



**Business Meeting Minutes for January 25, 2023**

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

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jim Reilly at 9:01 a.m. at The Chesapeake Heritage & Visitors Center, 425 Piney Narrows Rd., Chester, MD. The meeting was held in-person, with the option to participate via Zoom.

The following Board Members were present and represented a quorum:

Jim Reilly, Chair  
 Heather Bacher, Vice Chair  
 Ed Beres, Treasurer  
 Lee Bridgman, Secretary  
 Jeremy Reynolds (Zoom)  
 Larissa Costello  
 Hazen Arnold (Zoom)  
 Shawna Truitt (Zoom)  
 Lara Wilson  
 Shelly Gross-Wade  
 Jesse Parks  
 Deayna Ewell  
 Brian DeMoss  
 Todd Wilhoit

Members Not Present:  
 Jaime Thompson

Staff Present:  
 Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development  
 Rebecca Clark, Economic Development Coordinator  
 Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator, ED & Tourism Dev. (via Zoom)

**Economic Development Commission:**

Jim Reilly, Chair  
 Heather Bacher, Vice Chair  
 Ed Beres, Treasurer  
 Lee Bridgman, Secretary  
 Brian Demoss  
 Hazen Arnold  
 Jeremy Reynolds  
 James P. Reilly  
 Larissa Costello  
 Lara Wilson  
 Deayna Ewell  
 Jamie Thompson  
 Shelly Gross-Wade  
 Jesse Parks  
 Todd Wilhoit

**County Commissioners:**

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

Others present:

Jack Wilson, Queen Anne's County Commissioner  
Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation  
Linda Friday, President, QAC Chamber of Commerce  
Kimberly Kratovil, Eastern Shore Fields Rep. for U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (Zoom)  
Connie Dean, Career Technology Liaison, QAC Economic & Tourism Development  
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Business Dev. Rep., MD Dept. of Commerce (Zoom)  
Dave Harper, VP of Programs, Chesapeake College  
Alyssa Hastings, Eastern Shore Rep., Office of Senator Chris Van Hollen  
Diana Kuhu, QAC Business owner and Resident  
Lanette Power-Waters, Communication Specialist, QAC Public Schools

**II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:**

On a motion made by Heather Bacher and seconded by Jesse Parks, the November meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Ed Beres and seconded by Heather Bacher, the January meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

**III. Treasurers Report:** Mr. Beres shared that the account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$1778.71. There was a \$1000 expense to Chesapeake Chefs for the 2022 EDC Holiday Breakfast in December.

**IV. Commissioners Report:** County Commissioner Jack Wilson provided an update:

- A.** The Commissioners are beginning the budget cycle and as they prepare for the FY 24 budget. They anticipate their biggest challenge will be the Board of Education.
- B.** The Commissioners are combining efforts with Kent, Caroline and Talbot Counties to devise a program to save the A.F. Whitsitt Center. The Whitsitt Center is a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center located in Chestertown, MD.
- C.** Legislation is back in session in Annapolis and Commissioner Wilson shared details regarding bills that are being introduced that could impact Queen Anne's County. Legislation is being introduced that would enable code counties on the Eastern Shore to increase the hotel tax from 5% to 6% with the additional funds being allocated to Economic Development.
- D.** Commissioner Wilson shared that QAC is in good shape financially and he does not foresee any tax increases. He does not anticipate any issues should there be a recession.

**V. Department of Economic & Tourism Development Update:** Heather Tinelli, Director of ED & Tourism Development provided an update for the EDC members and liaisons.

- A.** Staff continues to meet weekly to discuss the details of the Ferry Project. It is anticipated that a request for RFP's will go out in mid-February.
- B.** The Bay Bridge Boat Show will be returning in April. April Plummer continues to work on the details, sponsorship, and marketing campaign to push traffic to local businesses.
- C.** QAC Tourism will be hosting the monthly DMO meeting in April. This will include overnight stays, hosting a Happy Hour at a local Brewery/Restaurant the previous night as well as highlighting local restaurants for breakfast and lunch on the meeting day.
- D.** QAC hosted both the Rural Maryland Council and Grow & Fortify events in December. One was held during the day at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club and the other was hosted in the evening at the new Kent Island Resort. Both events were successful.
- E.** The Matapeake Professional Park grant has officially been closed by the Department of Housing & Community Development.

