

## **Economic Development Advisory Board Kent County, Maryland**

**November 5, 2014**

Board Members Present: James Rich, Chair, Ron Athey, Dan MacLeod, Robert Ampula, Robert Jacob, and Zoe Schneider

Board Members Absent: Tom Beckett, John Carroll

Also in attendance: Commissioner William Short, Ernest Crofoot, County Administrator, Scott Boone, Director, Information Technology, Loretta Lodge, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce, and Jim Luff.

At 4:02 p.m. the meeting convened.

On motion by Mr. Ampula and seconded by Mr. Athey the minutes from the October 1, 2014, meeting were approved.

Mr. Boone presented a map that identified many factors in the County. The map showed areas with and without wireless access, and Maryland Broadband Coop and Network Maryland fiber. Mr. MacLeod shared that all ninth graders have laptops assigned that they take home. Currently about 50% of Kent County students have access to internet service. The long term plan for the high school is one to one, each student is assigned a device that they have access to 24/7. Web-based learning modules are being used more and more in education. The map gives us a visual aid of potential target areas that consist of high numbers of students and businesses. Mr. Boone explained some of the possible methods of providing service to specific areas. Two Economic Development success stories already exist; Gratitude and Millington to Galena connection.

Mr. Ampula shared information from a meeting he attended last week, as a member of the loan review committee for the Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center (ESEC). They loan money to businesses in Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Caroline, and Dorchester Counties. The ESEC loans businesses up to \$150,000.00 to \$200,000.00. At an entrepreneurial conference in Delaware, the Dorchester County's Economic Development Director was present and able to make contact with a business owner, who later located in Dorchester. The company's financials reflect they will do \$1,000,000.00 in sales this year. Mr. Ampula wanted to convey the information while it was still fresh.

Mr. Crofoot reported on the Bridge Painting Project meeting held this morning, November 5, 2014, at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Short proposed forming a Task Force to explore alternatives and/or ways to mitigate the closing or if there will be a closing at all. One proposal that is being looked into is eliminating the draw bridge, making it a fixed structure.

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m., and the board agreed to meet again on Wednesday, December 3, 2014, at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

November 5, 2014

Page 2

EDAB Minutes

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams

Deputy Clerk