

Talbot County Economic Development Commission (EDC) Meeting
Talbot County Government Building, 215 Bay Street, Suite 5, Easton MD 21601
October 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chairman, Timothy G. Jones; Vice Chairman, Al Silverstein; Gerald O'Mara, Jacqueline Wilson; Ron Engle; Ted Bautz; Walter Chase and Scott Beatty

Ex Officio Members Present: Jennifer Williams, Jennifer Morris, Mike Henry, Terenda Thomas and Cassandra Vanhooser

Members Excused: Andrea Lev, Jean Weisman, Peter Dunbar and Craig Wanner

Attendees: Jennifer Shull, Scott Warner, Laura Heikes and Debbie Bowden

Guest Speaker: Chairman Jones introduced Dr. Clay Railey, Vice President for Workforce and Academic Programs at Chesapeake College. Dr. Railey provided an overview of his background as well as the goals of the College within his position as Vice President of Workforce and Academic Programs. As Chesapeake College is the pathway for people in the 5-county area to achieve their career goals, Dr. Railey is drafting a letter to state agencies and the superintendents of the schools (Dorchester, Talbot, Queen Anne, Kent and Caroline Counties) about the P-Tech Academy. There are significant formidable, logistical and financial issues for the Eastern Shore to accomplish this project as it has been legislated. P-Tech is a collaboration between the high schools, community college and the business community, establishing a free-standing high school/community college experience for students. The program will be placed at Chesapeake College and students beginning as freshmen will work through a four-year curriculum at which time they will have a high school diploma and an associate's degree in a STEM career field. P-Tech started with the school system in Brooklyn, NY with IBM. This model also involves internships with the business community; however, one of the Eastern Shore's biggest challenges is transportation. Dr. Railey is working with Dorchester Tech High School to provide programming for the next level of skills training in HVAC, plumbing, electricity and auto mechanics. He is working with the five counties to create a comprehensive culinary program that builds on what they are doing in the high school career tech program. Chesapeake College recognizes culinary and tourism is a huge industry and the need for skilled trades. Dr. Railey reported as he met with the businesses in the five counties, he discovered there are many jobs available yet the companies cannot find skilled workers. Chesapeake College wants to work with the business communities in the five counties to create programs for students and to recruit students; informing the students that there are careers that they can engage in, which will provide them with a viable and sustainable livelihood; they do not have to leave the Eastern Shore. Dr. Railey reported there are high-end security firms on Kent Island that need people. Chesapeake College is also in the process of creating a curriculum to train solar technicians, as solar panels are increasing. Additionally, the College is creating a training program to convert fossil fuel energy cars into electric/battery driven vehicles. Within the next month, Dr. Railey will be meeting with each of the five counties to discuss strengthening the articulation agreements from their high schools to Chesapeake College programs.

Mr. Bautz mentioned the article in The Star Democrat, which examined unemployed males from 25 years old to mid-50, and asked Dr. Railey about training adult potential employees in addition to high school students. Dr. Railey recommended working with the business community to market opportunities that are available to that specific demographic. A discussion ensued regarding the various challenges of addressing the area's entire workforce interest.

Chairman Jones mentioned the culinary center and HVAC program in Caroline County, the Career Technology Center in Dorchester County and the engineering program in Easton; the counties could consolidate these resources. Transportation is expensive; however, is it more expensive than building a career technology center in each of the five counties?

For more information about P-Tech Schools, please visit www.ptech.org. For more information on Maryland's Career and Technology Education programs, please visit www.mdctep.org.

Call to Order: Chairman Jones called the meeting to order, with a quorum, at 8:27 a.m.

Approval of October Agenda and September Meeting Minutes: Chairman Jones asked for a motion to approve the October agenda; Vice Chairman Silverstein motioned to approve the October agenda and Mr. Engle seconded, the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Jones requested a motion to approve the September meeting minutes; Vice Chairman Silverstein made a motion to approve the September meeting minutes as presented; Ron Engle seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Business Environment Committee (BEC): Mr. Bautz reported the Business Environment Committee met on September 20th at 9:30 a.m. The BEC was reconstituted with the additional membership of Bill Stagg from Lane Engineering, LLC; Mike Hiner, Scott Beatty and Andy Hollis were also present. The meeting focused on the development review process, inter-agency coordination and customer service. To address the cross-agency coordination issues, the BEC invited Dr. Fredia Wadley, Health Officer, to attend the next meeting scheduled for October 19th at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Bautz reported the Builders, Trades and Design Professionals Public Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16th at the Talbot County Community Center, from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Communications Committee (CC): Ms. Vanhooser reported the next meeting date is being determined.

Correspondence: No correspondence received.

Action Items: Chairman Jones reported at the last EDC meeting, Mr. Craig Wanner proposed volunteer members form a manufacturer's forum. The EDC members discussed the status of the Upper Shore Manufacturers Council. Mr. Scott Warner reported that this group is presently dormant and that Dan McDermott had been involved with this group. Since Mr. Wanner was not in attendance, Chairman Jones

suggested he, Mr. Wanner, Mr. Warner and Mr. McDermott hold a meeting to provide input and discuss the objectives for the manufacturers' forum, should there be anything besides the focus of workforce development.

