



**Queen
Anne's
County**
MARYLAND

Business Meeting Minutes for August 24, 2022

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jesse Parks at 9:02 a.m. at The Chesapeake Heritage & Visitors Center, 425 Piney Narrows Rd., Chester, MD. 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
Heather Bacher, Vice Chair
Lee Bridgman, Secretary
Ed Beres, Treasurer
Brian DeMoss
Jim Reilly (Zoom)
Deayna Ewell
Jeremy Reynolds
Shelly Gross-Wade
Larissa Costello
Hazen Arnold
Shawna Truitt (Zoom)
Lara Wilson (Zoom)

Not Present:
Jaime Thompson

Staff Present:
Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development
Rebecca Lepter, Economic Development Coordinator
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator, ED & Tourism Dev. (via Zoom)
Todd Mohn, QAC Administrator

Economic Development Commission:

Jesse Parks, Chair
Heather Bacher, Vice Chair
Ed Beres, Treasurer
Lee Bridgman, Secretary
Brian Demoss
Hazen Arnold
Jeremy Reynolds
James P. Reilly
Larissa Costello
Lara Wilson
Deayna Ewell
Jamie Thompson
Shelly Gross-Wade

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:

Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Dev. Representative, Dept. of Commerce
Steve Johnson, Planner, QAC Planning & Zoning
Lanette Power-Waters, Communication Specialist, QAC Board of Education
Dave Harper, VP of Programs, Chesapeake College
Tom Rider, Business Service Sup., Dept. of Labor
Kim Kratovil, Eastern Shore Fields Rep., U.S. Senator Ben Cardin
Carrie Pannone, MD Business Roundtable for Education, State Program Mgr. (Zoom)
Lauri Bell, Dorchester Next Generation Scholars Coordinator (Zoom)

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

On a motion made by Lee Bridgman and seconded by Heather Bachman, the August meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Heather Bachman and seconded by Lee Bridgman, the June meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. Treasurers Report: Mr. Beres share that the account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$2,791.02.

IV. Commissioners Report: Todd Mohn, QAC Administrator, provided an update on behalf of the QAC Commissioners.

- A.** Primaries have been held and there will be at least one new commissioner elected this fall.
- B.** The Town of Centreville has a renewed interest in economic development and is seeking grant funds expand their wastewater plant. There is interest in developing the property behind Food Lion into a business park as well as residential development. They are also updating their Comprehensive Plan.
- C.** Preparing for the annual meeting with State Highway (MDOT) where projects and initiatives will be discussed with county leaders, then the Commissioners. If there are any issues like highway improvements, safety concerns, paving etc. that the EDC would like brought to their attention, this is a good opportunity to present.

V. Department of Economic & Tourism Development Update: Heather Tinelli, Director of ED & Tourism Development, provided an update for the EDC members and liaisons.

- A.** Met with the current manager of the Queenstown Outlets. Since the meeting, the property ownership has changed so Ms. Tinelli will be following up to find out about priorities of the new owners.
- B.** The Jamal Property Text Amendment (Old Outlets in Kent Narrows) was pulled and will not move forward.
- C.** Presented Rural Economic Development Incentive Funds projects to the Upper Shore Regional Council for consideration during MACo; the projects were approved as presented and will move to the Maryland Department of Commerce for final review and/or approval.
- D.** Attended the staff meeting for the Bay Bridge Marina Project.
- E.** Met with the Administrator for the Enterprise Zone program.
- F.** Continue to work with EDIF to make sure businesses are reporting. There are some new projects being presented and some others that are coming to completion.

