

Business Meeting Minutes for January 27, 2021

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Kathy Deoudes at 9:01 a.m. at the Chesapeake Heritage Visitor Center, 425 Piney Narrows Road, Chester, MD 21619. Due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, the meeting was held via Zoom, an in-person meeting was not offered. The following Board Members were present and represented a quorum:

Kathy Deoudes, Chairman
Heather Bacher, Vice Chairman (via Zoom)
Lee Bridgmon, Secretary (via Zoom)
Ed Beres, Treasurer (via Zoom)
Jesse Parks (via Zoom)
Jeremy Reynolds (via Zoom)
John Anderes (via Zoom)
Jon Cook (via Zoom)
Hazen Arnold (via Zoom)
Rob Marsh (via Zoom)

Not Present:

Brian DeMoss
Mike Rosendale

Staff Present:

Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development
Katie Clendaniel, Marketing & Destination Specialist, Economic & Tourism Development (via Zoom)
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator, Economic & Tourism Development (via Zoom)

Others present:

Jack Wilson, Commissioner, Queen Anne's County (via Zoom)
Chris Corchiarino, Commissioner, Queen Anne's County (via Zoom)
Linda Friday, President, Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce (via Zoom)
Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation (via Zoom)
Paige Tilghman, Economic Development Manager, Town of Centreville (via Zoom)
Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs, Chesapeake College (via Zoom)
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Development Representative, Maryland Department of Commerce (via Zoom)
Mike Arntz, Community Liaison, Congressman Andy Harris (via Zoom)
Melissa Kelly, Eastern Shore Regional Director, Senator Chris Van Hollen (via Zoom)
Jody Schulz, Owner, Fisherman's Village/Kent Narrows Boatel (via Zoom)
Jack Schammel, RBI Mentor, TEDCO (via Zoom)
Tom Rider, Business Service Supervisor, Dept. of Labor, Licensing & Regulation (via Zoom)
Joyce Jones, Queen Anne's County Liquor Board (via Zoom)
Thomas Beery, Queen Anne's County Liquor Board (via Zoom)

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

On a motion made by Mr. Arnold and seconded by Mrs. Bacher, the January meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Mr. Arnold and seconded by Mr. Anderes, the minutes from the December meeting were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. Treasurers Report: Mr. Beres reported that the account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$3848.80. There has been no recent activity.

IV. Commissioners Report: Queen Anne's County Commissioners, Jack Wilson and Chris Corchiarino updated the board on behalf of the County Commissioners. At the January 26th Commissioners meeting, the Commissioners pushed to maintain local control on HB12 and avoid state mandates. Queen Anne's County currently has 2,300 residents who have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. With the 300 doses that were received this week, the State of Maryland has instructed that those doses be administered to employees of the school system. QAC is beginning to receive second dose vaccine allocations. A significant increase in the vaccine supply is not expected until mid-March or April.

V. Department of Economic and Tourism Update: Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development provided a department update for the EDC. Governor Larry Hogan has allocated \$191K in funding to the Hotel Industry. In order to be eligible for this program, the venue has to have at least 10 rooms for a hotel/motel and at least 5 rooms for a Bed & Breakfast. The venue must also pay the County's hotel tax and be open to the public by March 2021. This program closes on January 31, 2021. The first round of funding for the Restaurant Relief Grant awarded \$433,513 to local restaurants by December 31, 2020. Queen Anne's County received a second round of funding totaling \$266,109 and is currently accepting applications, the deadline to apply is February 4, 2021. In partnership with the Upper Shore Regional Council the department is providing \$28K in grant funding to help support local agriculture businesses looking to develop, expand, diversify, or improve their marketing efforts as well as conduct agricultural research initiatives within Queen Anne's County. We currently have received 8 applications, deadline to apply for the Upper Shore Micro Ag Grant is January 31, 2021. Through the CARES Act, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has been awarded \$3M in funding for fisheries and related businesses. Deadline to apply for funding is February 28, 2021. The department is actively helping those in the industry without internet fill out and submit applications. On January 21st the department in partnership with the Maryland Small Business Development Center and the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce hosted a business resource information session via ZOOM to discuss some of the resources currently available to small businesses. We have currently received 6-8 applications for the Travel & Tourism Advisory Committee. The plan is to take this to the Commissioners for approval by the end of February. In April 2020 the department applied for and was awarded grant funds from the USDA for a rebranding initiative. An RFP has been released and awarded to Choptank Communications which was approved by the County Commissioners at their January 26th meeting. The Upper Shore Regional Council has set aside funds to help support the Trade Liaison position. This will be a shared position between Kent County and Queen Anne's County. This position is in the final stages of development. Target will be back filling the existing K-Mart space, anticipated opening Fall 2022. Boat retailer, Marine Max has recently moved into space at Safe Harbor Narrows Point. Construction continues on the new Hyatt Place in the Kent Narrows. Mrs. Tinelli continues to work with The University of Maryland Medical System to bring an Urgent Care facility to Queen Anne's County. They are currently looking for locations in the Chester area.

