



**Queen
Anne's
County**
MARYLAND

Business Meeting Minutes for February 23, 2022

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jesse Parks at 9:00 a.m. at The Chesapeake Heritage & Visitors Center, 425 Piney Narrows Rd., Chester, MD. Due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions being lifted, the meeting was held in-person, with the option to participate via Zoom.

The following Board Members were present and represented a quorum:

Jesse Parks, Chairman
Lee Bridgman, Secretary
Larissa Costello
Heather Bacher
Jim Reilly
Shawna Truitt
Jamie Thompson
Deayna Ewell
Lara Wilson
Shelly Gross-Wade
Jeremy Reynolds (via Zoom)

Not Present:
Hazen Arnold
Ed Beres, Treasurer
Brian DeMoss

Staff Present:
Heather Tinelli, Director,
Rebecca Lepter, Economic Development Coordinator
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator (via Zoom)
Todd Mohn, County Administrator

Economic Development Commission:

Jesse Parks, Chair
John R. Anderes III
Hazen S. Arnold IV
Heather L. Bacher
Edward Beres
Lee A. Schnappinger Bridgman
Jonathan Y. Cook
Larissa Costello
Brian R. DeMoss
Rob Marsh
Jim Reilly
Jeremy Reynolds
Shawna Truitt

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
Jack N. Wilson, Jr., District 1
Stephen Wilson, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Christopher M. Corchiarino, District 4

Others present:

Jack Wilson, Commissioner, Queen Anne's County
Linda Friday, President, Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce
Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Grayson Middleton, Eastern Shore Outreach Coord., OFC of the Governor
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Dev. Representative, Dept. of Commerce
Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs, Chesapeake College
Paige Tilghman, Economic Dev. Manager, Town of Centreville
Mike Arntz, Community Liaison, Congressmen Andy Harris (via Zoom)
Lanette Power Waters, Communication Specialist, QAC Schools
Kim Kratovil, Eastern Shore Field representative, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (Zoom)
Adam Tolley, CTE Supervisor, Queen Anne's County Public School (Zoom)
Renee Sheehy, Sr. Public Affairs Manager, Delmarva Power

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

Agenda: On a motion made by Heather Bacher and seconded by Jim Reilly, the February meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Minutes: Lee Bridgemon stated the date for Agronomy Day needed to be changed to March 4th. Correction was made to the January EDC minutes. On a motion made by Heather Bacher and seconded by Jim Reilly, the November meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. Treasurers Report: Mr. Beres, Treasurer, was unable to attend the meeting but emailed Ms. Tinelli prior to the meeting. The account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$2,815.40.

IV. Commissioners Report: Queen Anne's County Commissioner Jack Wilson updated the board on behalf of the County Commissioners:

- A.** At the previous evenings County Commissioner's meeting the Commissioner's voted to not change the definition of a shooting club proposed in the 2109 Text Amendment. This was supported by both the Economic Development and Planning Commissions.
- B.** The county will be a Gold Sponsor for the upcoming Agriculture Day on March 30th and 31st. Commissioner Wilson urged members and liaisons to volunteer or sponsor this fun and educational event for our youth.
- C.** Governor Hogan has tagged 50 million dollars for the Regional Councils throughout the state. Queen Anne's County is a member of the Upper Shore Regional Council with Kent and Cecil Counties. If it remains in the budget and is passed, the USRC will receive 10 million or 3.3 million each. The funds do have stipulations that it must be used for infrastructure and other business friendly investments with a regional component.
- D.** The focus for the Commissioners over the next two months will be the FY 2023 budget.
- E.** The State Board voted yesterday to remove all mask mandates from schools, and they will not have to meet any metrics. This will now go before a

Legislative Rules Committee for review. The potential ruling would release all counties and allow their own autonomy to do what they would like with mask requirements. The Commissioners have a sent a letter of support to put it back to local autonomy to make decisions.

- F. Commissioner Wilson gave updates for current bills pertaining to Queen Anne's County that were presented to Legislation.
 - i. Liquor License Bill- Allows 4 non-resident businesses to be held at one time in the county. This would open opportunities to chain type restaurant options. The Kent Narrows Region would be excluded. The Commissioners anticipate this bill to pass.
 - ii. Agritourism Bill- Defines special events and Agritourism so that Agritourism based businesses could host events without applying for special daily permits. Commissioner Wilson anticipates the bill will pass.
 - iii. Kent Narrows Public Fishing Restriction- Restricts people from fishing over and under the Kent Narrows Draw Bridge. Commissioner Wilson stated it is very dangerous for fisherman to fish along the sandy embankment where the tidal surge is so strong, and boats are consistently traveling. It is also a dangerous situation to the boaters as fisherman are casting towards boats. Commissioner Wilson anticipates this bill will pass without any issues.

