



**TALBOT COUNTY GOVERNMENT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**  
215 Bay Street, Suite #5 | EASTON, MARYLAND 21601 | (P) 410-770-8058 (F) 410-770-8059

**Talbot County Economic Development Commission Meeting**  
**Minutes from December 7, 2017**

**Members Present:** Vice Chairman Al Silverstein, Ron Engle, Ted Bautz, Scott Beatty, Jean Weisman, Peter Dunbar, Jacqueline Wilson, Mike Henry, Cassandra Vanhooser, Gerry O'Mara,

**Department of Economic Development Staff Present:** Sam Shoge, Ryan Snow, Kathy Megahan

**Attendees:** Laura Heikes, Deborah Bowden

**Call to Order:** Mr. Al Silverstein called the meeting to order without a quorum at 8:02 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the November 6 meeting were presented.

**Year in Review:** Department staff presented an overview of the accomplishments of the past year by the economic development team. Mr. Snow reported these accomplishments included the many new leases signed by companies at the Talbot County Business Center, partnering with Easton EDC for a designated Enterprise Zone for Easton Point/Port Street, working with the Talbot Planning and Zoning Department to apply for an Enterprise Zone on Tilghman Island, and the upcoming introduction of PACE legislation to the County Council on Dec. 12. Mr. Shoge stated an increase in public outreach by the economic development team was a top priority at the outset of the year. Forms of outreach included 5 listening sessions throughout Talbot County to gather input for the strategic plan, an energetic Business Appreciation Breakfast with the Lt. Governor as the keynote speaker, a well attended Coffee and Conservation at the Waterfowl Festival, and several radio ads. New communications tools were brought online and include a new website, social media channels, and a new newsletter.

Ms. Vanhooser added these additional factors helped account for such a successful year:

- ✓ Increase in communication and coordination with other departments in the county.
- ✓ Addition of new tenants- like Hinkley Yachts- to the Business Center
- ✓ Outreach meetings with current businesses and start-up businesses in the county.
- ✓ Continuing education of Department staff toward Economic Development Certification.

Mr. Engle inquired about the future of the Business Center and the tenants. Mr. Henry stated the FAA currently has a target date of 2023 for the demolition of the building. Ms. Vanhooser



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reported plans are in the works for where the current tenants can move and that the tenants are aware of the time frame and none of the leases are longer than 5 years.

#### **Strategic Plan Update Presentation:** Sam Shoge

Mr. Shoge gave an update on the five strategic goals after input from last month's meeting by commission members:

- **Goal #1 Develop Aggressive Business Retention Strategy**
- **Goal #2 Develop Aggressive Business Attraction strategy**
- **Goal #3 Develop Comprehensive Communications Plan and Public Relations Strategy**
- **Goal #4 Advocate for County legislative and regulatory initiatives that support the retention, expansion and attraction of businesses**  
County's mix of
- **Goal #5 Create sector-based workforce development plan**

**Chairman Report:** Al Silverstein gave the report for Tim Jones, who was absent.

- Election of officers for Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions could not take place because of a lack of quorum.
  - Nominees: Al Silverstein, Chairman  
Jackie Wilson, Vice Chairman
- Members to vote electronically and the results will be announced at January's meeting.

**Committee Reports:** No report

**County Manager Report:** No report

#### **Department of Commerce Report:**

Debbie Bowden reported on the need for food co-packaging and cold storage facilities throughout the state. This may be a future business opportunity for Talbot County.



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Ms. Bowden also reminded members of the “Ready, Set, Grow” workshop that will be held on February 21 at Chesapeake College. This is to help small, minority or women owned businesses.

#### **Member Updates:**

- Mike Henry would like members to review legislation exempting sales tax on aircraft parts. He will get a copy to the members.
- Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 4 at 8:00 am at Easton Library

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:52