

Washington County Economic Development Commission

Regular Meeting November 13, 2014

The regular meeting of the Washington County Economic Development Commission (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, Dan Pheil, Julie Rohm, Janet Stiles Fulton, Pete Thomas, and Wade Watson.

Ex-Officio members attending were Terry Baker, Commissioner for Washington County; Kristin Aleshire and Donald Munson, Council Members for the City of Hagerstown; Jill Frick, Economic Development Manager for the City of Hagerstown; Sandy Mehalko, Regional Director for the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). Washington County Department of Business Development staff in attendance was Carmen Harbaugh, Kassie Lewis, Bob Mandley, and Linda Spence; others in attendance included Greg Murray, Tabitha Porterfield, Vickie Swink, Sam Devaram, and Brian Vinci.

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Hugh Breslin.

Approval of the Agenda – Paul Crampton made a motion to approve the Agenda for November 13, 2014 the motion was seconded by Ed Lough and approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – Pete Thomas motioned to approve the meeting minutes of October 9, 2014 as presented, the motion was seconded by Bob Jeffers and approved by unanimous vote.

Special Presentation by Brian Vinci – The Samantha Kelly Memorial Fund (“The Fund”) was organized to honor the life of Williamsport High School student, Samantha Kelly whose life tragically ended as a result of an automobile accident in 2012. Brian Vinci, Ms. Kelly’s step-father and custodian of The Fund announced the memorial fund awards one \$1,000 per year renewable college scholarship annually to a Williamsport High School senior female via a competitive application process. Total award is \$4,000 over four years. The Fund is also seeking to develop an indoor multi-purpose athletic center for community youth athletics. Mr. Vinci noted a need for a facility to help improve the overall health and economic conditions for Washington County through local indoor sports programs and events. Plans for the center include a court, turf, and wellness components. Challenges include identification of potential sites, capital, and market factors. Currently, public/private partnerships are being explored, as well as data collection and grant opportunities. Several suggestions, contacts and resources were identified.

Elected Officials’ Comments – Commissioner Baker expressed appreciation to those who voted in the recent Washington County Board of County Commissioners’ election, stating he is honored to continue serving the citizens of Washington County. He was thankful to have also served alongside members of the Washington County Economic Development Commission Board for the past four years. Council Member Munson commented on the unveiling of the bear statue at City Park.

Director’s Report – Kassie Lewis provided members with an update on projects and accomplishments, similar to what she presented to the BOCC on November 3. Since late August, she met with more than 50 community stakeholders, partners and leaders, municipality mayors, educational representatives, City of Hagerstown representatives, and several nationally-known companies located in Washington County, MD. Projects underway include Project Hollywood, engaging the DBED film office to shoot historical properties and buildings in Washington County; Project Radius, cataloging a list of manufacturers located within a 10 mile radius of Washington County, MD and by county -- develop testimonials convincing companies Washington County, MD should be their first choice for a manufacturing location; and Project Watermelon, a unique way to bring fledgling entrepreneurs out of their basements and garages; and the *Washington County Business Outreach Program* conducting weekly visits to Washington County companies with bookings through mid-January. The

“Loves My Business” campaign, nearly 7,000 window clings were mailed to registered companies in Washington County and 26 businesses were selected to receive a surprise visit by the DBD Prize Patrol. Ms. Lewis continues to work with the *Agricultural Business Development Advisory Committee* to refocus their vision and priorities.

Executive Committee – Hugh Breslin reported three candidates will be submitted to the BOCC for consideration in filling a vacancy on the EDC board; Jim Herbert of Antietam Cable Television, Mike Zampelli of Hagerstown Radiologist, and Michael Reyka of Meritus Health System. He announced modifications to the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) - Zone Schedule was approved by the BOCC on October 28. Changes include designation of a FTZ Administrator and Co-Administrator, elimination of fees charged by Washington County, MD to activate the zone, etc.

City Center Committee – Ryan Daughtridge reported members recently met and discussed similarities between the City of Hagerstown’s Urban Partners Strategic Plan and the Washington County Economic Development Commission’s Strategic Economic Development Plan developed by URBANOMICS. The next committee meeting will be held at noon on November 24 at *Bulls and Bears Restaurant*. He mentioned the next downtown Hagerstown PopUp Shop event will be held on November 21.

Education and Workforce Development Committee – Bob Jeffers commented on a recent meeting with Clayton Wilcox of the Washington County Public School system to outline concerns and to identify solutions to foster soft skills development. He noted he recently attended the Maryland Roundtable for Education. Wade Watson mentioned Volvo hosted Maryland Department of Education Counselors and Vocational Educators recently and follow-up meetings in Baltimore.

Marketing & Communications Committee – Julie Rohm expressed appreciation to all those involved in making the *“Loves My Business”* campaign such a successful event. The *Celebration of Business* taskforce is scheduled to touch base on November 17 as plans continue to move forward. Sandy Mehalko and Sam Devaram were thanked for developing such a dynamic retail program recently. Ms. Rohm announced invitations to the Noodle and Company’s VIP soft opening scheduled for November 21 will be sent directly following the meeting.

Old Business – There was no *Old Business* to report.

New Business – Hugh Breslin announced a special EDC Board meeting has been scheduled for November 26 at 7:30 a.m. with Delegate Andrew Serafini to discuss ideas for presenting legislative requests in the coming session(s). Wade Watson announced a ribbon cutting will take place at Volvo on July 1 as the rollout their new axle program. Capital investment of \$23M and anticipation of creating 140 jobs.

Closed Session – *Jef Bohn* 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 *Ed Lough*. Hearing no discussion the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Open Session – On a motion made by *Hugh Breslin* to return to *Open Session* and seconded by *Ed Lough*, the motion was unanimously approved. Present during *Closed Session* were *Kristin Aleshire*, *Jef Bohn*, *Hugh Breslin*, *Ryan Daughtridge*, *Jill Frick*, *Carmen Harbaugh*, *Bob Jeffers*, *Kassie Lewis*, *Ed Lough*, *Bob Mandley*, *Donald Munson*, *Greg Murray*, *Dan Pheil*, *Tabitha Porterfield*, *Julie Rohm*, *Linda Spence*, *Sarah Sprecher*, *Janet Stiles Fulton*, *Vickie Swink*, *Pete Thomas*, and *Wade Watson*.

Adjournment – Janet Stiles Fulton made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Ed Lough. Hearing no discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Linda Spence, Business Support Specialist
Department of Business Development