



**Queen
Anne's
County**
MARYLAND

Business Meeting Minutes for October 26th, 2022

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The business meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jesse Parks at 9:03 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:

Jesse Parks, Chairman
Heather Bacher, Vice Chair
Lee Bridgman, Secretary
Ed Beres, Treasurer
Deayna Ewell (Zoom)
Jeremy Reynolds
Larissa Costello (Zoom)
Hazen Arnold
Shawna Truitt (Zoom)
Jaime Thompson (Zoom)
Lara Wilson (Zoom)

Members Not Present:

Brian DeMoss
Shelly Gross-Wade
Jim Reilly

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:

Jesse Parks, 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

County Commissioners:

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

Others present:

Chris Corchiarino, Queen Anne's County Commissioner (Zoom)

Gigi Windley, Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation

Steve Johnson, Planner, QAC Planning & Zoning

Linda Friday, President, QAC Chamber of Commerce

Kimberly Kratovil, Eastern Shore Fields Rep. for U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (Zoom)

Lt. Johnston, Patrol Commander, QAC Office of the Sheriff

1st Sergeant Lowery, Patrol Commander, QAC Office of the Sheriff

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

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

On a motion made by Heather Bacher and seconded by Ed Beres, the August meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. **Treasurers Report:** Mr. Beres share that the account managed by Chesapeake Charities has a current balance of \$2,778.71. He also stated that the committee will be signing up for the Portal through Chesapeake Charities so they can check donations and balances online.

IV. **Commissioners Report:** County Commissioner, Chris Corchiarino, provided the members with an update:

- A. On October 25th, there was a CPT meeting with the MD Dept. of Transportations (MDOT) to discuss projects that have been completed.
- B. Commissioners continue to move forward with support for the NEPA II study for the Bay Bridge Crossing.
- C. The Commissioners continue to seek funding and support from MDOT for a bike/pedestrian crossing that would connect the two major trails on Kent Island.
- D. November 15th will be the last meeting for the current Commissioners.
- E. The new Board of Commissioners will be sworn in on December 6, 2022 and their first meeting will be held December 13, 2022.

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

- A. This week is MD Economic Development Week and the Department started with a kickoff event at Chesapeake College on Friday, October 21st. The event included almost 100 local business leaders, high school career technology teachers, high school counselors and Chesapeake College faculty. The day began with tours of the trades and healthcare facilities, transitioned to guest speakers and then a business roundtable luncheon was held where attendees were strategically placed at tables to encourage discussions and relationship building. Ms. Tinelli also thanked to the college and the QAC Chamber of Commerce who offered support for the event.
- B. There are some upcoming events that Ms. Tinelli wanted to share with the board:
 - i. Brews With Benefits is Sunday, October 30th at Kent Island Resort. Each local brewery will be donating funds to a local charity.
 - ii. November 13th is Bay Bridge Run- Local businesses can add to the virtual goodie bag.

- iii. Crab Basket Tree Lighting Event is December 3rd. Vendor Fair, Hot Cocoa and Cider and Visit with Santa from 2 to 6pm and Lighting Ceremony at 6:30pm.

VIII. Liaison Reports

- A. Kent Narrows Development Foundation:** Gigi Windley, Executive Director provided an update on behalf of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation:
 - i. Conducted a meeting with MDoT to discuss signage improvements.
 - ii. Taking over some mowing contracts to make sure the area has more regular maintenance and better control of litter issues.
 - iii. Waterman's Crab Basket Tree Lighting is on December 3rd.

- B. Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce-**President, Linda Friday provided a brief update regarding the QAC Chamber activities and events.
 - i. The Chamber hosted a mixer at The Dock House Restaurant that was well attended.
 - ii. Planning for the Celebrating Business Dinner at the new Four Seasons Clubhouse on November 16th at 5pm.
 - iii. Harvest Breakfast is going to be on November 18th at Chesapeake College.
 - iv. Holiday Mixer will be on December 7th
 - v. Success in 60 Event at Seline in the Business Park.

- C. QAC Planning and Zoning-**Steve Johnson, Planner with QAC Planning and Zoning, provided an update.
 - i. Slippery Hill Phase One and Phase Two is pending final signatures for approval.
 - ii. Amended Ellendale subdivision with 2 commercial lots
 - iii. Received an amended site request for Chick fil A to expand their drive-thru lanes.
 - iv. Planning Commission in November will include several public hearings

- D. Real Estate-**Ed Beres shared real estate statistics from surrounding counties to compare to QAC. The counties that were included were, Talbot, Caroline, Kent, and Anne Arundel:
 - i. There is a nationwide issue with a company that is targeting homeowners, that have owned their homes for a while, to sign a 40-year agreement. This agreement states that, in turn for a disclosed amount of funds (5K to 10K), if they sell their home any time in the next 40 years you must use that company as your realtor and have to pay them 3 percent. This agreement is now recorded in land records and in perpetuity with the home and hold any owners of the home responsible for the fee for 40 years. Kathryn Hagar went to Lance Richardson and discovered 7 have been recorded in our county. The National Real Estate Assoc. is trying to get ahead of the issue and individual states are beginning to work with their state's attorney offices as well. Lance Richardson is currently investigating the issue.
 - ii. Mr. Beres discussed local trends and statistics regarding real estate in QAC.

