



Business Meeting Minutes for August 23, 2023

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

Due to the temporary closer of the meeting space at the Chesapeake Heritage & Visitor Center, the meeting was conducted at the Queen Anne's County Library in Stevensville, Maryland.

The following Board Members were present and represented a quorum:

Jim Reilly, Chair (via Zoom)
Heather Bacher, Vice Chair
Ed Beres, Treasurer
Lee Bridgman, Secretary
Jesse Parks
Jaime Thompson
Larissa Costello

Members Not Present:

Todd Wilhoit
Jeremy Reynolds
Deayna Ewell
Shelly Gross-Wade
Brian DeMoss
Lara Wilson

QAC Staff Present:

Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development
Rebecca Clark, Economic Development Coordinator
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator, Economic & Tourism Dev.
Connie Dean, Career Tech. Liaison, QAC Economic & Tourism
Todd Mohn, Administrator, Queen Anne's County
Jim Moran, QAC Commissioner

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:

Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Linda Friday, President, QAC Chamber of Commerce
Kim Kratovil, Eastern Shore Field Rep., U.S. Senator Ben Cardin
Nancy LaJoice, Sr. Bus. Dev. Rep., U.S. Dept. of Commerce
Steve Johnson, Planner, QAC Planning & Zoning
Dave Harper, VP of Programs, Chesapeake College
Julie Ranelli, Branch Manager, Kent Island Library,
Michael Kovalcik, Public Service Associate, QAC Library
Dan Harding, Principal, Kent Island High School

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

On a motion made by Lee Bridgeman and seconded by Ed Beres, the August agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Jesse Parks and seconded by Lee Bridgman, the June meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. Treasurers Report: Mr. Beres stated there is a current balance of \$2122.98 in the account managed by Chesapeake Charities. They will be transferring out \$355 to QAC Economic & Tourism for online ticket sales related to the Field to Table event. This will leave a balance of \$1767.98.

On a motion made by Ed Beres and seconded by Lee Bridgman, all members present voted in favor for transferring of funds for reimbursement to QAC Economic & Tourism Development Department.

IV. Tour of KI Library MakerSpace Facility: Julie Ranelli and Mike Kovalcik provided the EDC Members and Liaisons with a tour of the Makerspace facility located in the KI Library. The MakerSpace is a design, craft and fabrication center that welcomes all skill levels and focuses on art and education. It offers an environment for creativity, curiosity, and innovation.

- i. The center is open Monday 1-4pm, Tuesday and Wednesday 10am-4pm and Thursday 1-7pm.
- ii. The site is not to be used for manufacturing or large-scale production services.
- iii. There is no cost to use the facility or equipment, however, there may be a charge for materials used.
- iv. The equipment that is availability for use in the MakerSpace:
 - a. Epilog Fusion Edge 24, 40-watt laser - Laser Engraver
 - b. Vaquform- manually operated vacuum-forming machine
 - c. Variety of 3D Printers
 - d. Anycubic Photon Mono X2 Resin Printer
 - e. Roland BM-20 Vinyl Cutter
 - f. 5 Singer Start 1304 Sewing Machines
 - g. Flourish II Embroidery Machine
 - h. Cricut Maker 3
 - i. WACOM Cintiq 16" Graphics Tablet
 - j. Adobe Creative Cloud

V. Introduction of New Kent Island High School Principal: Dan Harding, KI High School Principal, was present at meeting to introduce himself and express interest in KIHS partnering with

local businesses. He stated that building relationships with the local community and businesses is a priority. He is very excited to work with the new Career Coach and will offer support and guidance to grow the program.

VI. Overview of Bay to Bridge Traffic Plan: County Commissioner, Jim Moran, was present to share the latest plans and updates for the upcoming Bay to Bridge traffic Plan.

On Saturday, September 16, 2023, QAC Government will launch a pilot program, in joint effort with the Maryland State Highway Administration and the Maryland Transportation Authority, aimed at enhancing traffic flow and safety. This Pilot Program will involve temporary detours and closures of select exits along Route 50 over three weekends in September into October.

The pilot program is scheduled to take place on the following weekends:

- Saturday, September 16, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Sunday, September 17, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Saturday, September 23, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Sunday, September 24, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Saturday, September 30, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM
- Sunday, October 1, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 8:00 PM

During these weekends, several exits will be temporarily closed to encourage travelers to remain on Route 50 and reduce congestion on adjacent side roads. However, it's important to note that the Castle Marina Exit (39A) will remain open to westbound traffic, serving as the last entry point onto Route 50 Westbound prior to the Bay Bridge. Eastbound route 50 will not be affected by any detours or closures.

