

Meeting Minutes for January 23, 2023

I. **Call to Order and Determination of Quorum**

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Whitehill at 9:01 a.m. via Zoom. The following board members were present and represented a quorum:

Mike Whitehill, Chairman
Tom Glen
Patrick Perry
Todd Mohn

Staff Present:

Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development
Rebecca Clark, Economic Development Coordinator

II. **Approval of Agenda & Minutes**

On a motion made by Mr. Mohn and seconded Mr. Perry, the January meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Mr. Perry and seconded by Mr. Mohn, the December meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. **Department Update**

Mrs. Tinelli gave an overview of department highlights from the last month:

- The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Ferry project has gone out to the public; the deadline for submissions will be the end of February. Annapolis will be the lead for the project
- The feasibility study for the old Sudlersville Middle School was completed by Moseley Architects. Ms. Clark will send the study to members to view for reference.
- The three counties under Upper Shore Regional Council—Kent, QA, and Cecil recently received an award at winter MACo for their administration of Micro Ag grant opportunity funded through USRC. The current round (the third) is open for submissions at this time, with \$64,000 available.
- Rural Investment Funds received approval from the Department of Commerce. Our office is awaiting an MOU from USRC to be presented for our projects.

- CDBG grant for Matapeake Professional Park has officially closed.

IV. **New Business**

- Mrs. Tinelli reminded Commission members that financial disclosure forms that were emailed need to be signed and returned
- A draft contract for Chesapeake Chef Service, LLC was presented to the Commission for review. Members agreed to review and email comments to Ms. Clark
- Staff are expecting to receive EDIF Applications from Tokyo Bay and Orchard Point Oysters
- EDIF balance is currently running around \$199k. A budget will be due in February and the Commission will be asked for input on whether to apply for additional funding in the County budget.

V. **Monocle Meat Company Application Review**

Brandon Upchurch attended to present his application for Monocle Meats. He has 8-10 years' experience managing grocery butcher shops at Lowes Foods – a high end grocery store. They are seeking \$35,000 in funds to purchase a meat saw, display cases, a freezer and some other equipment for opening a butcher shop in Kent Island. They have hit snags with permitting and are currently waiting on the contractor's license to come in so he can apply for the necessary permits. Work still do be on the space should take 3-5 weeks and will include plumbing for the grease trap, floors, drywall, paint, and put-up walls. They have developed business partnerships with farms in Baltimore, QAC, and Kirby & Holloway, and will offer different cuts of meat at all price points so meat is accessible to all. He is in search of a good grass-fed beef operation to work with.

The target open date will be in about 3 months, which will be a soft opening. A grand opening will take place this summer. Funding would support 3-5 employees over the first 3 years.

Committee discussion: The Commission discussed the project and made a motion to approve the request for funding, not to exceed \$40,000 subject to confirmation that \$5,000 in the bulk equipment line item are allowable. Allowable items will include: service cases, walk-in cooler, meat saws, and possibly bulk equipment. A provision to include business mentoring involvement must be included. The agreement must outline that two full-time and one part-time position will be created and sustained for the loan, and once those requirements are satisfied the loan will convert to a grant. Personal guarantees will also be required.

A motion was made by Mr. Glen to approve an award of \$35,000 with an additional \$5,000 subject to complete, itemized list of bulk equipment items if determined allowable. The motion was seconded Mr. Mohn. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

VI. **Adjournment:** On a motion made by Mr. Perry and seconded by Mr. Glen, all members present unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:39 am.