

St. Mary's County Economic Development Commission
Commissioner's Meeting Room, Chesapeake Bldg.
41770 Baldrige St., Leonardtown, Maryland
Wednesday, July 19, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order

Elizabeth Torgerson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Attendees: Elizabeth Torgerson, chair

Dr. Christine Bergmark

Richard Tarr

Dr. Dale Moore

Gerald Meyerman

Frederick Stewart

Stephanie Cornet

Curtis Brown

Leona Charles

Lilyanne Ohanesian

Staff: Chris Kaselemis, Kellie Hinkle

Absent: Lisa Colavito, Dr. Silvio Borrero Caldas, Trisha Post

3. OLD BUSINESS

None.

4. PRESENTATIONS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Announcements from Chris Kaselemis, Director, Department of Economic Development (DED)

DED attended several Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies

Devil's Den Escape Room in Mechanicsville, MD

Rita's Ice in Lexington Park, MD

Cedar Point Federal Credit Remodel in California, MD

Old Line Cycles in California, MD

Southern Maryland Small Business Minority Expo – August 5, 2023 from 10am until 5 pm to be held in the USMSN Facility.

Buy Local Proclamation from the Commissioners recognizing Buy Local Week, July 24- 31, 2023. On July 31st there will be a Buy Local Celebration Event at Suttler Post Farm in Mechanicsville.

DED was awarded an OLDCC Grant for a Military Resiliency Project.

DED currently has three vacancies. Donna Sasscer, Agriculture Manager, retired on June 30, 2023. Casey Guidrey, Development Facilitator, has accepted a position in Calvert County. Anna Behm, Administrative Coordinator, has accepted a position out of State.

B. CEDS Update/Progress – Chris Kaselemis, Director, DED and Jennifer Brown, Director, SOMD 2030 Workforce Development Initiative

SoMD 2030 is focused on building up our STEM pipeline, increasing career opportunities, and expanding partnerships with government, industry, and academia. This collaborative effort is funded by the Naval Air Warfare Center Aviation Division (NAWCAD). The Patuxent Partnership (TPP) is accomplishing the work under our Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) with NAWCAD. We are working with St. Mary's College of Maryland, the College of Southern Maryland, St. Mary's, Charles and Calvert County Public Schools, as well as other schools, industry, and NAWCAD. The SoMD 2030 funding is due to the continued efforts of the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance.

SoMD 2030 connects talented students with paid apprenticeships and internships in southern MD. It enhances the success of the TechJobsRule (TJR) high school apprentice program with the Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center (Forrest Tech Center) of St. Mary's County Public Schools, NAWCAD, TPP member companies and the Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP) approved employers in St. Mary's County. It creates college internship opportunities with local industry, government, and nonprofits – leading to additional education and career opportunities.

C. Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund Project– Chris Kaselemis, Director, DED

The Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund was created to fund infrastructure projects that will support economic development activity, stimulate private investment, and grow jobs in the state's rural counties. The Maryland Department of Commerce provided grant funds for projects proposed by the state's five tri-county councils which serve the rural regions of Maryland. The regional councils coordinated with local jurisdictions within their regions to identify the priority projects to be included in the application. The following St. Mary's County projects have been funded:

- Upgrades to the Barns at New Market parking lot expansion and enhanced septic system
- Upgrades to exterior of Airport Terminal
- Lexington Park Development District Implementation Plan
- Chesapeake Uncrewed Route Network
- Regional Bicycle Route
- Urban Legacy Land Preservation Program

D. Proposed incentive for Excise Tax– Chris Kaselemis, Director, DED

In the past, St. Mary's County had a Development Impact Fee to fund new roads and schools in the area of development. St. Mary's County requested legislation to enable an Excise Tax to replace the Development Impact Fee and allow for additional flexibility for spending those funds on quality-of-life infrastructure improvements. DED plans to request enabling legislation to offer a credit/reduction on Excise Taxes for target industries and workforce housing.

E. Open Discussion

Each member was given the opportunity to add any information or ask any additional questions.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

7. ADJOURN

Action: Dr. Christine Bergmark made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Gerald Meyerman and approved unanimously.

Minutes taken by Lisa Ledman, DED.

Approved: January 17, 2024