V. **Department of Economic & Tourism Development Update:** Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development provided a department update for the EDC:

- A. The Economic & Tourism Development Strategic Plan will be completed soon, and MS Tinelli will be presenting a look at the draft later in the meeting.
- B. Ms. Tinelli and her staff had a great meeting with the MD Dept. of Planning to discuss our priority funding areas. They also reviewed the Sustainable Community Applications for communities that are looking for funding to rehab buildings.
- C. The department has been reviewing previous EDIF loans one by one to ensure all details are in order. There are some conditional loans that are now in default and the county is taking legal action to resolve.
- D. Per request by the EDC, a sub-committee has been formed to discuss the plan for the old outlets in the Kent Narrows. The committee is set to meet tomorrow with the property owner, Douglas Jamal.
- E. Ms. Tinelli received a call from Target Executives stating that they will soon be turning over the facility for stocking, merchandising, and training. The anticipated open date is in early April 2022.
- F. The University of MD Urgent Care is under construction and will be located next to the Big Lots in Kent Town Market. The anticipated open date is summer 2022.
- G. There will be an additional Urgent Care located in Kingston by the Chester River. Ms. Tinelli met with the owners and is excited for the opportunities this will provide to our North County residents.

- H. The ED staff has been working with a local assisted living facility to find funding options to expand.
- I. The Upper Shore Regional Council is discussing the creation of a regional website similar to Project Bright Future. The website would focus on the apprenticeship and internship programs implemented by Connie Dean, Career Technology Liaison, for Kent and Queen Anne's Counties. There is additional talk of including Cecil County as well.
- J. Ms. Tinelli met with Linda Friday to deliver Milestone Certificates to local businesses.
- K. Ms. Tinelli took a tour of Kent Island Crab Cakes who are a recipient of an EDIF loan. The funds were used to purchase a commercial freezer, therefore allowing them to expand their business.
- L. Ms. Tinelli and staff visited the newly renovated packing house in Cambridge. The building houses a commercial kitchen component, USDA offices as well as several commercial spaces. The project was so impressive that a second meeting has been arranged to discuss the details of the project, how it was funded and how something similar could be accomplished in our local municipalities.

VI. Queen Anne's County Economic Development: Rebecca Lepter, Economic Development Coordinator, provided an update for the EDC Board.

- A. The Micro Ag Grant was posted and they received 15 submissions. There is a meeting scheduled on Friday, March 25th to discuss the applications and the funding.
- B. An RFP notice has been posted for the feasibility study planned for the old Sudlersville Middle School. There has been quite a bit of interest and the department is hopeful they will have some good proposal options.
 - i.

VII. 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.
 - i. Chamber staff spent two days hand delivering Milestone Certificates to local businesses that were unable to attend the celebration dinner last December.
 - ii. The COC is partnering with QAC Economic Development to host "Google My Business" workshop. APG Media will lead the discussion with local business sharing tips and details regarding marketing your business on Google. The class is free and open to anyone in the business community.
 - iii. The Chamber is hosting a Mixer on March 24th at the Kent Island Yacht Club.

- iv. The annual COC Golf Tournament is on May 12th at Queenstown Harbor Golf Course.
- v. Ms. Friday supported QACPS staff with the review of 31 applications for "Teacher of the Year".
- vi. The Capital Campaign kick-off has begun for Chesapeake College and they have already raised over 1 million dollars.
- vii. The COC has begun a welcome campaign for new local businesses. They will visit the new businesses and present them with a package containing brochures and small gifts donated by other local companies.

B. Kent Narrows Development Foundation: Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation:

- i. The Swan Cove Spa has opened in the retail space located at the Boatel.
- ii. The construction on The Dock House Restaurant located in front of the Boatel continues. An opening in summer of 2022 is expected.
- iii. Harrison's Yacht Sales has been sold to Safe Harbor which expands the footprint for Safe Harbor to include the region between The Jetty, Bridge's Restaurant and Fisherman's Inn properties.
- iv. The Hilton was acquired by Chesapeake Hospitality.
- v. The foundation continues to follow the pending legislative bills for Non-Resident Business Licenses and Prohibited Fishing that pertains directly to the Kent Narrows region.
- vi. KNDF supports Governor Hogan's recommendation to increase Maryland Tourism Development's Board Allocation Fund by two million dollars.
- vii. The foundation continues to work on the final details of the Community Plan.
- viii. The Chesapeake Motoring event will be returning on June 4th and 5th and will take place at the Kent Island Yacht Club.

C. Chesapeake College: Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs at Chesapeake College provided an update for the EDC Board.

- i. Chesapeake College is diligently working with partners to expand the workforce programs. The goal is to have 45% of the graduates credentialed with an industry certification or apprenticeship program by the end of school year in 2031. The current total is 10%.
- ii. The Capital Campaign is now in full swing, and they have already reached one million in funding.

D. QAC Planning and Zoning-Steve Johnson, Planner with QAC Planning and Zoning, was unable to attend the meeting but provided a detailed list of concept plans that are in the review process.

