



**Queen
Anne's
County**
MARYLAND

Business Meeting Minutes for March 23, 2022

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jesse Parks at 9:00 a.m. at The Chesapeake Heritage & Visitors Center, 425 Piney Narrows Rd., Chester, MD. Due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions being lifted, the meeting was held in-person, with the option to participate via Zoom.

The following Board Members were present and represented a quorum:

Jesse Parks, Chairman
Lee Bridgman, Secretary
Ed Beres, Treasurer
Hazen Arnold
Brian DeMoss (Zoom)
Larissa Costello
Jim Reilly
Shawna Truitt
Jamie Thompson (Zoom)
Deayna Ewell
Shelly Gross-Wade
Jeremy Reynolds (via Zoom)
Lara Wilson

Not Present:
Heather Bacher

Staff Present:
Heather Tinelli, Director,
Rebecca Lepter, Economic Development Coordinator
Katie Clendaniel, Marketing & Destination Development Spec.
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator (via Zoom)

Economic Development Commission:

Jesse Parks, Chair
John R. Anderes III
Hazen S. Arnold IV
Heather L. Bacher
Edward Beres
Lee A. Schnappinger Bridgman
Jonathan Y. Cook
Larissa Costello
Brian R. DeMoss
Rob Marsh
Jim Reilly
Jeremy Reynolds
Shawna Truitt

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
Jack N. Wilson, Jr., District 1
Stephen Wilson, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Christopher M. Corchiaro, District 4

Others present:

Jack Wilson, Commissioner, Queen Anne's County (Zoom)
Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Dev. Representative, Dept. of Commerce
Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs, Chesapeake College
Mike Arntz, Community Liaison, Congressmen Andy Harris (via Zoom)
Kim Kratovil, Eastern Shore Field representative, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (Zoom)
Renee Sheehy, Sr. Public Affairs Manager, Delmarva Power
Dan Schneckenburger, Exec. Dir., Upper Shore Workforce Invest. Board (zoom)
Tom Ayd, Principal, Greenstreet Properties-Village at Slippery Hill
Connie Dean, Career Tech. Liaison, QAC Economic & Tourism Development
Tom Rider, Bus. Service Supervisor, Dept. of Labor
Steve Johnson, Planner, QAC Planning & Zoning

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

Agenda: On a motion made by Lee Bridgman and seconded by Jim Reilly, the March meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present. Minutes: On a motion made by Jim Reilly and seconded by Lee Bridgman, the February meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. Treasurers Report: Mr. Beres, Treasurer, stated the account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$2,815.40.

IV. Commissioners Report: Queen Anne's County Commissioner Jack Wilson updated the board on behalf of the County Commissioners:

- A. At the previous evenings County Commissioner's meeting the Commissioner's introduced the budget for FY 2023 and will be working to make adjustments and finalize. Details will be shared at the April/May EDC meeting
- B. There was a delay with the advertisement of the Comp Plan meeting notification, so the meeting has been delayed until April 12, 2022.
- C. Current Text Amendments will most likely be discussed in the first or second Commissioner's Meeting in May. Commissioner Wilson suggested the EDC review the amendments and discuss if they will write letters of support prior to them being discussed at the Commissioner's meeting in May.
- D. Commissioner Wilson stated that all legislative bills that have been submitted from QAC have made it through the first phase of legislation. Two bills have moved to phase two. He will be receiving a full legislative overview later today and will provide an update to Ms. Tinelli to share with the board.

V. Department of Economic & Tourism Development Update: Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development provided a department update for the EDC:

- A. The Economic & Tourism Development Team attended/hosted several meetings with partners since the last EDC meeting in February:

