

# Economic Development Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 7, 2020

Via Zoom

### I. Welcome and Call to Order

Chairperson Jackie Wilson called the meeting to order at approximately 8 a.m.

**Members Present:** Ted Bautz, Scott Beatty, Chuck Callahan, Shannon Dill, Ron Engle, Margaret Enloe, Andy Hollis, Reza Jafari, Tina Jones, Sandi Pepe, Micah Risher, Donna Saathoff, Terenda Thomas, Cassandra Vanhooser, Craig Wanner, Jean Weisman, Jackie Wilson

**Board Members Absent:** Walter Chase, Al Silverstein

**Staff Present:** Kathy Megahan, Candace Harris, Pam Keeton

**II. Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the May 7, 2020, meeting were presented. Mr. Bautz moved the minutes be accepted as written. Mr. Engle seconded the motion, which passed by a unanimous vote

**III. Guest Speaker:** Dan North, senior economist for Euler-Hermes North America, presented an overview of the U.S. economy and discussed the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. He reported that the forecast is for a U-shaped recovery. Though the economic pain is deep and unprecedented, he also noted, "All is not hopeless." Consumers are still hopeful about the future, which is a good sign. See attached slides from his presentation.

**IV. County Council Report:** Mr. Callahan reported on the County's continued COVID-19 effort and acknowledged many who have contributed to the Emergency Services efforts.

### V. Chairman's Report

Ms. Wilson thanked the EDC for their continued support of the business community during the COVID-19 pandemic and noted that banks have been particularly busy processing PPP applications for many of Talbot County's businesses.

### VI. Director's Report

Ms. Vanhooser reported that the month has flown past (and it feels somewhat like *Groundhog Day*) as she is actively involved in Talbot County's COVID-19 response as part of the Emergency Operations Center team. Business owners continue to need help finding and applying federal programs. She has crafted the twice-weekly private sector

calls to address needs in the business community, including a regular audience with the Talbot County Health Officer, Dr. Fredia Wadley.

Talbot County is receiving more than \$6.4 million in funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Ms. Vanhooser will assemble a task force made up of EDC members to help draft a small business grant program and review applications. Talbot County Director of Finance Angela Lane will co-chair the effort.

Ms. Vanhooser also reported that she served on the Maryland Department of Commerce Recovery Task Force representing tourism and destinations. The group drafted recommendations that were sent to Gov. Larry Hogan's office for inclusion in his statewide Roadmap to Recovery.

Additional staff changes were also announced. Pam Keeton joined the staff last month as content marketing coordinator and is doing a terrific job, Ms. Vanhooser said. Kathy Megahan, who has served as administration assistant to economic development, public works, and building maintenance, is retiring from her position. She will take a reduced accounting role with building maintenance. Ms. Vanhooser noted that she and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism will miss Kathy, and she wishes her well on her new endeavor.

## **VIII. Town Reports**

Representatives from each of the towns reported on news and events taking place in their jurisdictions.

## **X. Adjournment**

Ted Bautz made a motion to adjourn, with Ron Engle as second. The motion passed unanimously. The next meeting will be held on June 4, 2020, at 8 a.m.