

Economic Development Commission

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 7, 2023

8 a.m.

Via Zoom

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism Director Cassandra Vanhooser called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. as no member of the executive board was present.

Members Present: Ted Bautz, Dr. Clifford Coppersmith, Shannon Potter Dill, Jimmy Jaramillo, Chris Kleppinger, Micah Risher, Clay Stamp, Terenda Thomas, Cassandra Vanhooser, Jackie Wilson

Members Absent: Chuck Callahan, Walter Chase, Reza Jafari, Ken Kozel, Amy Kreiner, David Montgomery, Donna Saathoff, Rob Straebel, Deborah Walsworth

Staff Present: Krista Boothby

Guests: Helga Einhorn, Susie Hayward, Kimberly Kratovil, Liz LaCorte, Cheryl Lewis, Cristy Morrell, Dana Newman, Kelly Simonsen, Scott Warner

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Dr. Coppersmith made a motion to accept the minutes from the June 1, 2023, meeting as written. Mr. Risher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

III. Chuck Callahan, President, Talbot County Council – Reported by Clay Stamp

Mr. Stamp recognized Ms. Vanhooser for inviting Tom Barkin, CEO of the Richmond Federal Reserve, to Talbot County. He reported that the county is currently undertaking many projects including the new gymnasium at the Talbot County Community Center. Mr. Stamp invited those present to attend the “A Day to Remember, 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance” event starting 8:30 a.m. at the corner of West and Dover Streets in Easton.

IV. Director’s Report – Cassandra M. Vanhooser

Ms. Vanhooser invited presenters to speak on specific projects.

- Scott Warner of the Mid-Shore Regional Council gave an overview of the Delmarva Index which can be found at DelmarvaIndex.org. He invited EDC members to attend the MSRC’s annual tour which will take place in the Bay Hundred region of Talbot County on September 14.
- Liz LaCorte of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum gave a presentation about the new CBMM Welcome Center which was partially funded by Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund.

- Dana Newman, Director of the Talbot County Library System, spoke about the Literacy Lab program funded by Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund.
- Micah Risher, Airport Manager of the Easton Airport gave a presentation about the Airfield Modernization Program to begin in October 2023.
- Kelly Simonsen of Easton Utilities gave an update on the broadband accessibility project.

IEDC Economic Recovery Corp: Ms. Vanhooser noted that she was Zooming in from a hotel room in Henry County, Alabama. She was selected to be a member of the International Economic Development Council's Economic Recovery Corp. The team she is working with will make recommendations to Henry County about how to expand their economic base.

Business Resource Fair for Latino Businesses: Ms. Vanhooser is working with a group called Uniting for Entrepreneurship – Talbot County, and they are planning a business resource fair for Spanish-speaking business owners. The event will take place on October 14, 2023, at 4 p.m. at the Waterfowl Building

Work Sessions with the County Council: The department will hold two work sessions with the County Council. The first one on September 26 will be a presentation by members of Senator Van Hollen's and Congressman Sarbanes staff regarding the Chesapeake National Recreation Area. The second work session is about proposed updates to the Property Assessed Clean Energy program and will be held October 10 at 3:30 p.m.

Visitors Center Feasibility Study: A committee from the Tourism Board is conducting interviews with the four candidates who submitted bids to complete the feasibility study. The final interview is September 11. The committee will make a recommendation to Council, which cannot be done until the first Council meeting in October because of the related capital-enabling legislation.

Minority Business Program: Debbie Walsworth is chairing the committee that is working on establishing a training program for minority business owners. Talbot County funded two cohorts of up to 15 participants each through the Maryland Rural Economic Development Fund.

Coffee and Conservation: Ms. Vanhooser urged members to attend the department's annual Coffee and Conservation event at the Waterfowl Festival on November 10.

Milestone Events: Ms. Vanhooser noted that the Summer of 2023 was a season of milestone events. Secretary Kevin Anderson visited on June 14 and toured several businesses. The departmental offices were moved to Bay Street at the end of June. Richmond Fed President Tom Barkin held a series of listening sessions on August 15-16. Ms. Vanhooser testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship on August 17.

V. Town Reports

Town representatives reported on news from their jurisdictions.

VI. Comments from Board Members and Guests

No comments from board members or guests.

VII. Final Remarks and Announcement of Upcoming Meetings

November 10 – Coffee and Conservation at Waterfowl Festival, 8:30 a.m.

December 7 – EDC Meeting, 8 a.m.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Jaramillo made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Stamp seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m.