- i. Ms. Tinelli and Ms. Lepter met with the QAC/Kent County chapter of S.C.O.R.E. to discuss objectives and how the counties can partner on similar goals.
 - ii. The Economic Development team continues to attend MEDA meetings virtually and will attend the Spring Conference in person this April.
 - iii. The department continues discussions with the Upper Shore Regional Council regarding the potential 50 million funding that would be divided between the 5 councils in Maryland. Queen Anne County is included with both Kent and Cecil Counties. If funds are approved, they will be used to support infrastructure and Economic Development projects.
 - iv. The Economic Development team has met with Easton, Talbot, Caroline, and Visit Annapolis Economic Development departments to continue to build relationships, bridge gaps explore potential partnerships.
 - v. The team met with Tom Sadowski, Executive Director for MEDCO to discuss funding and solutions for our needs.
 - vi. The Tourism Team continues to work with the Historic Stevensville A&E Board to support the reorganization process and apply for grants for future projects.
- B.** The Department continues to receive leads from the state regarding large companies and manufactures that are interested in potentially relocating their businesses to our region. They have been working with property owners and real estate brokers to compile listings that can be shared with interested businesses.
- C.** Ms. Tinelli attended the ribbon cutting for the new YMCA in Chestertown and met with Robbie Gill to discuss the details of the new QAC YMCA under construction in Centreville.
- D.** Ms. Tinelli attended the Ribbon Cutting for the opening the newly remodeled Kent Island Library. The library is open and phase two of the project has begun.
- E.** Rebecca Lepter handled the second round of Micro Ag Grants, funded by the Upper Shore Regional Council and QAC Commissioners. \$48,000 was awarded to 13 ag-related businesses in Queen Anne's County.
- F.** QAC Economic Development partnered with the QAC Chamber of Commerce to host a "Google My Business" workshop free to local businesses, APG Media presented to approximately 25 people. The next workshop is "Access to Capital" and they are hoping to reach some local start up businesses to offer help and support.
- G.** The Economic Development team went on a Community Development Tour through the Town of Sudlersville with representatives from DHCD, Planning & Zoning, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Commerce, and the towns elected officials to evaluate their needs. Ms. Tinelli hopes to use this experience in the future when working with other municipalities in the county.
- H.** The Economic Development Team completed its internal audit on the EDIF files and contracts.
- I.** Target will be opening on April 3rd and Ms. Tinelli is working with their government affiliate for formal announcement details and ribbon cutting date.

- J. The State Superintendent of Schools is scheduled to visit QAC, discuss the new culinary program, and visit 2 local businesses that have incorporated the students into their kitchens. They want to learn about the program and hope to utilize the knowledge to inspire other regions to do the same.
- K. The team will join staff from Chesapeake College to visit Hartford Community College and tour their CTE Department and their new Innovation Center.
- L. Later today, the department is scheduled to meet with tourism staff from Visit Annapolis, Calvert County and Somerset County to discuss the Ferry Project and how all the regions will continue to move forward and work together on the project.
- M. Ms. Tinelli shared a brief list from Planning & Zoning regarding projects are currently going through the permitting process.

VI. Queen Anne's County Tourism Development: Katie Clendaniel, provided an update for the EDC Board.

- A. Ms. Clendaniel stated that marketing efforts are now in the process of focusing on Spring and Summer 2022 events and activities.
- B. The Tourism Team members recently attended the Pennsylvania Bus Association conference in northern Pennsylvania. The attendees consisted of bus tour organizers, bus company owners and PA residents that traveled on buses to the event. The team shared travel information and details about the region to the residents and focused on group travel options with the organizers and owners.
- C. The Tourism Team is in the first phase of creating the new Self-Guided Tour App. They will begin with 3 tours focusing on Centreville, Historic Stevensville, and the local breweries.
- D. The All-American Road planning continues with the addition of a consultant that will work on the interpretive plan. She will be in our area today and we will host her for an early dinner to discuss our assets to highlight on the route.
- E. Ms. Clendaniel is wrapping up a strategic planning session with Historic Stevensville A&E that included the re-organization of the advisory board. And applying for grants to help fund new branding, website upgrades and photography and video for marketing and promotion.
- F. The Ferry Project continues to move forward with more partners reaching out with interest of inclusion. The department and Visit Annapolis have a meeting scheduled with both Somerset and Calvert counties to discuss details. Most recently, MEDCO has offered a \$25,000 matching grant for funds that can be utilized for the cost of the feasibility study. All partners continue to remain engaged and enthusiastic about the project and the opportunity.

VII. Liaison Reports

- A. **Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation:
 - i. The Swan Cove Spa is having an open house on 3/25 from 10am to 4pm.

- ii. Ms. Windley recently toured the new Dock House restaurant located next to the Boatel. The anticipated opening date will be in May 2022.
- iii. Annie's Restaurant has been demolished and Safe Harbor is working on a major site plan.
- iv. Red Eye's Dock Bar is returning for the summer, and they are expecting it to include a new Tiki boat.
- v. KNDF is focusing on an area clean up initiative to include the help of KI Beach Clean Up, Plastic Free QAC and QAC Park & Recreation.
- vi. Hyatt Place hotel continues to expect an opening in fall of 2022.
- vii. KNDF is submitting additional paragraphs for consideration in the County Comp Plan. This is due to KNDF finding the section addressing Tourism in the county to be heavy on Agritourism and not equally covered for Maritime and Coastal Tourism.

B. Chesapeake College: Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs at Chesapeake College provided an update for the EDC Board.