Ms. Bowden reported there are other resources to consider, such as the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP). Although a statewide organization, they are very interested in looking at a local focus. Additionally, there is a group that includes manufacturing; it supports all levels of business leadership and has since waned because of lack of programs. Everyone is facing the same dilemma. Ms. Bowden requested to be a part of this meeting and suggested bringing in other resources that might be able to assist with funding and/or reestablishing the council. The EDC members decided the initial manufacturers' meeting would include Scott Warner, Dan McDermott, Craig Wanner, Debbie Bowden, Al Silverstein and Tim Jones. After the meeting, they will report to the EDC.

Chairman Jones reported the other action item is a request for nominations for Champions of Maryland Manufacturing. Chris Plater, from RMI Manufacturing indicated the deadline was extended to October 7th to accommodate Talbot County. Ms. Bowden reported that the Department of Commerce was also asked to put in nominations, two from each county, and she was provided an external deadline of October 17th. Ms. Bowden was hoping the EDC would provide her with the nominees. Vice Chairman Silverstein proffered Konsyl Pharmaceutical, The Whalen Company and Salisbury Pewter. Members present concurred with the nominations.

County Manager's Report: Ms. Morris reported the first round of interviews for the coordinator's position, Office of Economic Development, has been completed. Ms. Morris indicated they were pleased with the quality of the candidates. The County Manager's office is bringing back four of the candidates in mid-October for the second interview with the full County Council. Ms. Williams indicated they started with 17 applicants and the number was pared down to six. The goal is to have the new coordinator in position by early November.

Ms. Morris reported during Ms. Tilghman's term as Director of Economic Development, she worked with the Waterfowl Chesapeake and started an annual Business Networking Breakfast held on the morning before Waterfowl Festival begins. Ms. Morris, Ms. Vanhooser and Ms. Hall met with the director of Waterfowl Chesapeake to review the details of the event. The event is scheduled on Friday, November 11th at the Waterfowl Conservation Pavilion on 11 South Harrison Street. The breakfast will begin at 8:30 a.m. and at 9:45 a.m., everyone is invited to walk over to the Waterfowl Building for the Festival's Flag Raising Ceremony at 10 a.m. in honor of Veteran's Day.

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Jones reported, based on the timing of hiring the new ED Coordinator as well as the holiday season, Mr. Hollis requested the EDC push back the strategic plan committee meetings in the towns so the ED Coordinator is involved. This is a great opportunity to reestablish the Office of Economic Development to the business community. A discussion ensued regarding perceptions of the Office of Economic Development as well as its leadership, especially concerning engaging the existing business community. Chairman Jones asked for volunteers for the strategic planning committee. Those that volunteered were Mr. Wanner, Mr. Beatty, Ms. Vanhooser (in September's meeting); Mr. Engle, a representative from the County Manager's Office, Vice Chairman Silverstein, Chairman Jones and Councilwoman Williams. Chairman Jones requested Ms. Hall arrange the first meeting once the ED coordinator is appointed. Councilwoman Williams suggested that instead of emailing invitations, it would be beneficial for the new ED Coordinator to pick up the phone, introduce themselves and engage with the businesses; let the businesses understand that the OED and the County want to hear what they have to say by inviting them to the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting in their towns.

Lastly, there are two vacancies on the EDC. Paul Makosky was an At-Large member and Mr. Bond, who recently tendered his resignation, represented the County Arts. Chairman Jones asked for nominees for the EDC to present to County Council. Vice Chairman Silverstein suggested Gerald H. Early, Executive Director of the Talbot County Arts Council, Inc. Mr. Beatty suggested Dr. Clay Railey for the At-Large. Mr. Bautz suggested the EDC consider an organization outside Easton. Mr. O'Mara suggested Tad DuPont from St. Michaels.

Town & Member Reports:

Vice Chairman Silverstein, Chamber of Commerce: reported he has 72 businesses signed up for the Regional Job Fair, scheduled on Wednesday, October 12th, from 2:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Talbot County Community Center. Last year, 61 businesses attended the job fair. Talbot County, through the County Council, is sponsoring the fair and the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board is funding the event. A number of organizations will be located in a resource room to assist job seekers with a variety of services to help them gain employment. Additionally, a representative from the State Board of Elections will be there to register people to vote.

The Talbot County Public Schools (TCPS) holds the license for Manufacturing and Education Partnership for Excellence (MEPE), which used to be under the old Manufacturing Council. The Chamber's Partners in Education Committee is working with TCPS; presently they have eleven educators who are going through seven evenings visiting manufacturing businesses. The educators will receive three credit hours after they complete their project. The Committee is partnering with Angela Visintainer, Director of Caroline County Economic Development; Ms. Visintainer is connecting with the businesses. A discussion ensued regarding tracking demographic information from the job seekers. Ms. Shull suggested job seekers receive a post card to be executed, returned by a certain date and entered into a drawing for something rewarding.

