

**St. Mary's County Economic Development Commission**  
Commissioner's Meeting Room, Chesapeake Bldg.  
41770 Baldrige St., Leonardtown, Maryland  
Wednesday, January 17, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The January 17, 2024 Meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order at 6:00 pm.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Members in attendance were:

Elizabeth Torgerson  
Dr. Christine Bergmark  
Dr. Dale Moore  
Richard Tarr  
Leona Charles  
Trisha Post  
Curtis Brown  
Frederick Stewart  
Dr. Silvio Borrero  
Gerald Meyerman  
Lisa Colavito

Guests in attendance included:

Chris Kaselemis, Director, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development  
Priscilla Leitch, Agriculture and Seafood Manager, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development  
Katherine Stormont, Economic Development Specialist, St. Mary's County Department of Economic  
Development  
Noelle Tillmon, Effective TV

Members not in attendance

Mahree Annan  
Lilyanne Ohanesian

**3. PRESENTATION**

None.

**4. OLD BUSINESS****A. Approval of Minutes**

The Commission reviewed the October 18, 2023 Minutes. Curtis Brown made a motion to approve the October 18, 2023 Minutes, seconded Christine Bergmark

Yea - Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Gerald Meyerman, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Frederick Stewart, Richard Tarr, Elizabeth Torgerson

The Commission also reviewed the July 19, 2023 Minutes. A correction to the spelling in the roll call of Dr. Dale Moore's name was noted. Curtis Brown made a motion to approve the July 19, 2023 Minutes with this correction, seconded by Dr. Christine Bergmark.

Yea - Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Gerald Meyerman, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Frederick Stewart, Richard Tarr, Elizabeth Torgerson

**5. NEW BUSINESS****A. Announcements**

Chris Kaselemis reminded the Commission that there is a Façade Improvement Grant Program with \$50,000 available to eligible Lexington Park businesses. This is a match program where the County will grant up to \$6,000 match per application.

Chris Kaselemis also stated that he attended a Maryland Chamber of Commerce event called Meet the State – Charting Maryland’s Economic Growth event in Annapolis. The keynote speaker was Tom Barkin who is the CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank in Richmond who believes that the economy is where it should be:

- Inflation is down
- National GDP is up
- Unemployment is at historic low
- Supply chain issue has eased

## **B. Annual Report**

The Commission reviewed 2023 Annual Report. Elizabeth Torgerson made a motion to accept the 2023 Annual Report, seconded by Curtis Brown. Motion Carried

Yea - Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Gerald Meyerman, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Frederick Stewart, Richard Tarr, Elizabeth Torgerson

## **C. 2024 Meeting Schedule**

January 17, 2024

April 17, 2024

July 17, 2024

October 16, 2024

## **D. Agriculture & Seafood Division Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Projects**

The Commission was given a project update for Agriculture and Seafood portion of the CEDS by Priscilla Leitch.

Farmers Markets – St. Mary’s County sponsors three (3) Farmers Markets. There are plans to increase marketing/promotion efforts for 2024.

Barns at New Market –54 unique vendors. Commercial Kitchen available for rent.

California Farmers Market – about 20 vendors

Home Grown Farmers Market – about 20 vendors

Rural Maryland Economic Development Projects – regional effort with Pier Water International, Southern Maryland Agriculture Development Commission, and Southern Maryland Counties.

- Southern Maryland Agriculture and Aquaculture Analysis will identify the food supply chain from local farms to consumers and highlight processing, aggregation, and/or distribution challenges to achieving a fully functioning supply chain.
- Southern Maryland Blue Catfish Feasibility Study will identify if Blue Catfish harvest is a sustainable and competitive section for small businesses and job creation in the region, or in cooperation with other areas of Maryland

St. Mary’s County Agriculture and Seafood Brand – create a brand identity and campaign to support locally made products.

## **E. Chesapeake Bay Ferry Study Update**

None.

## **F. Workforce Attraction/Awareness Campaign**

Katherine Stormont and Noelle Tillmon from Effective TV gave a presentation on the 20 Away Attraction Campaign which focused on our region’s strengths and the work to life quality offered as outlined in the Workforce Attraction portion of the CEDS.

## **G. Tech Transfer CEDS Project Update**

Richard Tarr talked to the Commission about the Technology Transfer initiative. The 3 areas of focus for Tech Transfer are

- Spin Out Technology – taking military technologies and commercializing them
- Spin In Technology – taking commercial technologies and can be relevant to military needs
- Dual Use – leverage investments to benefit both military and commercial technologies in an collaborated environment

## H. Open Comment

Gerald Meyerman questioned the status of Visit St. Mary's. Chris Kaselemeis responded that there is a current recruitment for an Executive Director for Visit. St. Mary's.

Dr. Christine Bergmark told the Commission of the local St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce partnering with the US Chamber of Commerce to host a Civics Bee for middle school students to write an essay identifying a problem in their community and then explaining how a citizen or themselves might resolve the problem. There is a Chamber Business After Hours/Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at All In One Tag & Title in California on October 24<sup>th</sup>. The St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce is co-hosting the Maryland Spirits which celebrates the artisanal distilleries on February 10<sup>th</sup> at the Naval Air Museum. The St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce is hosting the State of the Schools lunch at the end of February and sponsoring a bus to the Legislative Reception in Annapolis on February 29<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Dale Moore updated the Commission that the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance has been working hard to partner with the National Defense Industry Association to change the R&D tax expense issue. Southern Maryland 20/30 Workforce has a SPARK event on February 1<sup>st</sup> with over 800 youth registered. Dr. Moore also stated that he is concerned that locally we are limited in graduate education programs. The Department of Defense just released their first National Defense Industrial Strategy, this is available online. The final report from the Atlantic Council and the Commission of Defense Innovation Adoption, this is also available online. The St. Mary's College is hosting the Junior Science and Humanity Symposium on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Rick Tar spoke about a Hackathon sponsored by CSM Velocity Center which will be held on March 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Leona Charles told the Commission of the National 8(a) National Small Business Conference 2024 which will be held in Atlanta on February 5<sup>th</sup> – February 7<sup>th</sup>. Also the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) has opened their portal for small businesses to submit beneficial ownership forms.

Lisa Colavito reiterated information on the College of Southern Maryland's Hackathon event and spoke of the Maker's Space in Indian Head which is available for use as well as a Home School Program expanding to Leonardtown campus. Chris Kaselemis reminded the Commission that there is a Maker's Space for use on Airport View Drive and also the St. Mary's Arts Council is partnering with the St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks Department to open on at the former Carver Elementary school in Lexington Park.

## I. Election of Officers

The following nominations were made

Chair

Curtis Brown nominated by Elizabeth Torgerson

Lisa Colavito nominated by herself

Elizabeth Torgerson nominated by Dr. Christine Bergmark

Vice Chair

Leona Charles nominated by Elizabeth Torgerson

Curtis Brown nominated by Dr. Christine Bergmark

Trisha Post nominated by Curtis Brown

Secretary

Lisa Colavito nominated by Elizabeth Torgerson

The Board voted anonymously, and elected Curtis Brown as Chair, Leona Charles as Vice Chair, and Lisa Colavito as Secretary.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Dr. Dale Moore motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Curtis Brown.

Yea - Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Gerald Meyerman, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Frederick Stewart, Richard Tarr, Elizabeth Torgerson

Minutes taken by Lisa Ledman, DED.