- F. The latest round of Micro Ag Grants, which won an innovation award at MACo earlier this month, is open and accepting applications. The deadline to apply is January 31, 2023.
- G. Ms. Tinelli and Ms. Lepter attended the Rural MD Economic Development session regarding workforce development and the impact of Maryland Blueprint/Kirwan on building a workforce pipeline.
- H. Ms. Tinelli and staff conducted business visits to Miltec, AZZ Enclosures, 201 Love Point, KI Pub, Kentmorr, Big Truck Brewery, Monocle Meat, Tokyo Bay, Orchard Point Oysters and are also working with some local businesses in Stevensville.
- I. Ms. Tinelli attended Winter MACo as well as the USRC meeting.
- J. The Rural MD Economic Development Fund was awarded to USRC. The department is awaiting details and guidance on how the funding will be managed.
- K. Ms. Tinelli attended the Broadband Advisory Committee meeting.
- L. The Sudlersville Adaptive Reuse Study is complete and now on the next phase where department staff will assist them in vetting potential partners and funding sources for the project.
- M. Staff continue to attend regular meetings with the Stevensville Arts & Entertainment District Board. Their 10-year redesignation application is due in April. They are also looking to partner with Planning to work on Sustainable Communities and are currently addressing parking issues. They will be meeting with the QAC Chamber of Commerce to discuss possibly holding a joint event in the district sometime this year.

## VI. Liaisons Reports:

- A. **Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** The Executive Director of Kent Narrows Development Foundation, Gigi Windley, provided information regarding the region.
  - i. The new Kent Narrows Travel Guide is complete. Ms. Windley shared a copy with attendees.
  - ii. The new Hyatt hotel is open and will offer 80 new jobs to the region. Approximately 80 of the 120 rooms are currently open.
  - iii. The Dock House recently completed some design upgrades that were not able to be completed prior to their opening late last summer.
  - iv. Both Piney Narrows and Safe Harbor Marinas are currently involved in construction to add new floating docks.
  - v. The KNDF Board has 2 new board members:
    - a) Jake Boulay, Cedar Point Marina
    - b) Bill Ortel, Harris Seafood
- B. **Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce:** Linda Friday, QAC Chamber of Commerce President, provided a brief update to the EDC Board members.
  - i. The new QAC Chamber Directory is complete. Ms. Friday shared the new directory with the members.
  - ii. There will be a QAC COC Mixer at Cult Classic tomorrow at 5pm.
  - iii. Ms. Friday shared details regarding the upcoming QAC Chamber event, the "State of Education" on March 21, 2023.
- C. **Real Estate Recap 2022:** Ed Beres, Realtor and Re/MAX Executive, shared a packet containing 2022-year end statistics for the major towns located in Queen Anne's County as well as comparison statistics between QAC and neighboring counties.
- D. **QAC Planning & Zoning:** Steve Johnson was not available to attend the meeting, but he did provide a packet containing details regarding the following topics:
  - i. Concept Plans currently under review
  - ii. Minor Site Plans currently under review
  - iii. Major Site Plans currently under review
  - iv. Major Subdivisions currently under review
  - v. Conditional Users currently under review

- vi. Growth Allocation
- vii. Amendments

**E. Chesapeake College:** Dave Harper, VP of Programs for Chesapeake College, provided an update for the EDC Members.

- i. Chesapeake was just awarded a Maryland Works for Wind grant to help support welding program expansion and construction of a mobile welding trailer. Scope of work for the RFP is being drafted.
- ii. The College is awaiting award letters for Rural Maryland Grants; these funds will provide a shot-in-the-arm for workforce programs through equipment and personnel investments, including purchase of a boat and trucks for CDL Class B instruction.
- iii. Program Updates:
  - a) Expanded hospitality focused trainings, page 31 in the catalog
  - b) Computer & Information Technology training - page 16
  - c) Elevated demand for Wastewater Training for our community - check out page 9
  - d) Workplace Excellence, "soft-skills" training: Chesapeake has 5 certified trainers.
- iv. Graduate & Professional Programming:
  - a) A New Partnership with Bowie State for an EdD in Leadership (see attached) supports the local teaching pool. Currently over 20 students
  - b) Offering Summer Institute for Conditional License Teachers (CLT) to help fill the need for teachers in our area (flyer attached)
  - c) Collaborating with QAC and three other counties to support local Early Childhood (CDA) Education certification using the MD Leads grant.
- v. Staffing Updates:
  - a) Advanced Manufacturing Program Director: A finalist candidate has been identified for this new program; the College is waiting on Rural MD confirmation to extend the offer
  - b) Director of Skilled Trades & Transportation: Replacing Jason Mullen after his promotion to Workforce Dean. Strong candidate pool!

