



## 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 March 1, 2018**

**Members Present:** Chairman Al Silverstein, Ron Engle, Ted Bautz, Scott Beatty, Peter Dunbar, Jacqueline Wilson, Cassandra Vanhooser, Gerald O'Mara, Andrea Lev, Margaret Enloe, Andy Hollis

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

**Attendees:** Laura Heikes, Tracy Ward, Susie Hayward, Reza Jafari, Dana Newman, Kimberly Kratovil, Melissa Kelly

**Call to Order:** Al Silverstein called the meeting to order with a quorum at 8:02 a.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the February 1, 2018 meeting were presented. Mr. Beatty moved that the minutes be accepted as written. Mr. Bautz seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote.

**Guest Speaker Series, Talbot County Public Schools:** Dr. Kelly Griffith, Superintendent

Dr. Griffith gave a presentation on the 2017 Annual Report of the Talbot County School System. She provided an overview of the financial, demographic, and student performance data. She highlighted the three main goals: Academic Excellence, Partnership with the Community, and Organizational Resources. Included in these goals is an increase in the number of students taking Advanced Placement Courses and an increase in students participating in Dual Enrollment courses through Chesapeake College. She emphasized the success of the Career and Technology Education (CTE) program in preparing students for the future and the importance of internship opportunities with community partners. Some of the concerns Dr. Griffith mentioned were teacher shortage and retention, an increase in the dropout rate (due to non-traditional students aging out of the system) and the continuing challenge to fund the budget. Dr. Griffith presented the plans for the future Easton Elementary School which would include a wellness center open to the community.

**Director's Report: Frederick Douglas Groundbreaking:** Cassandra Vanhooser

Ms. Vanhooser reported on the success of the February 14 groundbreaking of the new Frederick Douglas Park on the Tuckahoe, thanks to a group effort by many County departments and



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members of the community. Next for the park is the construction of basic infrastructure to include a parking lot, portable bathrooms and an interpretive panel. The Economic Development team will be working on fundraising through grants to help develop the park. Ms. Vanhooser also stated there are future hopes for a state or federal partner. The department has also launched a website – [frederickdouglasbirthplace.org](http://frederickdouglasbirthplace.org)

#### **Department Report:** Sam Shoge

Mr. Shoge reported on the PACE Bankers round table which was held February 9. The round table was held to help local bankers better understand the program and how they could sign up and start participating in lending to businesses interested in the program.

On February 21-23, Ms. Vanhooser, Mr. Snow and Mr. Shoge attended the three day Baltimore MEDA Training Credit Analysis class for International Economic Development Council certification. The team also attended the Advocacy Day for Rural Maryland Council on February 8 in Annapolis and Tourism Day on February 16.

On March 19<sup>th</sup> the department will host the Maryland Comptroller, Peter Franchot, who is coming to tour the Talbot County Business Center. Final updates have been submitted to Mr. Shoge for the final draft to the Strategic Plan.

**Committee Reports:** No report

#### **County Manager Report:** Andy Hollis

Mr. Hollis congratulated Ms. Vanhooser and her team on their vision and success of the Frederick Douglas Park. Mr. Hollis added the County is in the middle of development of the yearly budget. The County is not expecting an increase in revenue this year.

**Department of Commerce Report:** No report

#### **Member Updates:**

Ms. Enloe reported plans are underway for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Waterfowl Festival which will be in 2020. She also reported the Festival has been invited to apply to the Maryland Historic Trust Capital Grant program to help fund renovations at the Armory.

Peter Dunbar reported on concern with the future of the Muse in Oxford, which has been vacant for several years. The town of Oxford is considering several options. Also, the town has received a \$750,000.00 to build bio-retention ponds for storm water management.



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Ron Engle reported the town of Easton has approved the building of a new apartment building to help with the shortage of housing for young professionals.

Tracy Ward reported on Chesapeake Harvest distribution sites and on its new website.

**Adjournment:** With business concluded Mr. Engle moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mr. Bautz. The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 a.m.

Next Meeting will be Thursday April 5 at 8:00 at 100 W. Dover Street (TCFL)