- G.** Continue to meet with PRS Guitars to support their request for workforce development training funding. They now have over 540 employees and are the largest private employer in the county.
- H.** Attended the MD Association of Counties (MACo) Convention last week. Was able to meet one-on-one with Liz Fitzsimmons of MD Tourism which was a very productive meeting. Our department hosted the booth to represent the county. We gave away branded crab knives with our logo and had the opportunity to share local food and drink at the Taste of the Counties Reception. We sampled lump crab salad from Kentmorr Restaurant, 3 different brews from Cult Classic and fresh ice-cold watermelon from Godfrey's Farm. Our county shined and we were a huge hit with the attendees.
- I.** Continue to have the Travel & Tourism Advisory Committee meetings.
- J.** Recently conducted a 2-day photo shoot to update tourism photos. Focused on the Cross Island Trail, waterfront dining, farmers market, sunset cruises on local charter boats.
- K.** In 2021 QAC Tourism received 39,000 in marketing funds from MD Tourism and this year, QAC will receive 266,000. It is restricted for certain uses but is a boost for QAC.
- L.** QACETD applied for and was awarded a second round of USDA funding for \$73,000 to implement the branding project and support other departments in shifting their branding packages accordingly.
- M.** The Stevensville A&E District, for which we are the management entity recently received a grant from local government. They established a MOU with the county as well as created their own By-Laws. A new Executive and General Board was established, along with a new Strategic Plan to set them up as they prepare to re-new their 10-year MD A&E District Designation through MD State Arts Council.
- N.** The Ferry Feasibility Project Study Grant request has made it through to the final round. Funds would be utilized to evaluate counties along the bay, opportunities for ports, cost of the project etc. Through that process, every county or city that touches the bay has joined together and recently submitted a grant application through Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County for destination development funding. The objective is to explore the waterways, trails, and tourism assets of these waterway counties to see how the counties can collaborate efforts.
- O.** Connie Dean is running an In-Service Training today for the CTE teachers. She will begin with different businesses coming in for a roundtable discussion and then have teachers visit local businesses that correspond to their field.
- P.** QACETD is currently working with Chesapeake College to plan an event for Economic Development week.
- Q.** The Bay Bridge Run is scheduled for Nov. 13, 2022.
- R.** The Crab Basket Tree Lighting Event is set for Saturday, December 3, 2022.
- S.** Arttoberfest in Historic Stevensville is scheduled for October 1, 2022. Over 50 handmade artisans and crafters, local breweries, food trucks, bands, DJ, performers and more will be part of the event.
- T.** Backyard Brews with Benefits is planned for October 30, 2022. Local Breweries will be at the Kent Island Resort, and each will raise funds for a charity.
- U.** The Eastern Shore Urgent Care is opening, and the ribbon cutting is this Friday the 26th.
- V.** Rebecca Lepter shared more details pertaining to the Town of Centreville. The ED staff recently met with representatives for the Town of Centreville, DHCD and the Planning & Zoning office to discuss their goals in relation to economic development. An upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant is their top priority at the moment. The department plans to bring in DHCD and USDA for a tour and continue to offer support.
- W.** Regarding Sudlersville and the Adaptive Reusage Project at Sudlersville Middle School, the architects have completed the initial site survey. They had a meeting with the Fire Department and our department and reported that the building is in very good condition

and has a lot of potential. There is a community listening session coming up in September at which time the architect will come to discuss their survey results and possible plans and what the community is looking for in that space.

VIII. Liaison Reports

- A. Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation:
- i. The Dock House restaurant is now open for business.
 - ii. Hope Boutique opened in the Boatel retail space.
 - iii. Sugar Doodles Ice Cream Shop is expected to move into another available retail space.
 - iv. The bulkhead construction at the Chesapeake Heritage & Visitor Center is complete and now includes a boat lift and 2 ramps to be utilized by DNR.
 - v. Moving forward with the Wayfinding Project and have received funds to start the process.
 - vi. There was nice article about the Kent Narrows in the Chesapeake Bay Magazine-Weekends on the Water Special Edition.
- B. Department of Labor-** Tom Rider, Business Service Supervisor, Dept. of Labor provided an update to the EDC members and Liaisons:
- i. Hosting a Job Fair on October 4th at Chesapeake College.
 - ii. Many businesses are now entering their job opportunities on the MD Workforce Exchange website
- C. QAC Planning and Zoning-** Steve Johnson, Planner with QAC Planning and Zoning, provided an update.
- i. The Ellendale subdivision is going to the planning commission next month. This would introduce 2 commercial lots behind the Target in Stevensville.
 - ii. Jesse Parks asked a question regarding how the decision is made when many projects are in planning, but limited amounts of sewer/water allocation is available. His question was, "How is it determined which projects will move forward and which will not?" Todd Mohn explained that it is a complicated issue and that they continue to search for new options to resolve.
- D. QAC Board of Education-** Lanette Power-Waters, Communication Specialist for QAC Board of Education, provide an update on behalf of the Board of Ed.
- i. The BOE hosted a Kick-Off for Full time staff the previous day and had over 600 attendees. They introduced all the new teachers, BOE Staff, Commissioners attended as well as the QAC Sherriff who shared some enlightening information and training pertaining to assailants.
 - ii. The BOE has completed their strategic plan she feels as if the staff is very ready and motivated for this school year.
 - iii. They are fully staffed for teachers but always looking for custodians and cafeteria workers.
 - iv. Very involved in the QAC Goes Purple campaign that will be launched September 10, 2022.

