

**Business Meeting Minutes for February 24, 2021**

**I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:**

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Kathy Deoudes at 9:00 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)  
Mike Rosendale (via Zoom)

**Not Present:**

Brian DeMoss

**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  
Paige Tilghman, Economic Development Manager, Town of Centreville (via Zoom)  
Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs, Chesapeake College (via Zoom)  
Mike Arntz, Community Liaison, Congressman Andy Harris (via Zoom)  
Jody Schulz, Owner, Fisherman's Village/Kent Narrows Boatel (via Zoom)  
Beth Malasky, Public Information, Queen Anne's County Community Affairs (via Zoom)  
Adam Tolley CTE Supervisor, Queen Anne's County Public School (via Zoom)  
Andrea Vernot, Choptank Communications (via Zoom)

**II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:**

On a motion made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mr. Beres, the February meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mr. Anderes, the minutes from the January 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. The application period for the new Queen Anne's County/Kent County Trade Liaison position has officially closed. Interviews will begin next week, with an anticipated start date of March 15<sup>th</sup>. The federal government is now shipping Covid-19 vaccines directly to retail partners such as Walgreens on Kent Island. Safeway is receiving Covid-19 vaccines directly from the State of Maryland. Safeway is working closely with Dr. Ciatola to get those at least 10 Queen Anne's County citizens at highest risk vaccinated daily, before moving to their online sign-ups. QAC is receiving 300 Moderna vaccines a week for the next 3 weeks. There is hope that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine will be released within the next week. Overall, vaccine supply remains low.
- V. Department of Economic and Tourism Update:** Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development provided a department update for the EDC. Economic & Tourism Development in partnership with the Department of Community Affairs developed and published the 2020 year in review which was sent to all county employees. Governor Larry Hogan allocated \$191K in funding to the Hotel Industry. In order to be eligible for this program, the venue had 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. There were 7 Hotel/Bed & Breakfasts that applied, funding was awarded based on the amount of hotel tax each business pays. Queen Anne's County recently completed the second round of restaurant funding totaling \$266,109. The second round of funding saw 29 applications, with the average grant being \$10K. 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 received 12 applications. 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, to date we have helped 10 watermen apply for funding. We have currently received 6-8 applications for the Travel & Tourism Advisory Committee. The plan is to take this to the Commissioners for approval at their first meeting in March. Mrs. Tinelli and Mrs. Clendaniel are currently working with Queen Anne's County Parks & Recreation to develop positive messaging regarding the usage of Terrapin Nature Park and Ferry Point Park during the summer months. The Workforce Housing study is close to completion, they plan to update the EDC once it is completed. The application period for the new Queen Anne's County/Kent County Trade Liaison has closed, interviews will begin next week. The department is working on a job description to hire a new Economic Development Coordinator/Manager. Queen Anne's County will be hosting the Bay Bridge Boat show April 15<sup>th</sup>-April 18<sup>th</sup> at Bay Bridge Marina. Current projects in the conceptual phase include Royal Farms and a boat dealership. There are plans to build flex space in the Centreville Business Park. Exciting news for local tourism, The Chesapeake Scenic By-Way has been designated an All-American Road!

