



## **Economic Development Commission - Jan 21 2026 Minutes**

Wednesday, January 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Chesapeake Building Commissioners Conference Room, 41770 Baldrige Street, Leonardtown, MD

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

#### A. Call to Order

The January 21, 2026 Meeting of the Economic Development Commission was called to order at 6:00 pm.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

#### A. Roll Call

Members in attendance were:

Curtis Brown

Dr. Asif U Dowla

Brandie Edelen

Matthew Burgan

Leona Charles

Richard Tarr

Dr. Rupan Talukder

Dr. Dale Moore

Jacob Keller

Dr. Silvio Borrero-Caldas

Guests in attendance included:

Cynthia Greb, Director, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development

Kellie Hinkle, Deputy Director, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development

Sydney Garner, Agriculture and Seafood Manager, St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development

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

Dr. Frank Clinton, Business Consultant, Small Business Development Center

Wynne Briscoe, President, Lexington Park Business Association

Evelyn Hernandez, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Community Development Corporation

Members not in attendance

Lisa Colavito

Mark Robinson

Nicholas Hooper

- B. Introduce New Member
- C. Introduce new DED Director

### 3. PRESENTATIONS

- A. [Small Business Meet Up Plan](#) 

Emily Lacey and Dr. Frank Clinton unveiled the new FlightPath SMC partnership between the Department of Economic Development and the Small Business Development Center. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) recommends the expansion of the ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship to encourage non-defense UAS startups, main street businesses, and innovation in general. The FlightPath objective is to advance local economic development by empowering small businesses and entrepreneurs with accessible training, strategic connections, and increased visibility of available recourses; equip0ping them with the knowledge, networks, and tools needed to start, sustain, and scale their operations; and cultivating a collaborative resilient business community by bridging organizational gaps, reducing barriers, and enabling sustainable growth and smarter scaling. There are eight events planned for 2026 including Fireside Chats, Trainings, and Networking.

Emily Lacey also shared information about the St. Mary's County Young Professionals Group which is a workforce development initiative that hosts monthly networking events for young professionals and strives to highlight local small businesses.

- B. Lexington Park Business Association (LexBA) (10 min.)  
Wynne Briscoe updated the Board on the Lexington Park Business Association (LEXBA) which has been in existence for 1 year and meets monthly to improve the future of Lexington Park. LEXBA is an independent community-based nonprofit corporation, non-

partisan 501 (c)(6) tax-exempt organization with no political affiliation; comprised of members who are stakeholders and community leaders that share a commitment to promotion, partnership, and a thriving Lexington Park; that meets monthly at the Lexington Park Library. The mission of LEXBA is to empower and uplift Lexington Park by united business and community partners into one voice that advances member-driven priorities and positive growth. LEXBA organizes and amplifies the Lexington Park business community by advocating for shared interests and building practical, member-led action plans that move top priorities forward. LEXBA champions Lexington Park's strengths by building community pride and business momentum through collaboration, visibility, and coordinated initiatives.

C. Community Development Corporation (CDC) (10 min.)

Evelyn Hernandez, Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Brenda Quintero, Executive Director, of the Community Development Corporation (CDC) highlighted the efforts of the Corporation. While LEXBA supports the businesses of Lexington Park, the CDC focuses on the community members. The mission of the CDC is to create and encourage infrastructural, economical, and community development initiatives, to promote public art installations, and to beautify, revitalize, and improve the wellbeing of all businesses and individuals in St. Mary's County.

#### 4. OLD BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes (5 min.)

I move to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2025 Economic Development Commission Meeting.

Moved by: Curtis Brown; seconded by: Dr Dale Moore

**Motion Carries**

B. [By-law Discussion \(15 min.\)](#) 

It was suggested at the October 15, 2025 Economic Development Commission to evaluate the number and composition of ex officio membership and voting membership of the Board.

I move to forward the following language to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County for their consideration:

“Ex officio Membership

- Ex officio members of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) do not have voting powers.
- The number of ex officio members shall not exceed one-third of the total number of voting EDC members, ensuring that ex officio representation remains proportionate to the voting membership.
- Ex officio members shall be appointed by a majority vote of the voting EDC members during duly convened meeting, with appointments reviewed annually to align with the EDC's strategic objectives.

Composition of Voting EDC Members

- Voting EDC members shall prioritize the inclusion of representatives from underrepresented strategic industries identified in the CEDS, prompting balanced representation of key economic sectors.
- No single strategic industry, as defined in the CEDS, shall have more than two (2) representatives among the voting EDC members, to maintain diversity and prevent overrepresentation of any one industry. “

Moved by: Curtis Brown; seconded by: Leona Charles

**Motion Carries**

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. DED Program Updates**

Cynthia Greb updated the Commission with the following

- Ribbon Cutting at Walter Francis Duke Airport is scheduled for March (terminal remodel and runway expansion)
- AeroPark Innovation District wayfinding signage is in place. The Market Study should be completed in March.
- The Barns at New Market received over 200 vendor applications in 2025. DED has requested an additional part-time Market Manager for their FY2027 Budget.
- DED also requested additional funding in their FY2027 Budget for the implementation of AgriCoast.
- There will be a Blue Catfish Industry Familiarization Event at Chief’s on February 9th.
- The California Farmers Market is now accepting vendor applications for the 2026 Season. The vendors met and decided to modify the market hours to be 9 am until 12:30 pm and to raise the vendor fees to \$50 annually.
- DED is partnering with the St. Mary’s College of Maryland to host a Workforce Development Symposium in May or June.
- Leadership Southern Maryland is hosting a Growing Our Own Workforce Forum in March.
- 900 new business entities registered in calendar year 2025.
- DED will be updating the CEDS document next year, a budget request was submitted for their FY2027 Budget to hire a consultant for this update.
- Patuxent River will be releasing their Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Study in March.
- The St. Mary’s County 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update is underway. All are encouraged to partake in any community engagements.
- DED has submitted a proposal for Class L beer, wine, and liquor license for specialized license for manufacturers (distilleries, breweries, wineries) allowing on-premises consumption and sampling of products produced by the holder or another manufacturer.
- DED was approached to re-initiate the engagement between the local community and Foreign Liaison Officers.
- The Data Collection Phase of the Workforce Development Study has been completed and the next step is to start developing a plan to engage the community and stakeholders.

B. Sector Updates

Dr. Dale Moore updated the Commission that the activities of the Southern Maryland Navy Alliance and the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission.

Matt Burgan mentioned the impact of Pax River on potential development siting the St. Mary's County Planning Commission meeting on January 12, 2025.

Leona Charles spoke of the Procurement Redevelopment Act and the effect on small local businesses/contractors.

Curtis Brown shared how property value assessments affect small businesses who operate out of their homes. Mr. Brown also spoke of the implementation of Agile Framework on NAWCAD Webster Outlying Field.

Rick Tarr told the Commission of UAS testing resources, the Department of Defense (DOD) Patent Holiday, and the creation of a Quantum Group.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**7. ADJOURN**

I move to adjourn the January 21, 2026 Economic Development Commission Meeting.  
Moved by: Curtis Brown; seconded by: Leona Charles

**Motion Carries**