Specific details of the exit closures and detours are as follows:

- The Shopping Center Road Exit, which includes establishments such as Hardees, Dunkin Donuts, and Cult Classic, will be open for travelers to exit Route 50. However, access to re-enter westbound Route 50 from this exit will be closed. Travelers who exit here will need to return to Castle Marina Road (Chester McDonald's) to access westbound Route 50.
- The Duke Street Exit (38A) will allow travelers to exit Route 50 westbound to access the gas station and return to Route 50 westbound. Beyond the gas station, a closure will be in place just before Stevensville Middle School to prevent access to Route 18 or westbound Route 50 from Route 18.
- The Route 8 Exit (37) will permit westbound travelers to exit Route 50 and access Route 8, allowing them to travel north or south on Route 8. Please note that there will be no access to westbound Route 50 from Route 8. Travelers wishing to access Route 50 westbound from Route 8 will need to return to Castle Marina Road (Chester McDonald's).

Queen Anne's County Government and its partners understand that this pilot program may require adjustments, and we appreciate the public's patience and cooperation during these weekends. Public feedback is always welcome by emailing publiccomment@qac.org. At the conclusion of the pilot program, we will announce multiple ways for residents to provide additional feedback on the program. This will include a combination of Town Hall Public Meetings and virtual means for those unable to attend.

On a motion made by Heather Bacher and seconded by Larissa Costello, all members voted in favor of sending a letter to the Secretary of Transportation in support of the 3-week trial pilot program.

VII. Commissioners Update: Commissioner Moran provided the EDC Board Members with an update.

- A.** There will be a re-rating for sewer capacity and will include an additional 300,000 gallons that will be allocated to Chester, Stevensville, Marling Farms and Dominion regions.

- B. The voted to move forward with Armored Storage located near the Gibson Grant Development was approved.
- C. The public hearing for the Airport Zoning on Pier One Road will be scheduled and the Commissioners will vote in 2 weeks.

VIII. Department of Economic & Tourism Development Update: Heather Tinelli, Director of ED & Tourism Development provided an update for the EDC members and liaisons. She thanked KI Library Staff for providing the EDC members the opportunity to tour the facility and utilize the meeting space.

A. Tourism & Economic Development Update

- i. Economic Development Department has conducted some business meetings:
- ii. There is currently approximately 20 million dollars in potential projects.
- iii. There are many projects they are mid-way or in completion, like Tokyo Bay restaurant in Stevensville.
- iv. Staff recently attended MACo Conference in Ocean City. We had a booth setup in the MD Counties section and participated in the "Taste of the Counties" event where we highlighted local businesses. They served beer samples from Bull & Goat as well as 600 crab balls from Harris Seafood. The county was represented well and was a huge hit with the attendees.
- v. Continue to move forward with the Rural MD Economic Development Fund of 2.9 million from state and Upper Shore Regional Council. All but 2 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are signed and executed, and the projects continue to move forward. Ms. Tinelli will continue to share updates.
- vi. Attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for Everside Healthcare which is a new health care facility in Centreville available to QAC Government and QAC Public School employees.
- vii. The department had a ribbon cutting ceremony for the QAV Visitor Center located at the Queenstown Outlets. This visitor center will be utilized while the construction continues at the center in Chester.
- viii. Attended the ribbon cutting here at the new updated and beautiful Kent Island Library in Stevensville.
- ix. In November, the department will be hosting MEDA's Rural Economic Development event and will collaborate with Kent and Cecil counties. This includes a \$15,000 grant from PNC to work on a regional project. Ms. Tinelli said they are excited for the project which will be a Pitch Event for local entrepreneurs and small businesses to present their ideas for creating or expanding their businesses. It will offer a business the opportunity to win and utilize grant funds to support, grow and bring their idea to fruition.
- x. Year end hotel tax documents show a 15% increase for year over year income.
- xi. Some may have noticed the digital Crabs N Crushes billboard located in Anne Arundel just prior to the Bay Bridge on west bound Rt. 50. The billboard contains their new marketing campaign and a QR code that redirects to the website and Crabs N Crushes landing page.
- xii. Stevensville A&E District recently received 2 operating grants through MD State Arts Council.
- xiii. The QACETD and Planning Department are working together to apply for a Sustainable Communities application for historic Stevensville. This would be beneficial when planning for the future, applying for funding and potentially help with their goals to address parking issues in the district.
- xiv. Ms. Clark recently submitted a Rural MD Council grant for phase 2 of the Sudlersville Middle School Adaptive Reuse Project.

