

Hagerstown-Washington County Economic Development Commission

Regular Commission Meeting August 8, 2013

The regular meeting of the Hagerstown-Washington County Economic Development Commission (EDC) was held at 100 West Washington Street, Room 225. The following members were present: Dan Pheil (Chair), Ron Bowers (Vice Chair), Jef Bohn (Secretary), Ed Lough, Stu Mullendore, Kate Rader, Janet Stiles Fulton, and Pete Thomas. Members unable to attend include Paul Crampton and Bob Jeffers.

Ex-Officio members attending were Terry Baker and William McKinley, Commissioners for Washington County; Kristin Aleshire and Donald Munson, Council Members for the City of Hagerstown; Jill Estavillo, Economic Development Manager for the City of Hagerstown; Sandy Mehalko, Regional Director for the Small Business Technology & Development Center (SBTDC); and Gregory Snook, President of the Hagerstown/Washington County Industrial Foundation, Inc. Also attending were Greg Murray, Administrator for Washington County; Sam Devaram, Washington County Counselor for SBTDC; Tabitha Porterfield, Marketing Specialist for Washington County Public Relations and Community Affairs; Sarah Sprecher, Assistant County Administrator for Washington County; and EDC staff Carmen Harbaugh, Leslie Hart, and Linda Spence.

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Dan Pheil.

Approval of Agenda – Ed Lough made a motion to approve the meeting agenda for July 11, 2013 as presented. The motion was seconded by Kate Rader and approved by unanimous vote.

Approval of Minutes – Pete Thomas motioned to approve the meeting minutes of July 11, 2013 as presented, the motion was then seconded by Ron Bowers and approved unanimously.

Elected Officials' Comments – Commissioners Baker and McKinley congratulated Leslie Hart and members who organized the Ag Expo & Fair this year for putting together an excellent event. Job well done! Council Member Munson noted Hagerstown Police Chief, Mark Holtzman, was the keynote speaker at a recent Eggs and Issues event. Chief Holtzman reported on criminal activity in Hagerstown including an increase in drug and gang violence. Commissioner McKinley stated crime activity in this community unfortunately is comparable to those of similar size.

Executive Committee – Dan Pheil announced the City of Hagerstown removed John Lestitian as its nominee to fill their vacant position on the EDC Board and has forwarded another candidate for the Board of County Commissioners to consider. The Greater Hagerstown Committee submitted John Itell of Albright Crumbacker Moul and Itell; Richard Marshall of United Bank; and Hugh Breslin of WHAG for consideration to fill its second representative. The BOCC will discuss nominations later in August. Mr. Pheil announced the annual DBED/EDC luncheon has been scheduled for September 12, in Baltimore; more information to follow. He stated EDC Board meeting minutes will be posted on the EDC's web site. Mr. Pheil reported the letter of support to keep baseball in Hagerstown was presented to the Hagerstown Suns' majority owner, Bruce Quinn on Friday, July 26. Accompanying the letter, he and Vice Chair Ron Bowers presented Mr. Quinn with an autographed Suns baseball cap, and an oversized greeting card. Janet Stiles Fulton expressed disappointment in the process by which the letter of support was presented and felt her opposition on the matter was not addressed or heard. Mr. Pheil explained the process and noted the board followed "majority" rules on the matter. Mr. Pheil noted EDC staff and the County Attorney's office have been reviewing and updating Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) policy and procedures for Washington County. A refresher course on the benefits businesses have in locating within an FTZ will be provided to the BOCC and staff. Ron Bowers requested members of the Executive Committee to discuss legislation governing the distribution of Washington County's Hotel/Motel Tax at their next meeting.

City Center Committee – Ed Lough noted the committee is new and he is still in the recruitment phase. Confirmed members are co-chair Brien Poffenberger, Rich Daughtridge, Mary Baykan, and Mike Zampelli. Others not confirmed were Terri Leiter and Jill Estavillo.

Infrastructure and Site Development Committee – Ron Bowers explained he is working with Greg Murray to finalize staff items as part of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment Report. A meeting is planned for August 21 and plans to presents the report to the BOCC in September.

Marketing & Public Relations Committee – Stu Mullendore provided members with an update on marketing and strategic planning initiatives to date; the EDC’s organizational structure will remain as is for the next six months; the Infrastructure Needs Assessment Report is due to be completed by September; a Workforce Development report is expected in November; the City Center Committee is underway and will provide updates monthly; and the Marketing Committee is being co-chaired by Jim Kercheval and the committee will work towards developing a marketing plan for the EDC. Dan Pheil reported that he was interviewed recently by a consulting firm for PenMar Development Corporation (PMDC) in efforts to better prepare the property for development. Dori Nipps, the executive director at PMDC expressed her desire to have the EDC be present at board meetings. Greg Murray noted communication between PMDC and the County still exists and will continue. Sarah Sprecher presented members with an overview of the new branding and logos the Public Relations and Community Affairs office has been working on including an updated logo for Agricultural Business Development, Hagerstown Regional Airport, and the EDC. Mr. Murray explained collaterals were developed along with updated business folders, which will be presented during the upcoming MACo Conference.

