



September 11, 2024

Commission Members Present: Dick Story, Paula Reeder, Sandy Scott, and Judy Gifford, David Bowman, and Charlie Athey.

Commission Member Absent: Judy Crow.

Also in Attendance: Jamie Williams, Director, Katie Abbott, Economic Development Manager; Shalyn Boulden, Tourism Manager and Rose Osborn, Administrative Specialist, Economic and Tourism Development; and Shelley Heller, County Administrator.

At 3:00 p.m. Mr. Story called the meeting to order. Mr. Story requested a motion to approve the minutes from the August 7, 2024, meeting. On a motion by Ms. Reeder, seconded by Ms. Gifford, the August 7, 2024, minutes were unanimously approved.

Mr. Story shared that Chesapeake College gave an excellent presentation at the August 20, 2024, County Commissioners Meeting. They reviewed their Agricultural, Manufacturing and Healthcare programs. He urged all to watch the presentation from the recording.

Mr. Story shared Dr. Mary Boswell-McComas, Superintendent, Kent County Public Schools (KCPS), has scheduled a Business Roundtable for September 18, 2024, at Dixon Valve. This is an opportunity to get to know Dr. McComas and share thoughts on KCPS and how to build a stronger bridge with the Community. Commission members were urged to register and attend. Ms. Williams added Tom Porter, Supervisor, Career and Technical Education, Kent County High School has been invited to speak with the County Commissioners in October.

Mayor John Carroll, Town of Galena, shared the following:

- The Town has received a petition for a 100-acre annexation for the property located behind the Town Office Building. Eleven acres of the property are already within the Town limits. Draft concepts for the property include re-zoning for an environmental type of park with nature trails, etc. in addition to providing higher density commercial property, mixed use toward Town with more dense housing and further away from the main intersection, larger, estate sized lots and a few farmettes. The petition was introduced at the Town's last meeting, and they are currently working on drafting annexation agreements. They anticipate having the public hearing scheduled within the next sixty days and approximately six to twelve months to complete the legal process and then the owner will need to petition the Town for zoning. When annexed into the Town, County zoning will stand for five years, unless the Commissioners agree to a waiver allowing the Town to make zoning changes. Mayor Carroll advised that the Town's infrastructure has the

capacity to annex the property, and the property is within the growth area of the Town's Comprehensive Plan.

- The Town has hired a part-time events coordinator, Jodi Novak. She will also be working with economic development. Ms. Novak started a Saturday market and is currently looking for a space to hold the fair indoors.
- The Town of Galena has received a grant from the Kim Lamphier National Bikeways Network Program through the Maryland Department of Transportation for a walking trail. This will be a multi-phase long-term project to connect the center of Town towards Olivet Hill, next phase from Town to Toal Park and last phase to connect Georgetown to the County. The design and engineering phase should be complete by the end of 2024.
- The Galena Veterinary practice will be moving to the old PNC bank location. The vacant areas of Dogwood Village Plaza are being converted into apartments. Three apartments have been completed.
- Other events coming up in Galena include a 911 service, movie night, Appreciation Day, October 12, 2024, and a Holiday at the Park lights show.
- The Town of Galena will be applying for a grant through Maryland Sustainable Communities for planter boxes to be placed on Main Street.
- The Town is working on a Zoning Text Amendment to allow short-term and long-term rentals within the Town and to establish guidelines that should be ready for a public hearing in October.

Mayor David Foster, Town of Chestertown, shared a presentation on tax differentials.

Ms. Williams shared:

- The next Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA) Economic Development Basic Course will be held in July 2025 (5-day on-line course)
- The MEDA Primer will be held in May 2025 (one day in person)
- MEDA Fall Conference is scheduled for October 28, 2024, from 8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Baltimore Museum of Industry – “The Economy is International”
- Ice Cream Trail – there are eligibility requirements to be on the list and requires an application. Applicants must be on an existing Maryland Farm and use milk produced on the farm or are on an existing Maryland Farm and use an ice cream mix from the milk processor that benefits Maryland Dairy Farms. Lockbriar is the only Kent County business on the Ice Cream Trail currently.
- The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Summer Conference was a success. The Economic and Tourism Development (ETD) department highlighted hunting, oysters, Eastern Neck Island, and arts and culture. There is ALWAYS something to do in Kent County.
- Ms. Osborn shared the request for coupons in conjunction with the Museums of Kent (MOK) Driving Tour at the MOK meeting earlier in the day.
- The ETD department will be participating in the Molly's Maryland Outdoor Show later this month and the Harrington Outdoor Show in April 2025.
- 2023 Tourism spending numbers have been received. Spending increased from \$71.8 million to \$72 million, a modest increase of 0.2%.

- Business Sentiment and BRE Visits – intake forms have been received and visits will be scheduled. ETDC members will be invited to attend the visits with the businesses as they are scheduled.

Ms. Williams advised that we are currently four to five weeks into the new short-term rental online process and that letters have been sent to newly identified rental properties as well as current rental properties. Numbers are favorable considering it is so early in the process and the fact that most rental properties are used to paying quarterly. A report will be provided with end of the quarter data when available.

Guests scheduled for the October ETDC Meeting include William Mackey, Director, Planning, Housing and Zoning and Tom Mogle, Town Manager, Town of Betterton.

Dan Divilio, Public Relations/Communications Specialist, KCPS, advised that all public schools are back in session and noted an increase in pre-k enrollment. Dr. Boswell-McComas has been conducting community meetings, has attended several community events, and attended the Town of Chestertown and the County Commissioners' meetings. The next event will be the Business Roundtable scheduled for September 18, 2024, from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Athey, seconded by Mr. Bowman and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:04 p.m. The Commission agreed to meet again on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD
Director