

Washington County Economic Development Commission Board

Regular Meeting December 11, 2014

The regular meeting of the Washington County Economic Development Commission Board (EDC) was held at 100 West Washington Street, Room 255. The following members were present: Hugh Breslin (Chair), Paul Crampton (Vice Chair), Jef Bohn (Secretary), Ryan Daughtridge, Bob Jeffers, Ed Lough, Janet Stiles Fulton, and Pete Thomas. Excused were Sandy Mehalko, Dan Pheil and Wade Watson; absent included Kristin Aleshire, Donald Munson, and Julie Rohm.

Ex-Officio members attending were Terry Baker, Commissioner for Washington County; Jill Frick, Economic Development Manager for the City of Hagerstown; and Greg Snook, President for the Hagerstown/Washington County Industrial Foundation, Inc.

Additional attendees included Carmen Harbaugh, Kassie Lewis, Bob Mandley, Linda Spence, Greg Murray, Sarah Sprecher, Commissioner LeRoy Myers, Tabitha Porterfield, Aaron Stoner, and Dan Spedden.

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Hugh Breslin. Kassie Lewis introduced Dan Spedden, President for the Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Approval of the Agenda – Paul Crampton made a motion to approve the Agenda for December 11, 2014 the motion was seconded by Ed Lough and approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – Pete Thomas motioned to approve the meeting minutes of November 13, 2014 as presented, the motion was seconded by Bob Jeffers and approved by unanimous vote.

Elected Officials' Comments – Commissioners Baker and Myers both stated an eagerness to serve on the Board of County Commissioners and to work with the EDC Board over the next four years.

Director's Report – Kassie Lewis mentioned a recent meeting with the State delegation who are interested in legislative issues that negatively affect businesses and to identify quick resolutions.

Executive Committee – Hugh Breslin reported the names of three potential candidates to fill a vacancy on the EDC Board will be discussed with the BOCC in Closed Session on December 16. The candidates are James Herbert of Antietam Cable Television, Michael Reyka of Meritus Health System, and Michael Zampelli of Hagerstown Radiologist. Following up on the meeting with Delegate Serafini, et al, it is the intention of the newly elected delegation to determine how to better serve the businesses of the State of Maryland and will use Washington County, MD as its beta test. A survey asking top manufacturers what regulations, taxes, and/or issues exist that inhibit business and stifle business growth will be developed in the next few days. Washington County, MD will bring issues to the forefront and create a business friendly model, hopefully changing legislative attitudes. The DBD, if not already in the process of doing so, will develop a spreadsheet detailing why businesses left the County and what factors were used in their decision not to locate in the County. Findings from the Business Outreach Program visits will be discussed during the next Executive Committee meeting. Hugh Breslin noted the January board meeting will be postponed until January 14.

City Center Committee – Ryan Daughtridge reported committee members recently identified two projects the City of Hagerstown is currently working on the EDC could actively support at this time. The newly elected Board of County Commissioners would like to hear more about the Strategic Priorities of both the City of Hagerstown and the Washington County Economic Development Commission/Department of Business Development to determine if the County could support other projects as well. Greg Murray suggested Kassie Lewis and Sarah Sprecher craft a presentation for the BOCC, submitted on an Agenda Request Form (ARF) for a late January, early February schedule.

Education and Workforce Development Committee – There was nothing to report for the *Education and Workforce Development Committee*.

Marketing and Communications Committee – There was not a *Marketing and Communications Committee* report this month.

Old Business – Greg Snook noted the State of Maryland recently approved the Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise (RISE) Zone Program. He noted CHIEF and the Hagerstown Community College are in support of the program and feel it is a great tool in attracting new business to the community. Applications for RISE will be accepted by the State in June/July 2015. He noted CHIEF has begun to actively market Mt. Aetna Technology Park and C. William Hetzer has begun construction of Yale Drive.

New Business – Hugh Breslin noted NMH Healthcare, a skilled nursing facility on Marsh Pike, is scheduled for a ribbon-cutting event on January 13. *On a motion made by Pete Thomas and seconded by Bob Jeffers, a request made by the Department of Community Grants Management for a letter of support for a grant application from the Appalachian Regional Commission for \$1M (no matching funds required) to extend Crayton Boulevard to Showalter Road was unanimously passed.* Kassie Lewis mentioned a project geared at reaching out to budding entrepreneurs tinkering in their garages and basements is underway. Flyers will be sent with the County's water bills directing them to a survey asking questions regarding need. A free series of individual or group consultations will be developed from those who respond. This program was developed with the Small Business Development Center's Washington County, MD Counselor, Sam Devaram. In addition, a local web developer has also agreed to provide web development services for up to 30 entrepreneurs who respond to the survey. Commissioner Baker announced the Spirit of the Tree will be held later in the day, and Comptroller Franchot will make a special visit to Bulls and Bears to recognize its general manager.

Closed Session – Paul Crampton motioned to go into Closed Session to consider a matter concerning the proposal of a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State; or any personnel matters in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland. The motion was seconded by Janet Stiles Fulton. *Hearing no discussion the motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

Open Session – On a motion made by Paul Crampton to return to Open Session and seconded by Janet Stiles Fulton, the motion was unanimously approved. Present during Closed Session were Commissioner Baker, Jef Bohn, Hugh Breslin, Paul Crampton, Ryan Daughtridge, Jill Frick, Carmen Harbaugh, Bob Jeffers, Kassie Lewis, Ed Lough, Bob Mandley, Commissioner Myers, Greg Murray, Tabitha Porterfield, Greg Snook, Dan Spedden, Linda Spence, Sarah Sprecher, Janet Stiles Fulton, Aaron Stoner, Pete Thomas.

Adjournment – Jef Bohn made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Ryan Daughtridge. *Hearing no discussion, the meeting was adjourned.*

Linda Spence, Business Support Specialist
Washington County Department of Business Development