- VI. QAC Branding Presentation: Choptank Communications:** Andrea Vernot of Choptank Communications presented to the board a high-level overview of the re-branding process that is currently taking place. Small 8-10 person community driven focus groups are set to begin in March. Two focus groups will take place in-person, and two focus groups will take place via Zoom. The focus group scheduled specifically for the Economic Development Commission will be on March 9<sup>th</sup> held via Zoom. A sample survey will be sent to all members for feedback.
- VII. Old Business:**
- A. Comprehensive Plan Update:** Mrs. Deoudes updated the board on behalf of the Queen Anne's County Planning Commission. Future special topic meeting information was sent to the board via email today 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 begin work on the Comprehensive Plan Update. Tentative meeting dates include March 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>. Special workshop sessions specifically pertaining to Economic Development are scheduled for April 1<sup>st</sup> and April 27<sup>th</sup>. Please let your voice be heard!
- B. Legislative Update:** No additional information was provided on current legislation during the February Economic Development Commission meeting.
- VIII. New Business:**
- A. Election of New Board Members:** The Executive Committee met on February 17<sup>th</sup> to review the nine (9) applications received for the three (3) available Economic Development Commission vacancies. Upon agreement from the board, the Executive Committee would like the following recommendation made to the County Commissioners:
1. Jamie Thompson, Founder & CFO, Nicholynn Advisors, representing the Finance industry sector, and a resident of District 3.
  2. James Riley, President & CEO, Clean Systems, LLC and Therapy Systems DME, Inc., representing the Healthcare industry sector, and resident of District 3.
  3. Shawna Truitt, Principal, Patriot Acres Farm Brewery, representing the Agriculture and Food Service & Hospitality industry sector, and a resident of District 1.
- On a motion made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mrs. Bacher, the board unanimously approved the following slate of individuals to serve on the Economic Development Commission for a term of 3 years beginning January 1, 2021.
- B. QACPS Superintendent Search:** Queen Anne's County Public Schools is beginning the search for a new Superintendent. Mr. Marsh approached Mrs. Deoudes about the ECDC weighing in on the search. Mrs. Deoudes has drafted a letter on behalf of the EDC asking the search committee that the candidate be open to and encourage CTE and Skilled Trades programs within the public school system. On a motion made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mrs. Bacher the board unanimously approved sending a letter to the Superintendent search committee as well as the Queen Anne's County School Board.
- C. Subcommittee Review:** Chair, Kathy Deoudes discussed the need to bring back EDC subcommittees. Proposed committees include Workforce Development, Permitting and Broadband. The current interest from board members is as follows:
- a. **Permitting:** Jesse Parks, Kathy Deoudes
  - b. **Workforce Development:** Rob Marsh

c. **Broadband:** Jeremy Reynolds

If you would like to be part of a subcommittee, please let Mrs. Tinelli know via email.

**IX. Liaison Reports**

- A. Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce:** Linda Friday, President provided an update on behalf of the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce. On February 11<sup>th</sup> the Chamber hosted "Conversation with the Comptroller". There will be a Zoom meeting scheduled for March 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss the partnership between Queen Anne's County Public Schools and Chesapeake College's Culinary Arts program scheduled to begin in Fall 2021. There will be 10 students selected for the program, 5 from QACHS and 5 from KIHS. The Zoom meeting will also give local businesses the opportunity to learn more about the Maryland Youth Apprenticeship Program. The Chamber is currently supporting the Association Health Care, minimum wage, income tax credit and labor & employment legislative bills. The Chamber's annual golf tournament will be held on May 7<sup>th</sup> at Queenstown Harbor Golf.
- B. Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation. The Kent Narrows Foundation recently voted to participate in a Delmarva Life segment that is set to air Memorial Day weekend. This segment is funded by the Maryland Office of Tourism in partnership with QAC Economic & Tourism Development. Active construction projects occurring in the Kent Narrows include phase two of the Kent Narrows Marine Boatel and the Hyatt Place. An RFP was recently released for a pedestrian wayfinding project, the applicants have been narrowed down to 3 choices. 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. The College continues to partner with the University of Maryland Medical System to provide COVID testing on campus, they are currently working out the details on becoming a mass vaccination site contingent on vaccine availability. Instructional positions are currently available in Welding & Manufacturing and CDL & Logistics.
- D. Town of Centreville:** Paige Tilghman, Economic Development Manager provided an update on behalf of the Town of Centreville. There are currently several projects working their way through the planning process and they are currently in the middle of their budget presentations. The Town of Centreville is working closely with Mrs. Clendaniel on the Delmarva Life opportunity with WBOC.
- E. Congressman Andy Harris:** Mike Arntz, Community Liaison updated the board on behalf of Congressman Andy Harris. There is an agriculture grant currently available, Value Added Producer Grant Program, application deadline is March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Fire Prevention and Safety Grant programs are available until March 12<sup>th</sup>. Congress is currently in session.
- F. Queen Anne's County Public Schools:** Adam Tolley, CTE Supervisor updated the board on behalf of Queen Anne's County Public Schools. In partnership with Dave Harper of Chesapeake College, they have been working to create a Culinary Arts Program for Queen Anne's County students. There will be 10 students selected, 5 from QACHS and 5 from KIHS. This program is set to begin in the Fall of 2021 at Chesapeake College. This program is being modeled after the Marine Trades Program created with the help of Mr. Marsh a few years ago.

- X. Adjournment:** The February 24, 2021 Economic Development Commission was adjourned at 10:27am.

EDC Meeting Minutes  
February 24, 2021