. Checking into Federal monies for help
- Enterprise Zone is threatened as an incentive at State level as well as Local level – being misconstrued
- March EDC meeting will be Chris Moyer and Sandra Edwards talking about Enterprise Zone -- What it has done in past and what it can do in future

A review of the Cecil County Bond Rating was presented by Lisa Saxton, Director of Cecil County Finance.

- County issues general obligation bonds approx. every 24 month – part of process must get updated bond rating
  - Submit a report and give to purchasers
  - Meet with rating agencies
  - Metrics:
    - County’s Tax Base
    - Demographics
    - Financial Position
    - Management Practices
    - Debt Profile
- County assigned Aa2 rating from Moody’s Investors Service and AA+ S&P Global Rating
- Credit Strengths:
  - Sound financial profile supported by conservative budgeting
  - Stable tax base with average socioeconomic factors
- Credit Challenges:
  - Above average debt burden compared to national medians
  - Lack of balanced operations in wastewater fund
- Factors That Could Lead to an Upgrade:
  - Sustained tax base growth/improved demographics
  - Maintenance of structurally balanced operations leading to growth in reserves in general fund
  - Self-supporting utility funds with improved reserve positions

A Tourism Update was given by Sandy Maruchi-Turner, Tourism Manager

- This is Road Show Season for Cecil County Tourism
  - Been to one wedding show, another wedding show coming up, and Fishing Show in Valley Forge.
  - Largest Travel Show of the Year, Travel & Adventure Show in Philadelphia, coming up.
  - Two Bus Association shows, Pennsylvania and Maryland in March
- Working on events for this year:
  - American Bus Association coming to MD next January. Areas within State can apply as part of fan tour. Cecil chosen to be part of that.
- Fishing Event on June 20th. Top pro angler coming to Cecil. Has a foundation that gets kids into fishing.
  - North East Anchor Marina and North East Community Park chosen.
- On committee for Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill
- Partner appreciation breakfast being planned

- Economic Impact Study for State of MD
  - Numbers for Cecil:
    - Total Tourism Industry Sales of $182M
    - Approx. 2400 people employed in Tourism industry
    - Labor income $102M
    - State & Local Tax Revenues $26.9M (County and State)
    - Cecil County Visitors 1,055 (only measures people coming over 50 miles away)

Subcommittee Reports:

**Education/Workforce – Bruce England, Dr. Mary Bolt, Dr. Jeffrey Lawson**
- Ongoing Education Training Workforce Development – planning and developing ways to help grow our pipeline of workers
- Multiple avenues: Business Engagement Committee meeting (library, OED, College, etc.) focus is workforce needs, business priorities, etc.
  - CBRP, College hosts meetings
- Academics Team working with Jefferson University and two Pennsylvania community colleges on biomedical processing training in health care
- Student Advocacy Day in Annapolis – met with delegates, senators regarding issues related to them and college
- College must seek reaccreditation every 8 yrs. – visits start March 29, report April 1st
- Northern Maryland Tech Council (NMTC) Visionary Awards Ceremony Feb. 26th
- Ongoing battle for 4-year Colleges taking Community College credits
- KeHe (distributor for organic/natural foods) looking for workers
- Two programs to expand at CCST:
  - Teacher academy of Maryland (have self-interest)
  - September 2021, Manufacturing Technology program
    - Committee formed to put program together (businesses from Cecil County members)
    - Training to meet demand of employers
- Kirwan bill expected to be dropped Feb. 7th, 197 pages
  - Kirwan suppose to “backfill” areas of loss because of loss of state revenues
    - Will not help where Cecil needs help
- Business Education Committee – extremely important for businesses to give input

**Technology – Danny DeMarinis**
- Committee needs to meet before next general meeting to define next project

**Finance – Bob Palsgrove**
- Increased activity but nothing ready yet
Communications – JoAnn Dawson
- Future Business Leaders of America looking for judges for State competition for students; to be held in Hunt Valley
- Hope’s Legacy – Premier April 2nd at Senator Theater in Baltimore
  - Will be planning a screen at Fairwinds Farm as well
- CCST Job Fair – looking for businesses to participate
- 1st Annual Rooted in our Community – Farming Up Close and Personal
  - Open dialogue with farmers, what happens on farms, GMOs vs. non-GMOs, clear up misconceptions, neutral information for people
  - Cecil College – March 28th – Free to Public

Cecil County Public Library – Erica Jesonis (for Morgan Miller)
- Debuted new workforce related resource – Job and Career Accelerator
- Upcoming business programs in February

CC Dept. of Public Works – Scott Flanigan
- Procurement Open House, Wednesday, March 4th, 6pm, Cecil County Administration Building
  - Info session for businesses interested in doing business with Cecil County to learn about upcoming opportunities and how to pursue them

Summary
- Highly recommend attending NMTC Visionary Awards
  - Will be Cecil County businesses nominated
  - Need to bring attention to Cecil County
- A presentation on Census 2020 might be useful for business leaders
- Reminder to fill out and turn in Ethics forms

The report will be available via OED website.

Adjournment
Bruce England (for Mike Ratchford) adjourned the meeting at 9:04 am.

Our next EDC meeting will be on March 4, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. at Cecil College, Room TC208.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Assistant