VI. Old Business:

- A. Comprehensive Plan Update:** Mrs. Deoudes updated the board on behalf of the Queen Anne's County Planning Commission. Public hearings have been scheduled for January 27th to discuss County Wide/ North County, and January 28th to discuss County Wide/ Chester/Stevensville area. Future meeting information will be distributed via email by Mrs. Tinelli. Both Mrs. Deoudes and Mrs. Tinelli would like to schedule a work session for the Economic Development Commission outside of the regularly scheduled monthly meeting to specifically being work on the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- B. County Grant Update:** Governor Larry Hogan announced \$250M in funding through the Maryland Strong: Economic Recovery Initiative. \$50M of that was allocated for Restaurants, Queen Anne's County received \$443K. The application for the first round of funding closed on November 27, 2020, and all funds were disbursed by December 31, 2020 deadline. The review committee processed 35 applications from local restaurants, with the average disbursement amount being \$10K. Queen Anne's County received a second round of funding totaling \$266,109 and is currently accepting applications. The deadline to apply is February 4, 2021. In partnership with the Upper Shore Regional Council the department is providing \$28K in grant funding to help support local agriculture businesses looking to develop, expand, diversify, or improve their marketing efforts as well as conduct agricultural research initiatives within Queen Anne's County. We currently have received 8 applications, deadline to apply for the Upper Shore Micro Ag Grant is January 31, 2021.

VII. New Business:

- A. Liquor Board Presentation:** Tom Beery and Joyce Jones updated the board on HB12/SB205 on behalf of the Queen Anne's County Liquor Board. Chair, Joyce Jones stated that "Queen Anne's County is unique in that unlike other counties, we do not have an open container law. This means we do not need HB12/SB205 to enact the to-go and delivery features. We can do it by rule and regulation as we have done in the past and can continue to do as long as it is needed. Having the state dictate to us what we must do in our county, without any input from us, is not advantageous for everyone." The County Commissioners are in favor of keeping the control local, and plan to bring this to our legislation.
- B. Legislative Update:** Mrs. Tinelli provided the EDC a list of current legislation specific to Queen Anne's County and Statewide legislation specific to Economic Development via email prior to today's meeting. Please review the highlighted bills for discussion on the EDC's position at the February meeting.

VIII. Liaison Reports:

- A. Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce:** Linda Friday, President provided an update of behalf of the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce. In the beginning of January, the chamber held a pre-legislative session in partnership with the Kent County Chamber of Commerce. The 2021 directory will be delivered on Friday, currently it can be viewed on the chamber website. On January 21st in partnership with the Maryland Small Business Development Center and the Queen Anne's County Economic Development hosted a business resource information session via ZOOM to discuss some of the resources currently available to small businesses. On February 11th they will be hosting "Conversation with the Comptroller".
- B. Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation. Active construction projects occurring in the Kent Narrows include phase two of the Kent Narrows Marine Boatel and the Hyatt Place Hotel. An RFP was recently released for a pedestrian wayfinding project. The deadline for submissions was January 6, 2021. Applications have been reviewed and they are currently interviewing firms. KNDF has been working to update their community plan in conjunction with Queen Anne's County Comprehensive Plan update.

The Foundation will be creating a 28-page travel guide to be displayed in visitor centers that is set to be released in May 2021.

- C. Chesapeake College:** Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs provided an update on behalf of Chesapeake College. Face to face classes continue in support of Health Professions, Skilled Trades, and CDL, spring semester started today, January 27th. Full set of courses are available online. UMMS COVID testing continues on campus.
- D. Maryland Department of Commerce:** Nancy Lajoice, Senior Business Development Representative provided an update on behalf of the Maryland Department of Commerce. The first new business in Queen Anne's County for 2021 opened on January 4th, Turtles Garage an 8000 sq ft facility equipped with state-of-the-art equipment in Stevensville. They are offering general auto repair as well as body and collision repair for any year car. They specialize in older cars and hot rods. Businesses who received the MD Department of Commerce COVID loan last spring (\$75 million) have been notified that their loan has been converted to a grant.
- E. Town of Centreville:** Paige Tilghman, Economic Development Manager provided an update on behalf of the Town of Centreville. Centreville Economic Development Authority has been having trouble meeting quorum at their meetings. The Chairman of CEDA recently resigned so the Centreville Town Council has decided to suspend CEDA operations until after the pandemic. They will move forward with an Economic Development Committee which will include members of CEDA but will allow others outside the town to join as well. Their next meeting will be on February 16th. The YMCA expects to break ground Spring 2021. A 38K sq ft. flex space will be breaking ground at the end of Coursuval Lane. Working with Centreville Main Street to get the Farmer's Market open for Spring 2021.
- F. Congressman Andy Harris:** Mike Arntz, Community Liaison updated the board on behalf of Congressman Andy Harris. This past week Congressman Harris held a call with Eastern Shore restaurant owners and managers to discuss the \$15 minimum wage and whether it should apply to tipped employees or not. Grant funding for fire prevention/safety opened on Monday, January 25th and closes on February 26th.
- G. Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation:** Tom Rider, Business Service Supervisor updated the board on behalf of DLLR. Due to the COVID pandemic, DLLR plans to begin a Virtual Meeting with Independent Businesses program. This program will be a series of short videos that companies can create to give information to job seekers about their company and what types of jobs are available.

- IX. Adjournment:** On a motion made by Mr. Parks, and seconded by Mrs. Bacher, the board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 10:37am.