- v. The teachers 2021 contracts were extended and are now in the process of renegotiation. They anticipate the new contract will be negotiated by September 13th and signed with 30 days.

E. Chesapeake College- Dave Harper, VP of Programs, Chesapeake College, provided an update regarding happenings at the college.

- i. Classes started on Monday, August 22nd with 55% of students on campus.
- ii. The National Economic Unemployment Data showed that 16- to 24-year-olds were proportionately out, both the work force and education and we would like to see them back so that is what our efforts are about.
- iii. Chesapeake College is in stewardship and partnership mode because there are grants available through Rural Economic Dev. And Governor Hogan just announced Offshore Wind in which they participate. This allows for 470,000 to be utilized to set up a welding trailer that can be taken out into the 5-county region to help build turbines and help people work locally.
- iv. October is Workforce Development month, so the college has several projects and events planned. Program Advisory Council will off breakfast on campus to bring people together to see how they can better serve the community.
- v. They are excited about the partnership that they are building with PRS Guitars. They are looking to leverage some of the grants available right now to help begin a manufacturing program and have funds available to hire a consultant ant to help with curriculum development. Would like to have a meeting with Connie Dean and PRS and good advice from local employers that will lock arms together and say Chesapeake College can send 5 or 10 students to them over the next X number of years.

F. Real Estate-Ed Beres shared real estate statistics form surrounding counties to compare to QAC. The counties that were included were, Talbot, Caroline, Kent, and Anne Arundel:

- i. Sales are decreasing
- ii. Listings are increasing
- iii. Anne Arundel County is the only county selling above selling price. The other counties are all selling below.
- iv. Asking prices are still up in QAC by 17%. Where sellers were negotiating and holding on for larger selling price they are now trending to take first offers and get what they can from immediate sales.
- v. Mr. Beres explains that people are unsure about the economy and are scared to make moves.

IX. New Business

A. MD Business Roundtable for Education-Carrie Pannone, MD Business Roundtable for Education, State Program Manager and Lauri Bell, Dorchester Next Generation Scholars Coordinator introduced the EDC to the MBRT for Education program.

- i. Non-profit organization out of Baltimore MD for over 30 years. MBRT for Education is the catalyst for business, government, and education to drive

high student achievement that ensures a competitive future workforce for a world-class economy. The goals are to:

- a) Align high school standards to college and workspace expectations
 - b) Improve the knowledge and skill level of students
 - c) Prepare students for real world challenges and career opportunities
- ii. The MBRT is looking for volunteers for their MD Scholars Speakers Bureau that are trained to work with students and attend Career Days, STEM in the classroom, Mock Interviews, Judge Competitions and inspire and motivate students to achieve. Prepare students for life after high school using their experience, background and MBRT talking points. Encourage student to become a MD Scholar through the program and set them up for a brighter future. Ms. Pannone has provided brochures for members to take.

B. EDC Terms- There are 4 members who have terms that are expiring at the end of 2022. Ms. Tinelli will be reaching out to them individually to see if that plan to re-apply. Executive Board members will need to be updated. Jesse Parks announced he will not be re-applying for the Chair position and encouraged others to think about applying.

X. Old Business:

C. Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund -Ms. Tinelli and Ms. Lepter shared a presentation regarding the current RMEDF grant.

- a. The governor allocated 50 million dollars focused on rural counties within the state Of Maryland. Each of the 5 Tri-County Councils which focus on rural areas received 10 million dollars. For Upper Shore Regional Council which includes Kent, Queen Annes and Ceil, each received 2.9 million with 1.3 to be spent jointly on regional projects.
- b. The timeline to complete the process from notifications, applications, review, approval, and submission was very aggressive but the department worked very hard to meet the deadline.
- c. Ms. Tinelli shared the potential projects that were approved by the review board for funding as well as a brief description of each project.
- d. For those projects that were not chosen, the department has suggested other opportunities for funding and continues to offer support.
- e. Some of the Regional projects that they are considering are a Regional CTE for each county similar Connie Dean's position as Career Technology Liaison as well as someone that oversees the program. A marketing program that will market the region as a whole for Economic Dev. is being considered.

IX. Adjournment: On a motion made by Heather Bachman and seconded by Shelly Gross-Wade, the board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 10:44 am.