



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 May 3, 2018

Members Present: Ron Engle, Ted Bautz, Scott Beatty, Peter Dunbar, Tim Jones, Mike Henry, Cassandra Vanhooser, Jean Weisman, Craig Wanner, Terenda Thomas, Margaret Enloe, Andy Hollis, Walter Chase, Jennifer Williams, Reza Jafari

Members Absent: Al Silverstein, Jackie Wilson, Andrea Lev, Clay Railey, Gerald O'Mara, Shannon Dill,

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

Attendees: Tracy Ward, Helga Einhorn, Scott Warner, Dana Newman, Melissa Kelly

Call to Order: Tim Jones called the meeting to order with a quorum at 8:06 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the April 5, 2018 meeting were presented. Mr. Bautz moved the minutes be accepted as written. Mr. Chase seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote.

Guest Speaker Series, Talbot County Free Library: Scott Warner, Mid-Shore Regional Council

Mr. Warner gave a presentation to update members on the recent activities of the Mid Shore Regional Council, a cooperative regional planning and development organization which covers three counties: Dorchester, Caroline and Talbot Counties. The council's mission is to foster physical, economic, and social development in the three counties. The council consists of 26 voting members and fifteen non-voting members with 50% being elected officials, 38% from private industry, and the remainder minority representation. The MSRC is also an Economic Development District, which allows the MSRC to obtain federal funding to the region through the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. Some of the key initiatives and partnerships of the MSRC include:

- Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Inc.
- Mid-Shore Business and Technology Incubator
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- Shore Gourmet



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

- Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative
- Agricultural GIS Extension
- Maryland Upper Shore Transit
- Annie's Project
- Regional Marketing Initiative

Business Appreciation Breakfast Debrief: Ryan Snow

Mr. Snow reported on the results of the 2018 Business Appreciation Breakfast held on April 13 at the Milestone. He noted the positive feedback he received from attendees. Mr. Snow stated there was a final count of 192 guests this year. The guest speaker for the event was Deputy Secretary Benjamin H. Wu. After the breakfast the economic development team was able to spend the day with Secretary Wu touring several local businesses. Mr. Snow distributed an income statement for the breakfast showing a revenue total of \$4,609.02 and an expense total of \$6,562.50, resulting in a net loss of \$1,953.48. He explained the reason for the net loss was a decision from Talbot County Ethics Commission that the solicitation of sponsorships from county employees was a violation of the Ethics Provisions of the County Code (Chapter 60). Mike Henry suggested to partner with the Mid Shore Community Foundation and create a separate volunteer committee to handle the solicitations of sponsors, a strategy he uses to fund Airport Day. The option to either partner with the Mid Shore Community Foundation or to plan ahead for the expense in the budget will be under consideration for next year's Business Appreciation Breakfast.

Incentive Updates: Sam Shoge

Mr. Shoge reported on the new flier created by the Economic Development Team and distributed to members that clearly explains how the C-PACE program can give financial assistance to commercial property owners. The team is in the final stage of completing the agreement with PACE Financial Services to be able to officially launch the program. He also noted the team will be hosting a Tilghman Island Enterprise Zone Information Session scheduled for Monday, May 7th at the Tilghman Island Volunteer Fire Company at 6:00 p.m. Information on both of these programs is available in the department's newsletter and on the website and social media.

.

Director's Report: Cassandra Vanhooser

Ms. Vanhooser addressed member's questions about the upcoming noise ordinance. She stated that the Noise Committee is reaching a point of compromise with concerned residents. She feels



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

a draft of the ordinance should be ready for review by the County Council in the next three or four weeks.

Ms. Vanhooser welcomed Reza Jafari, who has been appointed by the County Council to become a member of the Economic Development Commission.

She announced to the Commission that Debbie Bowden, our representative for the Maryland Department of Commerce, has taken a new job as Economic Director for Caroline County. The Department of Commerce will be appointing a new representative shortly. She stated if the members knew of any good candidates they should forward the potential candidate's name to Secretary Wu.

Ms. Vanhooser gave an update on the MEDA Conference the Development team attended at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge on April 28th through May 1. She felt the contacts and networking the conference afforded the team was extremely valuable. Also, she was pleased to announce DEVRECO, won the small community development project award for their work on revitalizing the Cadmus building in Easton.

She reported the Development team would be hosting the Texas A&M Commissioners Court Leadership Academy on May 9th. This is a program that helps county commissioners and judges from around the country function better in their roles. The team will be touring local agriculture and aquaculture operations with the visitors.

Next week is National Travel and Tourism week. Ms. Vanhooser will be around the county talking about the power of the tourism industry and the economic benefit it brings to Talbot County.

Committee Reports: No report

County Council Report: Jennifer Williams

Ms. Williams reported the County Council continues to work on the county budget. They have held 2 public budget hearings. The council now needs to go back and review what was proposed at the hearings and decide what changes, if any, should be made to the current budget. The council has also been discussing the future of the businesses that currently rent at the Talbot County Business Center and how to support them when the Business Center closes. A survey is being done to determine the viability of relocating the businesses to the Mistletoe Farm location. Ms. Williams also reported that a proposal from the Planning and Zoning Department on Project 190 should be presented to Council members by next week.



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

Member Updates:

Craig Wanner mentioned the disadvantage Talbot County has in the availability of affordable industrial park locations. He feels the development of Mistletoe Farm would be a big step forward in improving that need.

Ted Bautz reported the town of Easton has been included by the governor as one of the designated communities to be able to take advantage of the Opportunity Zone, a new community development program to encourage long term investment in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide.

Mike Henry reported on the near completion of the airport environmental assessment, notice should be coming out in June.

Ron Engle gave an update on some of the new commercial construction going on around the county. This includes a new Verizon store on Route 50, Michaels at Waterside Village, Rise Up Coffee has submitted plans for its new building in Easton and construction has started for an addition to the Country School.

Adjournment: With business concluded Mr. Bautz moved to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Mr. Beatty. The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

Next Meeting will be Thursday, June 7 at 8:00 at 100 W. Dover Street (TCFL)