**F. QAC Board of Education:** Lanette Power-Waters, Communication Specialist, QAC Public Schools, provided a brief update.

- i. The nominations for the 2023 School Teacher of the Year have been submitted and the board will now begin the review process. There are opportunities available for local businesses to sponsor the awards banquet.
- ii. Ms. Power-Waters thanked those that shared the Budget Survey on behalf of the QAC Board of Ed.
- iii. Enrollment rates have increased from the beginning of the school year from 72% to 75%.

**G. University of MD Extension-** Lee Bridgman shared some upcoming event dates.

- i. Agronomy Day on March 3, 2023
- ii. AG Awareness Days on April 12 and 13, 2023 (volunteers always welcomed)
- iii. Master Gardeners Plant Sale on May 13, 2023.

**H. Office of U.S. Senator Ben Cardin-** Eastern Shore Field Representative, Kim Kratovil, share that they are continuing their congressionally directed spending meetings and have met with representatives from Queen Anne's County.

- I. **Office of Congressman Andy Harris-** Community Liaison, Mike Arentz, shared the Congressman Harris was named to head the House of Appropriations Panel overseeing funding for the Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Drug Administration and other agencies.

## VII. **New Business**

- A. **Career Technology Liaison Update:** Connie Dean, Career Technology Liaison with QAC Economic & Tourism Development shared a presentation to update the members on the accomplishments, projects and goals of the Apprenticeship, Internship and Career Technology program.
  - i. Programs that have been put in place:
    - a) Maryland Business Roundtable which involves training to local business leaders that provide lessons, guidance, support, and mentorship to local students. There have been 14 businesses trained that have provided 12 lessons to 9<sup>th</sup> graders. There are an additional 12 lessons planned for next semester.
    - b) JA Inspire- Junior Achievement of Eastern Shore provides career development to students. This includes the opportunity for 4000 8<sup>th</sup> grades students (305 Queen Anne's) to attend a massive job fair where they will have hands on, interactive experiences with over 100 businesses.
    - c) Strengthening the Emerging Workforce is a collaborative event hosted by QAC Economic Dev., Chesapeake College and QAC Chamber of Commerce in which High School teachers and counselors, local business leaders, and college staff are given a tour of the CTE programs offered at Chesapeake College, listen to the stories of local business leaders and provided the opportunity to have lunch and be engaged in the details of the opportunities available to our youth.
    - d) QACPS CTE Professional Development Day offered both the opportunity for local businesses to come to high schools and meet with the CTE teachers as well as the opportunity for the CTE teachers to visit local businesses.
    - e) National Apprenticeship Week- QAC Youth Apprenticeship Information Session included 15 businesses and organizations with 3 speakers.
    - f) Career Exploration Opportunities page has been added to the QACETD website. There have been 128 job listings, 14 apprenticeship listings and 495 QR scans associated with the landing page.
    - g) "Career Corner" morning announcement segments at both high schools which include local businesses in person, career videos and support from students to produce the segments
  - ii. **Future Projects:**
    - iii. Grant Funds to support Career Centers at QACHS and KIHS to include 2 career counselors, full career center equipment, supplies, training, and a mobile career center.
    - iii. Partnership with YMCA Financial Literacy Project and the QACETD Career Center Project to include a career center in the QAC YMCA.
    - iv. CTE Resource & Supplies Program- Ms. Dean is working on a collaborative project to develop a systematic and sustainable program in which CTE teachers can list the necessary supplies and resources that are needed for their programs and local businesses could donate.
      - a) CTE Program Enhancement
      - b) Business Input & Contributions
      - c) Structured Sustainable Process

- d) Would be available on the QACETD website
- v. Producing Career Videos
  - a) One Completed and Published
  - b) 2 Filmed and in Edit Process
  - c) 2 Scheduled for Filming
  - d) 21 More Ready to Schedule
- vi. School Based Career Events:
  - a) Internship Fair
  - b) Career Pathway Nights
  - c) Trades Career Fair
  - d) Life After High School
  - e) Decision Day

**X. Old Business**

**A. Financial Disclosure Forms:** Ms. Tinelli reminded those members that had not submitted their Financial Disclosure Form yet, to please do so prior to January 31, 2023.

**XI. Adjournment:** On a motion made by Jesse Parks and seconded by Heather Bacher, the board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 10:25 am.