- i. The college is happy to support the culinary program and looking forward to the trip to Hartford County Community College. CCC continues to work toward expanding their training to include additional trades, health professions and continue to support local manufacturing efforts. The Ag program has recently won a few small grants, acquiring a tractor and two greenhouses to improve student experiences.

C. Delmarva Power- Renee Sheehy, Public Affairs & Govt. Affairs Manager, provided an update to the EDC Board.

- i. Delmarva Power has recently installed several new electric vehicle stations at the Kent Island Library. Ms. Galloway requested a list of electric vehicle stations located in the county to share with residents and visitors.

D. QAC Planning and Zoning-Steve Johnson, Planner with QAC Planning and Zoning, was unable to attend the meeting but provided a list of concept plans that are in the review process.

E. MD Department of Labor- Tom Rider, Business Service Supervisor, shared his concern for the lack of workers in our region and the effect it is having on local businesses. He would like to see more job fairs in our region and shared details of a career fair at Harvest Ridge on May 18th. Mr. Rider extended the invitation for businesses to join. Jesse Parks also shared details of an upcoming job fair at the Chesapeake Bay Business Park on Thursday, April 28, 2022.

F. University of MD Extension, QAC- Lee Bridgman provided an update for the EDC Board.

- i. Plans are moving forward for the upcoming AG Awareness Day on March 30th and 31st. The event will host 7th graders from local schools and there are still many volunteer opportunities available.

- ii. The popular Spring Plant Sale will be returning this year in May. Ms. Bridgman will share more details at next month's meeting.

VIII. Old Business:

- A. **Douglas Development Corp. Visit:** Jesse Parks provided an update on the outcome of a recent visit with Mr. Douglas Jemal, the owner of the former Kent Narrows Outlet Center. The objective of the visit was to build a relationship and have an open conversation to understand Mr. Jemal's future plans for the property. In addition to Mr. Parks, attendees included Heather Tinelli, Rebecca Lepter, Jim Reilly, Gigi Windley and Commissioner Jack Wilson. Mr. Jemal and his team intend to focus on residential development of the property, with some retail space. He is planning to submit a text amendment that would enable him to expand the number of residential units that can be built. Members of the EDC will discuss this with the Planning & Zoning staff to better understand the allowable uses for the property, and the implications of the proposed text amendment. They will also continue to communicate with Mr. Jemal's team to work toward cleanup and demolition projects of some existing structures.
- B. **Welcome Committee-**Ms. Tinelli updated the board on the status of new business visits: The Welcome Committee was able to visit Bay Dogs, which recently opened in the Chesapeake Bay Business Park. Ms. Tinelli recently received a detailed list Katherine Hager, Clerk of Circuit Court, regarding all new business licenses issued in the county in the past year. New business visits are being planned and Ms. Tinelli will be emailing board members with dates so they may attend as their schedule allows.

IX. New Business

- A. **Village at Slippery Hill Expansion-** Tom Ayd, Principal, Greenstreet Housing provided a detail update on the status of this ongoing project.
 - i. The Village at Slippery Hill is a 24-acre parcel (9.5 cleared) located on Nesbit Road in Queenstown. The finished development would include a total of 186 rental apartments, 9400 sq. ft. of retail space on the lower level of front building and a pad site suitable for a commercial business up to 4600 sq. ft.
 - ii. Currently, Phase One is complete which includes 66 mixed income apartments, retail space and the core infrastructure and storm water construction for the complete project.
 - iii. The project has additional holding and financial approval for the remaining 120 units that will be completed in Phase Two and Three.
 - iv. Phase Two will include an additional 66 (one, two and three bedroom) mixed income apartments (5 buildings).

- v. Phase Three will include 54 Sr (low Income) apartments (46-one bedroom and 8 two bedroom).
- vi. They are hopeful to be pulling permits for Phase Two within the next 30 days and are looking for financial help options to help bridge the gap to close in June and break ground in July. The anticipated time to complete Phase Two project is 14 months.

The EDC Board is very excited to support projects like this as it supports QAC workforce initiatives and entices larger businesses to establish themselves where employees have affordable housing opportunities.

- B. Permitting Process Issues-** Jeremy Reynolds addressed the EDC Board to discuss recent issues he has observed with permitting requests in the county. Mr. Reynolds suggested that perhaps there could be some type of checklist specific to individual projects to alleviate these types of experiences. It was also suggested that there could possibly be a liaison that specifically answers questions about the checklist.

- IX. Adjournment:** On a motion made by Lee Bridgman and seconded by Shelly Gross-Wade, the board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 10:54 am.