



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 for Thursday, April 5, 2017

Members Present: Chairman, Timothy G. Jones; Walter Chase, Gerald O'Mara, Craig Wanner, Ron Engle, Ted Bautz, Scott Beatty, Jacqueline Wilson, Al Silverstein, Dr. Clay Railey, Andrea Lev, Jennifer Shull

Members Excused: Shannon Dill, Peter Dunbar, Terenda Thomas

Ex Officio Members Present: R. Andrew Hollis, Jennifer Williams, Mike Henry, Cassandra Vanhooser, Sam Shoge, and Ryan Snow

Attendees: Scott Warner, Debbie Bowden

Call to Order: Chairman Jones called the meeting to order, with a quorum, at 9:01 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the March meeting were presented. Mr. Silverstein moved that the minutes be accepted as written with necessary changes. Mr. Railey seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Enterprise Zone: Mr. Bautz explained the Enterprise Zone in Easton to the commission. It is a state program run by the Department of Commerce based on poverty levels within a Census Tract. Mr. Bautz explained that the Easton Economic Development Corporation was applying for designation and the County Council had to be co-applicants for the eligible Census Tract in Easton that includes Easton Point, the hospital, and much of Port Street—from Easton Point to downtown Easton. Commercial or industrial properties within the Enterprise Zone would be eligible for property tax credits on the increased assessed value and companies within the Enterprise Zone would be eligible for income tax credits per job created. The State would then reimburse a portion of the tax credits. Jobs created would yield \$1,000 per employee and \$3,000 per employee if they are economically disadvantaged. The administrator of the Enterprise Zone—the EEDC and County—would be able to set the criteria for tax credits by establishing a minimum investment in property and minimum number of jobs created. Mr. Bautz explained that a joint working group between the EEDC, the Easton planning and zoning office, Talbot County planning and zoning, and Talbot County economic development would meet to evaluate the application process, the makeup of the zone, and zone boundaries. It was moved the EDC support the enterprise zone and recommend the County Council approve the measure. The motion was seconded and approved by consensus.

Website Redevelopment for Department of Economic Development and Tourism: Mr. Shoge reported that the department is putting together a marketing committee comprised of members from the Economic Development Commission and the Tourism Board to develop a brand for Economic Development. This committee will work on the website redevelopment. Mr.



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Shoge further explained the department accepted a bid from Cake & Eat It Design to develop the new economic development website. Mr. Shoge stated the marketing committee will reinvigorate the logo design process. The marketing committee will be influential in helping the department write the communications plan and assist the department in telling the exciting stories regarding doing business in Talbot County. Mr. Shoge stated that the marketing committee will be coming up with a name for the old Black & Decker Bldg.

Business Appreciation Breakfast Update: Mr. Snow reported that the department has sent breakfast invites via eventbrite. 35 RSVPs have been recorded and sponsorships are approaching last year's level. The department has selected the awards from Salisbury Pewter and an email was sent out to the EDC asking for nominations.

Chairman's Reports: Mr. Jones reported the department met with Trappe's elected officials and thought it was a good meeting. Mr. Jones asked Ms. Shull for her opinion. Ms. Shull stated that it was a good conversation and 3 of the 5 councilmembers were able to attend. Ms. Schull stated Trappe needs to first determine what specifically they want to market in their town. Mr. Jones reinforced this comment by stressing the importance of Trappe identifying what they want to be. Mr. Jones further stated from the meeting, the difficulty to get grants came up because of the perceived wealth of the Town. When trying to obtain grants, the zip code and not city limit of Trappe is reviewed, inflating the overall statistics used to determine eligibility. The wealth characteristics of the zip code, which includes Island Creek and Jamaica Point (high dollar real estate neighborhoods), does not reflect the wealth makeup within town limits (which is much lower).

Mr. Jones feels the listening sessions are of high value and appreciates everyone that comes out. Mr. Jones said the commission needs to figure out what their role is, how to sustain themselves, and how to perpetuate the leadership on the commission. Mr. Jones introduced the newest member to the commission Ms. Margaret Enloe, executive director of Waterfowl Chesapeake. Ms. Enloe gave a brief introduction of her background and stated that she is really excited to be a part of this commission.

Committee Reports: Mr. Bautz reported from the Business Environment Committee. Mr. Bautz extended his kudos to the county staff and planning staff for their outreach to the contractor, architect community, and realtors. The county held a session two weeks ago to the Mid-Shore Board explaining the permitting process in the County.

The County Manager Report: Mr. Hollis expanded on Mr. Bautz remarks by stating the county staff and the head of the permitting department met twice with the Board in the past couple of weeks to go over the rules and ensure there is an open dialog. County Council members Jennifer and Chuck attended the session with the MSBR.



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Mr. Hollis stated the need for audio amplification and the importance of guests introducing themselves prior to commenting at the next listening session in St. Michaels.

Member updates: Mr. Silverstein reported that the Town of Easton is having budget sessions.

Oxford Day is April 22, 2017 and the Oxford Conservation Park will be dedicated at 9:00 am on the same day.

There being no further business, Tim moved to adjourn the meeting.

Next Meeting

The upcoming listening tour throughout Talbot County meeting dates and locations described below.

Town of St. Michaels will be held May 4th, 8 a.m., at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum Auditorium

Respectfully submitted,

Candace Harris