Small Business Development Committee – Jef Bohn reported the extended focus group has identified a plan and narrowed action items needed in the development of a community-wide business resource guide. Jill Estavillo has agreed to attend future meetings to provide the City of Hagerstown’s perspective. The next meeting is scheduled for September 10 at 7:30 a.m.

Workforce Development Committee – Pete Thomas stated there was nothing to report this month.

Celebration of Business Taskforce – Linda Spence explained the *Celebration of Business* Taskforce has nothing to report at this time. However a sub-taskforce, the *Small Business Appreciation Event* taskforce, is planning its first event in conjunction with the 1st Annual Rodeo Jam on September 28. It was suggested we name this event, Small Business Round Up or Business Round Up to have a tie into the Rodeo. Ideas so far include inviting all Washington County employers (utilizing Hoovers for more than 9,044 FIN #s) to the event and guarantee admission to the first 500 responders. Booths will be set up, similar to that of a tradeshow, and information about county services will be provided. We anticipate a schedule with BOCC and EDC staff and board members to greet and talk to our guests will be developed. Ms. Spence noted sponsorship opportunities are available with profits supporting the Ag Expo & Fair.

Old Business – Leslie Hart announced that she, along with County Administrator Greg Murray and members of the Public Relations and Community Affairs department will attend the Maryland Association of Counties convention in Ocean City, MD from August 14-18. The CVB made a decision not to participate this year so Washington County will solely operate the booth space. Local wine and cheeses will be presented during the convention again this year. Ms. Hart explained Washington County was approved to make application to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to fund a Supply Chain Study in FY ’13. The \$25,000 grant requires a match from the County. We placed the application on hold until we were further along in the strategic plan process and now need to proceed with the application or risk losing it altogether. *Ron Bowers made a motion to proceed with an ARC application to conduct a supply chain study for a matching grant of \$25,000. Stu Mullendore seconded the motion. Jef Bohn supported the motion but amended the motion to include “and other business support activity” as needed. Agreed, Ron Bowers restated the motion to proceed with an ARC application to conduct a supply chain study and other business support activities for a matching grant of*

\$25,000. Stu Mullendore again seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. Ms. Hart noted the Start-Up Maryland event is being held on September 25 in downtown Hagerstown.

New Business – Leslie Hart announced a copy of the Washington County Real Property Tax Credit Ordinance for Small Business was included in each member’s packets. During the 2012 legislative session, bills were passed to allow Frederick and Washington counties to enact an ordinance to provide a tax credit to small businesses. The County Attorney’s office and the EDC prepared an ordinance for BOCC consideration and staff asked board members to review and consider making a recommendation to move forward with presenting it to the BOCC. Members agreed to table the discussion until the September meeting to allow more time for review and comment. Ms. Hart mentioned Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA) past presidents will be on hand, September 9 to present EDC board members with a mini-seminar about economic development. EDC staff was contacted by Kaplan University, who are hosting a group of professionals from Guangxi Province, China. They expressed interest in learning more about agriculture and industrial development and workforce development. Ms. Hart developed a 2-3 day agricultural program and we are now looking to the board to provide a project for them to participate in such as a small focus group in conjunction with the Workforce Development Committee’s manufacturing symposium or to provide research assistance in identifying targeted industries for use in developing the overall marketing plan. Council Member Munson suggested we partner with the City of Hagerstown to provide a tour of National Golden Tissue, who has strong ties in China. As part of the “Farm to School” program, Ms. Hart announced she is working with State representatives to hold the Maryland kick-off event with the Lt. Governor at Pangborn Elementary School scheduled for September 23. Janet Stiles Fulton stated a broader range of agricultural statistical data is needed which should include all agricultural areas, not just those who participate in farmer’s markets. Greg Snook commented on the redesign change for Yale Drive; and difficulty in bringing broadband to that area. It appears the State is not willing to allow private businesses to access its lines. However, a conduit will be in the line along Yale Drive to ready itself for a broadband provider.

Closed Session – Stu Mullendore motioned to go into Closed Session to discuss the relocation or expansion of industry, and, buildings and site matters in accordance with Section 10-508 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The motion was seconded by Peter Thomas. Hearing no discussion the motion to go into Closed Session was approved by unanimous vote.

Open Session – On a motion made by Ron Bowers to return to Open Session and seconded by Ed Lough, the motion was unanimously approved. Present during Closed Session were Kristin Aleshire, Jef Bohn, Ronald Bowers, Jill Estavillo, Edward Lough, William McKinley, Sandy Mehalko, Stuart Mullendore, Donald Munson, Greg Murray, Daniel Pheil, Tabitha Porterfield, Kate Rader, Sarah Sprecher, Janet Stiles Fulton, Peter Thomas, Greg Snook, Carmen Harbaugh, Leslie Hart, and Linda Spence.

Adjournment – Stu Mullendore made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Bob Jeffers. Hearing no discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Linda Spence

EDC Business Support Specialist and Recording Clerk