Gerald O'Mara, Agriculture: reported the Talbot County Farm Tour was successful. Ms. Dill showed an example of what the agricultural community is doing to clean up the environment by touring John Swaine's farm to see the "agrochemical handling" building that captures and contains farm chemical spills within the building for easier removal. The tour moved on to Bobby Leonard's property. Mr. Leonard is a waterman, oysterman, crabber and farmer; he demonstrated utilizing the principles of farming on land to farming in creeks off the Choptank. Councilwoman Williams commented on Mr. Leonard's incredible process of oyster farming. Mr. O'Mara

advised that to get additional information regarding GMOs, look to The Wall Street Journal, "GMOs Are a Necessity – for Farmers and the Environment." <http://www.wsj.com/articles/gmos-are-a-necessityfor-farmers-and-the-environment-1475537025>

Mr. O'Mara reported a conversation he had with a Talbot County contractor about how difficult it is to get a permit in Talbot County as opposed to other counties. Mr. Bautz added the Business Environment Committee has been focused on getting to the core of this matter and they found there are environmental issues such as water quality, et al. The BEC has to look into State and Federal mandates, as well as local interpretations. Vice Chair Silverstein mentioned the State staff presented to the County Council after they reviewed their files and they found that customer service was lacking. Vice Chair Silverstein indicated he is meeting with Dr. Wadley later this month to address customer service and how they administer programs.

Mike Henry, Airport: reported he met with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), regarding the Airport's Improvement Plan, and the estimate for the demolition of the Black & Decker Building is about ten years. There are specific things that need to be accomplished before the runway may be extended. Mr. Henry is meeting with the Maryland Department of Environment to resolve some tree obstructions that shutdown the night approaches to the crosswind runway. Lastly, the airport will be paving this weekend to get the T-hanger taxi lanes completed.

Cassandra Vanhooser, Tourism: reported the Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA) Annual Media Marketplace was a grand slam homerun. The Office of Tourism hosted 52 journalists and 68 destination representatives and provided them with the opportunity to see everything that is Talbot County. The event was very well received by the journalists and by other destinations, which is important to the County. Additionally, the event, as well as the Office of Tourism, was embraced by the community.

Ted Bautz, Commercial Real Estate: reported the Easton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC) received a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for \$383,000, which will be used for the food promotion program, such as infrastructure, farmer training, etc. The EEDC would not have been successful had it not been for Scott Warner and the support of the Mid Shore Regional Council (MSRC). Mr. Bautz suggested the commission receive a presentation regarding the activity concerning broadband.

Ron Engle, Town of Easton: reported he and Don Richardson, the new Town Manager for Easton, met with one of the principals of the Maryland Health Club. The Club has hired Billy Casper Golf consultants regarding the course conditions and they plan to open a "farm to table" restaurant. Rise Up Coffee officially bought the three lots across from their Dover Street Store and they are going to upgrade the existing Rise Up building. The Bartlett Pear closed their bakery across the street and moved it into their restaurant; they are now offering breakfast and lunch seven days a week, in addition to dinner.

Scott Beatty, Large Business: no report.

Jacqueline Wilson, Small Business: no report.

Laura Heikes, Shore United Bank: no report.

Scott Warner, Mid Shore Regional Council (MSRC): reported with regard to the recent CEDS meeting, if the members know of any organizations that would be interested in providing the CEDS committee with regional projects, now is the time to reach out. Mr. Warner provided an overview of the history regarding the previous organization for a regional tech school that included the Upper Shore Regional Council, MSRC and Chesapeake College. Last week there was a meeting with the six counties from Dorchester and above, regarding the regional magazine that was done about a year ago. The ED directors discussed ramping up regional marketing and they met with one of the top site selection companies in the country. (Included is a link to review a copy of the digital edition of the magazine <http://siteselection.com/digitalEdition/2016/sep/>.) Vice Chairman Silverstein indicated it would be interesting to discover if any prospects came out of all the ads bought from site selection magazines over the years. He also suggested the EDC/OED examine alternative ideas for advertising, such as marketing in lifestyle and boating magazines, attracting the primary business owners to move to Talbot County for the lifestyle and bring their companies with them. A discussion ensued regarding marketing and the strategic plan.

Debbie Bowden, Maryland Department of Commerce: reported the Maryland Business Works is a highly successful incumbent worker-training program. For additional information visit the Maryland Department of Labor's website at <http://dllr.maryland.gov/employment/mbw.shtml> or contact the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning at dlwdalbusinessservices-dllr@maryland.gov.

Jennifer Shull, Town of Trappe: reported Saturday is Nace's Day with a parade in Trappe. The raindate is the 15th.

Walter Chase, Town of Trappe: encouraged everyone to come to the Parade as they have three bands and marching units coming out of Baltimore; and, they show off! The Parade begins at 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Adjourned: Chairman Jones motioned to adjourn, Vice Chairman Silverstein seconded and the motion carried unanimously at 9:26 a.m.

Next Economic Development Commission Meetings:

November 3rd and December 1st, Talbot County Government Offices, 215 Bay Street, Suite 5, Easton, Conference Room 1
Easton-January 5th; Trappe-February 2nd; Oxford-March 2nd; St. Michaels-April 6th and Queen Anne-May 4th.
Venues and details TBD.