

St. Mary's County Economic Development Commission

Commissioner's Meeting Room, Chesapeake Bldg.

41770 Baldrige St., Leonardtown, Maryland

Wednesday, January 15, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The January 15, 2025 Meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order at 6:00 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Members in attendance were:

Curtis Brown

Trisha Post

Richard Tarr

Dr. Christine Bergmark

Dr. Dale Moore

Lisa Colavito

Kenneth Russell

Dr. Asif U. Dowla

Nathan Evans

Elldwinia English

Leona Charles

Dr. Silvio Borrero-Caldas

Staff in attendance included:

Chris Kaselemis, Director, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development

Emily Lacey, Economic Development Specialist, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development

Guests: Jessica Andritz, Director, St. Mary's County Department of Land Use and Growth Management

Members not in attendance:

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III. Old Business**A. Approval of Minutes**

Lisa Colavito motioned to approve the Minutes of the August 21, 2024, seconded by Dr. Christine Bergmark.

Yea: Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero-Caldas, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Dr. Asif U Dowla, Elldwinia English, Nathan Evans, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Kenneth Russell, Richard Tarr

IV. Presentations

None.

V. New Business**A. Announcements**

Chris Kaselemis, Director of St. Mary's County DED, informed the Commission that staff is in the process of updating the Technology Resource Book which lists over 200 companies operating in St. Mary's County. There is a print version and an online version which is more up to date. The new print version should be released by the end of the first quarter. The Chesapeake Bay Ways Destination Assessment is a secondary deeper look at the Chesapeake Bay Ferry Study identified locations to assess and enhance the discovery, experiences, and connections between visitors and natural, cultural, and recreation opportunities in ways that support positive outcomes in the community

DED has submitted their FY2026 Budget to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC). The Commissioners will discuss Department Budget Submissions on March 11, 2025. This year DED submitted three (3) new funding requests for:

- Increasing hours for the part-time Market Manager at the Barns at New Market
- Agriculture & Seafood Branding marketing and promotion funding
- Increasing funding for Visit St. Mary's MD based on an increase in the Accommodations Tax collected by the County. The Agreement between the CSMC and VSSMD states that funding for VSMMD shall be 38% of the previous year's Accommodations Tax collected by the County, although the actual amount in any given year may be adjusted higher or lower by the CSMC.

DED has asked the original consultant to update the AeroPark Innovation District Plan using the Metropolitan Planning Organization to fund this update.

The Agriculture & Seafood Manager, Priscilla Leitch, has resigned from her position effective February 6, 2025.

The Department Newsletter will be coming out tomorrow. We send this out periodically and all EDC members should be automatically added to our distribution list.

The next St. Mary's County Young Professionals Event will be held on January 21, 2025 from 5 pm until 7 pm at the Port of Leonardtown. The group facilitate a space for young professionals to make connections among themselves.

Mr. Kaselemis stated that at the next meeting he would like the topic to be Workforce driven as there are a lot of initiatives DED is currently focusing on and participating in.

B. St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan Presentation

Jessica Andritz, Director, St. Mary's County Land Use and Growth Management (LUGM) informed the Commission about the current effort to update the County's Comprehensive Plan, entitled, "St. Mary's 2050: Charting our Tomorrow," which launched in October 2024. LUGM is seeking to establish a cohesive, countywide vision for future land use and an actionable strategy to achieve it. LUGM is asking all residents, property and business owners, and community partners to participate in this project by sharing their thoughts and future vision for St. Mary's County. The information shared will become the foundation of the updated Comprehensive Plan which is the policy document that will guide land use planning and public investment in the County for the next 25 years.

C. CEDS Related Updates

Chirs Kaselemis reminded the Commission of the Key Recommendations from the CEDS:

- Establish a forum for workforce development collaboration
- Building a mechanism to expose residents to apprenticeship and internship opportunities
- Strengthening the County's autonomous systems technology capabilities
- Increasing innovation and collaboration with the Navy.
- Expanding the ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship
- Creating a St. Mary's County Agriculture and Seafood Brand
- Identifying and attracting needed agriculture, seafood, and local product infrastructure
- Developing a density of inclusive, welcoming, and quality of place assets
- Enabling development in designated districts while better communicating smart growth strategies to preserve the land necessary to support agriculture and forestry sectors and support NAS Patuxent River

Mr. Kaselemis elaborated on creating a St. Mary's County Agriculture and Seafood Brand to more actively and effectively promote the sector. DED has been working with consultant Arnett-Muldrow on branding. They will be in town the first week of February to lead meetings with stakeholders making up the steering committee and various related focus groups.

D. DED Reorganization

Chris Kaselemis explained to the Commission that DED was able to consolidate the 2 Senior Administrative Coordinator positions and change one of those positions to an Economic Development Specialist. Current staff includes:

Ben Cohen, Development Facilitator

Katherine Stormont, Economic Development Specialist, Business Attraction & AeroPark Innovation District

Lee Greely, Economic Development Specialist, Business Expansion and Retention

Emily Lacey, Economic Development Specialist, Agriculture, Seafood and Small Businesses

Katrine Heuer, Economic Development Specialist, Communications and Marketing

Priscilla Leitch (resigned), Agriculture & Seafood Manager

Lisa Ledman, Senior Administrative Coordinator

E. Economic Development Commission 2025 Meeting Calendar

Chris Kaselemis announced the 4 dates of the quarterly meetings of the Economic Development Commission:

January 15, 2025

July 16, 2025

April 16, 2025

October 15, 2025

Curtis Brown motioned to accept the dates for quarterly meetings of the Economic Development Commission, seconded by Lisa Colavito.

Yea: Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero-Caldas, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Dr. Asif U. Dowla, Elldwinia English, Nathan Evans, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Kenneth Russell, Richard Tarr

Dr. Christine Bergmark questioned moving the meeting time to 5 pm. The Commission discussed this proposal but decided that 6 pm better accommodates those that work a full time schedule until 5 pm. Leona Charles suggested meeting more frequently than quarterly to possibly shorten the agenda items to be discussed (no motion).

F. Election of Officers

The Commission voted unanimously, and elected Curtis Brown as Chair, Leona Charles as Vice Chair, and Lisa Colavito as Secretary, all uncontested.

VI. Public Comments

Chris Kaselemis announced that this will be Trisha Post's last Economic Development Commission meeting and thanked her for her service.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Curtis Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Lisa Colavito.

Yea: Dr. Christine Bergmark, Dr. Silvio Borrero-Caldas, Curtis Brown, Leona Charles, Lisa Colavito, Dr. Asif U. Dowla, Elldwinia English, Nathan Evans, Dr. Dale Moore, Trisha Post, Kenneth Russell, Richard Tarr.

Minutes taken by Lisa Ledman, DED.