

**Business Meeting Minutes for August 25, 2021**

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

The business meeting was called to order by Secretary, Lee Bridgeman at 9:02 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 or via Zoom. The following Board Members were present and represented a quorum:

Lee Bridgeman, Secretary  
Ed Beres, Treasurer  
Jesse Parks  
Hazen Arnold  
Jim Reilly  
Larissa Costello  
John Anderes  
Rob Marsh  
Shawna Truitt (Via Zoom)  
Jeremy Reynolds (Via Zoom)  
Jon Cook (Via Zoom)

**Not Present:**

Heather Bacher  
Brian DeMoss

**Staff Present:**

Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development  
Connie Dean, Career Technology Liaison, Economic & Tourism Development  
Rebecca Lepter, Economic Development Coordinator, Economic & Tourism Development  
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator, Economic & Tourism Development (via Zoom)

**Others present:**

Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation  
Mike Arntz, Community Liaison, Congressman Andy Harris  
Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs, Chesapeake  
Jody Schulz, Owner, Fisherman's Village/Kent Narrows Boatel  
Royce Herman, Resident, Queen Anne's County  
Martha Herman, Resident, Queen Anne's County  
Kim Kratovil, Eastern Shore Field Representative, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (via Zoom)

**II. Executive Board Nomination, Vacancy:**

Lee Bridgeman, Secretary read the following statement on behalf of Kathy Deoudes. "Due to a conflict of interest in my role with the EDC Board and Planning Commission, I have resigned from the EDC board

effective July 7, 2021". The executive board met prior to the August EDC meeting to request that Jesse Parks resume his role as Chairman for the remainder of 2021. On a motion made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mr. Beres, the re-instatement of Mr. Parks as board chair for the remainder of 2021 was approved by unanimous vote of all members present.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Marsh and seconded by Mr. Reilly the August meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Mr. Anderes and seconded by Mr. Reilly, June meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

**IV. Treasurers Report:** Mr. Beres reported that the account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$3,815.47.

**V. Commissioners Report:** The Commissioners report was deferred due to Commissioner Wilson's absence.

**VI. Department of Economic and Tourism Update:** Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development provided a department update for the EDC. The county rebranding process has been completed and approved at the last County Commissioners meeting. The new tag line is "Where Shore Living Begins." A branding launch will be held at the upcoming Economic Outlook being hosted by the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce at Prospect Bay Country Club on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. The 2021-2022 Visitor Guide has been completed and will be released soon. With the addition of Rebecca Lepter as the Economic Development Coordinator, the department is now fully staffed. Mrs. Tinelli and Mrs. Lepter have recently attended business visits at Reed Millwork, Harbor Sales, AZZ Enclosures, Federal Resources and Queenstown Assisted Living. Mrs. Lepter has also been involved in the Comprehensive Plan meetings and will be focused on providing details to the Commission at upcoming meetings. The Non-Profit Grant for \$166,000 has closed, funds will be disbursed in the coming weeks. Queen Anne's County has been awarded an additional \$41,915 for the Online Sales and Telework Support Grant Program II. After a meeting with the Queen Anne's County Health Department, the Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company has decided to hold off on submitting a grant to the Rural Maryland Council for a commercial kitchen incubator until a feasibility study could be completed. USDA-CBDG has approved the County to apply for a \$50K CBDG grant to fund the feasibility study for the former Sudlersville Middle School property. The department attended the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) conference where they represented the County with the new branding. The department recently hosted the State of Maryland's Business Attraction Specialist. On the tour Mrs. Tinelli was able to highlight local business parks and both industrial and commercial land opportunities.

**VII. Career Technology Liaison Update:** Connie Dean provided a detailed presentation to the EDC on steps that have been taken, challenges, goals, and accomplishments over the past few months as she develops the program that will link schools and local businesses. The main goal of the program is to promote and enforce workforce and career development among students, with a future goal of working with both middle school and first year graduate students. Ms. Dean has met with Career Technology Supervisors from both Kent and Queen Anne's County High Schools and is diligently building a rapport with counselors as they development the curriculum. Ms. Dean has made a tremendous amount of progress in developing and bridging the gap between schools, students and local businesses and has been working to convey the differences between internships and apprenticeships.

**VIII. Old Business:**

- A. Comprehensive Plan Update-Land User Chapter:** After discussion regarding the proposed Land Use Chapter and Sewer Capacity the board unanimously agreed that these topics should be given more attention. Mr. Tinelli will send each member detailed copies of the proposed plans for review. Mr. Parks suggested that the board schedule a separate work session meeting in the next couple weeks to discuss and develop a comprehensive response.
- B. Subcommittee Update:**
  - a. Broadband Committee:** Jeremy Reynolds stated that they are still in the planning stages of forming the committee. They are focused on bringing in the appropriate committee members, defining the objective of the committee and what will be the exact focus.

**IX. New Business:**

- A. Introduction: New Economic Development Coordinator- Rebecca Lepter:** Mrs. Lepter has joined the Economic and Tourism Development department as the Economic Development Coordinator. She will be working directly with Mrs. Tinelli to provide Economic Development support, engage in business visits, staff Economic Development Incentive Fund meetings, and process state and federal grant funds.

**X. Liaison Reports**

- A. Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation. The Foundation is working on a pedestrian way finding project in partnership with Queen Anne's County. The bid for this project was awarded to Gable Communications. The Kent Narrows Travel Guide and Heritage Map was recently completed. The upgrades to the Wells Cove parking and public landing continues and new upgrades to the bulkhead located in front of the visitor center are scheduled to start soon. The Boatel has filled open business spaces, with additional space available. Construction on the Hyatt Place Hotel continues. The Narrows Restaurant has applied for an expansion permit. The Kent Narrows Waterfront has a new luxury boat house available for rent.
- B. Chesapeake College:** Dave Harper, VP of Workforce & Academic Programs at Chesapeake College, provided an update for the EDC Board members. Campus is busy and students are returning in great volume. The College plans to concentrate over the next 2 years to build the Workforce Development Training as an opportunity to rebuild the student volume for which they are accustomed. The equipment for the Culinary Program has been updated which will help to support 25% of local businesses that are hospitality and tourism based. Due to lab and equipment upgrades they have been able to increase course size and hope to soon increase staffing. They have a new Business Innovation Center that allows students to the opportunity to meet with businesses either face to face or virtually. They also have acquired a new Welding Program Director who is focused on building relationships with local businesses that require welding skills and has been working closely with the businesses to creating course curriculum.
- C. Community Liaison, Congressman Andy Harris, Mike Arntz:** There is still a large amount of federal funds available. He encouraged those that have not taken advantage of this resource to apply.
- D. QAC Real Estate Statistics:** Ed Beres stated that the real estate business in the county continues to be very prosperous. QAC is up year to date 11.1% in the average sold price with a 22 day on the market average compared to 80 days in 2020. Statistics were provided to all members present.

- XI. Adjournment:** On a motion made by Rob Marsh and seconded by Kim Reilly the meeting was adjourned at 11:07am.

EDC Meeting Minutes  
August 25, 2021