

Talbot County Tourism Board
Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2022
8:30 a.m.

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Judy Bixler called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. The meeting was held via Zoom videoconference.

Board Members Present: Jessica Bellis, Judy Bixler, Angela Eade, Ron Engle, Ian Fleming, Michael Hoffman, Mary Kellogg, Amy Kreiner, Laura Price, Cassandra Vanhooser

Board Members Absent: Kristen Greenaway, Harold Klinger, Mark Salter, Jeff Schneider

Staff Members Present: Krista Boothby

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Ms. Bixler presented the minutes from the April 13, 2022, meeting. Mr. Hoffman made a motion to approve the minutes with Ms. Kreiner seconding the motion. Minutes were approved.

III. Director's Report – Cassandra Vanhooser

Business Appreciation Summit Round Up: Ms. Vanhooser reported that the Business Appreciation Summit held on May 6 was the most successful yet. Former NFL running back Johnathan Holifield, author of *The Future Economy and Inclusive Competitiveness*, spoke to a capacity crowd at the Tidewater Inn's Gold Ballroom.

The EDC presented five Community Impact Awards. Winners included Aphenia Pharma Solution, the Avalon Foundation, the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center, Shore United Bank, and Santo Grande, CEO of Delmarva Community Service Inc.

Many people went from the breakfast event to a reception for David Baker, the new state director for Maryland and Delaware at the USDA Office of Rural Development. Mr. Holifield wrapped up the day with a roundtable discussion on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) Round Up: The Business Appreciation Breakfast will coincided with NTTW. Liz Fitzsimmons, managing director of the Maryland Department of Commerce Office of Tourism, and Ruth Toomey, executive director of the Maryland Tourism Coalition, presented Governor's Citations to those in

Talbot County who had won awards in FY2022. Citations were presented to the Avalon Foundation, Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism, and Chef Gregory James.

Community Economic Review Meetings: Talbot County will continue its efforts to promote the Eastern Shore Recovery Project Resiliency Toolkit with more public meetings. Erin Silva of the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative will present at Oxford on May 25 and in St. Michael at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum on June 23. This concludes the public outreach efforts in Talbot County for this project. Board members are encouraged to attend.

Rural 10: Ms. Vanhooser gave an overview of the Rural Economic Development Fund, also known as the Rural 10. In February, Gov. Larry Hogan announced that he would include \$50 million in his budget for economic development in Maryland's rural counties. The Maryland Department of Commerce has been tapped to manage this Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund, which will be administered locally by Maryland's five regional councils.

The Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism worked with the Mid-Shore Regional Council to secure a portion of this funding for Talbot County. The goal is to invest in projects and programs of significant economic development impact in our communities. A total of \$3,233,333 was allocated for Talbot County projects.

IV. Manager's Report – Krista Boothby

Mid-Atlantic Travel Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA)

The Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism is a member of MATPRA, a non-profit organization of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) from Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The alliance "strives to serve travel journalists by offering resources that ignore geographic boundaries, as do travelers."

MATPRA holds an annual marketplace held in a selected destination via an RFP process where DMO representatives meet with writers to promote their destinations. Talbot County held the marketplace in 2016. The 2022 marketplace will take place in State College, PA October 18-20.

MATPRA also promotes member destinations on their social media channels and monthly themed pitch newsletter. Members have a listing on the MATPRA.org where they can post videos, annual events, and images.

Please add Ms. Boothby to your PR lists to receive press releases, promotional news, and event info for to utilize in future pitches. Her email address is as follows:
kboothby@talbotcountymd.gov

V. Town Reports

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

VI. Comments from Board Members

Board members reported on news and events taking place with their organizations.

VII. Comments from the Public

No public in attendance.

VIII. Upcoming Meetings

Maryland Tourism Development Board Meeting, Oxford, June 16
Tourism Board Meeting, September 14, 2022

IX. Adjournment

Ms. Bellis made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.