IX. New Business

- A. QAC Office of Sheriff Presentation-** Lt. Johnston and 1st Sergeant Lowery, Patrol Commanders with QAC Sheriff Dept., were present to discuss current trends and challenges that the Department is currently handling within the county.
 - a. QAC crime pattern is relatively controllable and low in comparison to our neighboring counties.

- b. Officer Johnston reported the following statistics based on reports from January 2021 to present:
 - i. There have been approximately 235 Assault Incidents reported which would include domestic, sexual abuse and child neglect.
 - ii. There have been 275 theft and fraud cases reported.
 - iii. There have been 44 burglary incidents investigated.
 - iv. There have been 2 robbery incidents.
 - v. There have been 80 CDS (Controlled Dangerous Substance) reports.
 - vi. There have been 20 Opioid overdoses investigated by the department with 28 reported for the county with 4 fatalities.
 - vii. There have been 40 alcohol and DUI related reports.
- c. They have seen an overall improvement, however, lately they have seen an increase in methamphetamine in northern QAC county.
- d. Speeding is the number one complaint to the QAC Sheriff's Dept. They find that it is generally specific to 1 or 2 vehicles, and they encourage people to get descriptions and tag numbers. They find that having an officer speak directly to the individual about them speeding through residential areas generally helps resolve the issue.
- e. The department has noticed an increase in telephone scammers that target older Sr. individuals and unfortunately many have lost substantial amounts of money.
- f. The department has seen a tremendous increase in the HQL Wear and Carry permits.
- g. There have been some issues in the outlet parking lots but the lot between the Jetty and Bridges Restaurant tends to be more of a problem. They would like to see some security cameras in place in that area.
- h. They are preparing for upcoming events like Halloween, The Bay Bridge Run and Shop with a Hero.
- i. There has been an increase in businesses that offer self-check out dealing with theft. The problem is that they most times do not realize until they update inventory, and it is very difficult to track down suspects weeks after incidents. Each outlet store has their own corporate policies for shoplifting/theft. Some will provide for prosecution, some of monetary limits and some will refuse any and all prosecution. Many managers are not even familiar with their companies' policies. Some stores have security systems, some do not, and some have them, but they are not in working condition.
- j. The officers stated that the police presence and security in the high schools is excellent. Some members voiced their concern over videos and issues with their children with the presence of drugs in school. The officers stated it can be a challenge because students know exactly where cameras are located.

B. Economic Development Overview- Ms. Tinelli, Director of QAC Economic & Tourism Development, shared a presentation focused on an Overview of ED in QAC. The presentation focused on the "Heart" of Economic Development and the 4 major chambers which are Economic Development. Tourism Development. Community Development and Workforce Development.

- a. Ms. Tinelli shared the Mission and Vision of the Department.
- b. In the past year, the Department has hosted a series of Business Outreach Workshops to include:
 - i. Google My Business Workshop

- ii. Access To Capital Workshop
- iii. Strengthening the Emerging Workforce
- iv. Workforce Recruitment & Retention Resource for Business Leaders
- c. Ms. Tinelli shared a statistic graphic related to Business Retention & Expansion showing Enterprise Zone, EDIF and Business Visit Statistics.
- d. The department is focusing on having very good data tools. Ms. Tinelli shared Property Sales Statistics that listed notable projects and compared 2020, 2021 and 2022 commercial, mixed use and slip data. Also shared was the expected value of the new commercial projects.
- e. Ms. Tinelli shared the various Grant Funding that has been acquired through QAC Economic & Tourism Development. These grants include MD Tourism Marketing Funds, USDA Re-Branding Funds, CBDG Grant, Ferry Feasibility, Micro Ag Grant, Stevensville A&E Grants and the Rural 10 Grant Funds.
- f. The Target Audience is withing the Atlantic Coast in Maryland, New Jersey, Virginia, Pennsylvania and New York.
- g. Tourism Sales & Use Tax increased 117% form FY 21 to FY22.
- h. Continue to develop a Youth Workforce Pipeline between students/parents, high schools, college and businesses.
- i. In the past year the Workforce Development Program has created:
 - i. 21 New Internships
 - ii. 15 New Apprenticeships
 - iii. 74 Business Interactions
 - iv. Provided Professional Dev. And Business Visit Opportunities to 34 Teachers
 - v. Trained 12 Business Leaders to volunteer in the high schools
- j. Department Staff have developed the QAC Municipal Economic Development Outreach & Planning Project. Currently working with the Sudlersville Fire Dept. on the Adaptive Reuse Project for Sudlersville Middle School.

X. Old Business:

- C. Board Terms & Positions** – Jesse Parks, EDC Chair, stated that the Executive Board met prior to todays EDC meeting to discuss the applications that were submitted for open board positions. After more discussion among the executive committee, the selected nominee(s) will be presented to the full board for a vote at the November meeting. Mr. Parks and Ms. Tinelli are going to be contacting some current board members regarding the open Chair position on the board.

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