- xv. Ms. Tinelli shared information about some upcoming events and stated she would be following up with an email to members.
 1. Salisbury University Shore Hatchery Business Competition- 9/25 Deadline
 2. Artoberfest in Stevensville A&E District- October 7 from 10 to 4
 3. Concours d' Elegance at Kent Island yacht Club-9/24
 4. Chamber Business Crawl in Downtown Stevensville-9/7 at 5pm
 5. Project Cyber Security- Chesapeake College- October 24th

B. Workforce Development: Connie Dean, Career Technology Liaison for QAC Economic & Tourism Development, shared updates with EDC members.

- i. Working on creating a system to help communicate the CTE needs to local businesses to donate materials and supplies to schools. May include a landing page on website where schools can list needs, teacher requests and businesses can list materials and supplies they have to offer/donate.
- ii. The new Career Coaches have been selected and are beginning this week. Ms. Dean will be working with Adam Tolley to train, guide and support them as they get acclimated and set up at the schools.

IX. EDC Member and Liaison Updates: Due to the nature of the meeting and the restricted time for individual updates, the members and liaisons had just a few short statements:

A. QAC Chamber of Commerce- QAC Chamber of Commerce President, Linda Friday, provided a brief update.

- i. COC will be attending the ribbon cutting for the new T-Mobile on Friday, August 25, 2023.
- ii. QAC Goes Purple kickoff is on September 9th in Centreville.
- iii. On September 21st, the QAC COC is hosting the annual MD Chamber event which will include the Chambers from all over the state.
- iv. The QAC Chamber will be hosting a business crawl in downtown Stevensville A&E District on September 27th.
- v. QAC COC is now a member of the Four Seasons Welcome Committee and are regularly attending meetings. They have been invited to do a presentation about the area and provide goodie bags.

B. Kent Narrows Development Foundation:

- i. KNDF continues to work with county on the improvements to the lot at the Visitor Center. They are on schedule and expect the project to be complete in late October.
- ii. There may be some delays as the road on Piney Narrows may be paved and closed temporarily.
- iii. Working with Dept. of Public Works and Parks regarding replacement of signage.
- iv. Had several visits from travel writers and tour operators over the last month.
- v. There was a very nice video produced and being shared digitally by Better Living.
- vi. The QAC Watermen's Association is continuing to move forward with plans for the Watermen's Day event at the KI Yacht Club in September of 2024.

- vii. The QAC Watermen's Basket Tree Event will be on Dec. 2nd this year at the Crab Deck.
- viii. Boatoberfest in Kent Narrows for three weekends in October. Yacht 10 and the Fisherman's Village will open to showcase yachts/boats in water and on land.

C. Chesapeake College: Dave Harper provided an update for the EDC Members:

- i. Enrollment is up 10% for fall classes.
- ii. Number of classes students have enrolled in is down by 7%. Majority of students have jobs that require at least 20 hours per week.
- iii. Trades team is complete and includes navigator to help build bridges with curriculum and students. New positions include Manufacturing and Construction Coordinators that are experts in their industries. Continue use grants well to build curriculum attract good people for marine trades, welding, and fabrication as well as Transportation that includes CDL training and certification.
- iv. Continue to work with tri-county schools to build relationships.

D. QAC Real Estate Update: ED Beres provided a handout and some local statistics related to real estate in our region. Statistics were broken down by QAC as a whole, individual towns in QAC and neighboring counties statistics for comparison as well.

E. QAC Planning & Zoning Updates: Steve Johnson, Planner, QAC Planning & Zoning, provided a handout and brief update regarding project status updates.

- X. **Economic Development Week:** Ms. Tinelli will share more information as details come together for Economic Development Week plans and activities. Will include business walks, visits, and spotlights as well as other activities.
- XI. **EDC Board Vacancies:** Ms. Bacher shared that the EDC Board does currently have 2 applications that have been submitted for board vacancies, but they do not seem to be in the targeted industries. The EDC Executive Board will meet to discuss and review the applications.
- XII. **Next EDC Meeting:** Ms. Bacher stated the next EDC meeting will take place on September 27th and will be held at Cult Classic in Stevensville at 9:00am.

Adjournment: On a motion made by Heather Bacher and seconded by Jesse Parks, the board unanimously approved the adjournment of the meeting at 10:53 am.