- i. Kent Island Crossing- Retail, Office and Grocer space located in lot across from the entrance to the KIVFD.
- ii. Bay Bridge Marina-New construction apartment building
- iii. Milano's Restaurant-Replacement of old restaurant with new building.
- iv. Slippery Hill-Additional apartment building with Sr. housing units

- v. Queenstown Assisted Living- Phase 2-Additional space for 27 more beds
- vi. Hole In the Wall Gang- Camp for sick children and their families located at what was previously the Aspen Institute.
- vii. Conditional Use of Property for Schrader's Outdoor project

E. Office of Governor Larry Hogan- Grayson Middleton, Eastern Shore Outreach Coordinator, provided some updates for the EDC Board.

- i. Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund was designed to be very flexible. It will provide 10 million dollars to each of the Regional Councils in the state.
- ii. MD's Best Seafood conducted a survey regarding the H-2B Visa issue and the findings were very worrisome. This prompted the Governor to send a letter to Congressional Delegates stating his concern with the H-2B Visa issue and how it is affecting the packing houses and seafood industry in the state.

F. MD Department of Commerce - Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Dev. Representative, provided an update on behalf of the department.

- i. The second round of awards for Project Restore were announced which concludes the total 25 million fund. The governor included Project Restore as a permanent program in the budget but will need to pass legislation for approval.

G. Town of Centreville- Paige Tilghman, Economic Development Manager, provided updates for the EDC Board.

- i. The Rotary Club is identifying students that do not have a firm career plan and matching the students with local business owners for potential employment.
- ii. The new Centreville Town Council is working very well together and have made some recent decisions to reimplement the parking meters in town and apply signage to the electric car portal so it can be better recognized and utilized.
- iii. The YMCA project construction is moving along well.
- iv. Wye River Upper School is celebrating 20 years.

H. QAC Board of Education- Lanette Power Waters, Communication Specialist, provide updates for the EDC Board

- i. QAC Board of Education continues to diligently work on the department's Strategic Plan and has held several focus groups to help with the task. They are finding that many are requesting more community involvement.
- ii. The department is currently planning their "Teacher of the Year" Gala
- iii. The culinary program at Chesapeake College has started and is going very well.
- iv. The department continues to work towards the goal of masks worn in schools by choice and not by mandate.

VIII. Old Business:

- A. Introduction of New EDC Board Members:** With the addition of many new board members, Jesse Parks, Chairman for EDC Board, suggested that each member introduce themselves.
- I. Shelly Gross-Wade- President/ CEO for Prince George's Financial Services Corporation
 - II. Larissa Costello- Financial Advisor
 - III. Jim Reilly-President/CEO Therapy Systems DME Inc.
 - IV. Heather Bacher-Marketing Executive, Shore United Bank
 - V. Shawna Truit- Owner, Patriot Farms Brewery
 - VI. Jesse Parks- KRM Development
 - VII. Le Bridgman-Program Assistant, University of MD Extension
 - VIII. Lara Wilson-UMD Shore Regional Health
 - IX. Dana Ewell- Retail Mgt, Brooks Brothers
 - X. Jamie Thompson- Co-owner, Nicholynn Advisors Accounting Firm
 - XI. Jeremy Reynolds- Chief Operations Officer, RTI Group
- B. QAC Economic & Tourism Development Strategic Plan:** Ms. Tinelli, Director of QACETD, shared a rough draft of the Strategic Plan that the department has been working on for the past few months. Ms. Tinelli thought it was of most importance, as the departments plans and sets goals for the future, to create an updated Strategic Plan to use as a guide for the next 18 months. She believes this is an incredible tool to show our mission, core values, goals, projects, and plans. Ms. Tinelli wants to be able to prove that the department is following through and making an impact.
- C. QACETD FY 2023 Budget Overview-** Ms. Tinelli shared the upcoming budget requests that were submitted for FY 23. The department has not asked for any significant budget increases in many years, and she shared the increases she had requested. The largest request was for the Tourism Marketing Budget which are used for marketing the county through digital, print, billboard etc. The county currently falls far below the marketing budgets of surrounding counties. Other smaller budget increases requests pertained to having a larger staff and the need for additional travel, office supply and printing funds.

IX. New Business

- C. Legislative Update-** At the beginning of the meeting, County Commissioner Jack Wilson, had provided a detailed update regarding the legislative bills that are proposed and have significance to Queen Anne's County. Ms. Tinelli stated that she has recently received requests from local Legislators asking for support/non-support letters from the EDC Board regarding these

proposed bills. Mr. Parks stated that this will be a priority at the March EDC meeting, and they will ask speakers to attend, if needed, to share more updates and details regarding each bill.

- IX. Adjournment:** On a motion made by Mr. Reilly and seconded by Heather Bacher, the board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 10:43 am.