



Economic & Tourism Development Commission

September 10, 2025

Commission Members Present: Judy Crow, Creigh Rahenkamp, Cathy Bramble, Joanne Rich, David Bowman, and Bob Jacob

Commission Members Absent: Tiffany Scott

Also in Attendance: Jamie Williams, Director, Katie Abbott, Economic Development Manager, Shalyn Boulden, Tourism Manager, and Rose Osborn, Administrative Specialist, Economic and Tourism Development

At 3:00 p.m., Ms. Rich called the meeting to order and requested a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2025, meeting. On a motion by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Rahenkamp, the minutes of the August 20, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

New member, Cathy Bramble, introduced herself to the Commission.

Mr. Jacob expressed his interest in filling the vacant Vice-Chair position. A motion was made by Ms. Rich, seconded by Mr. Bowman, and passed unanimously for Mr. Jacob to assume the Vice-Chair position.

Ms. Williams shared that the Economic and Tourism Development Department is working with the Kent County Public Schools to update promotional material that contains achievements, programs, etc. A survey will go out to the real estate agents and major employers to determine the best method of communication and distribution.

Ms. Osborn shared that the Museums of Kent will be hosting an open house at the Kent County Visitor's Center on Friday, November 7, 2026, to promote the new history walls. The open house will run from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Boulden shared that she and Mr. Rahenkamp attended the Bayways and Gateways two-day conference in Queen Anne's County. Each town was allowed to give an update on the status of its respective projects.

Ms. Rich and Ms. Crow shared that they have each received bookings as a direct result of the CBS *Uniquely Maryland* with Rachel Holt segments that have aired.

The Housing and Tourism Subcommittees shared their purpose statement for their respective Subcommittees and gave updates on what they are currently working on.

The purpose of the Housing Subcommittee is to examine the relationship between workforce needs and housing availability in Kent County, with a focus on both skilled employees and seasonal workers. The Subcommittee will assess current land use, zoning, housing supply, and regulatory constraints that may affect the labor force by engaging with the building community, employers, county planners, and other stakeholders. The group will also explore innovative solutions to address identified gaps. Findings and recommendations will be reported back to the full Commission to guide informed policy and planning recommendations to the County Commissioners.

The Tourism Subcommittee is committed to fostering collaboration and creativity to strengthen Kent County's position as a premier destination. Our mission is to engage tourism-related businesses in innovative marketing strategies that highlight what makes our county unique. We strive to improve communication between businesses, associations, and local government, creating stronger connections and shared goals. By inspiring businesses to take an active role in tourism promotion, we aim to build a more vibrant and connected visitor experience for Kent County.

A motion was made by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Ms. Bramble, and carried unanimously to discontinue the Data Subcommittee at this time.

Ms. Williams shared the Kent County Economy Overview Report, noting a total population of 19,400 for 2024, a decline of approximately 2,600 people over the course of the past five years. The population is expected to grow by 192 over the next five years. Regional employment has declined by 658 over the past five years, with a projected increase of 142 over the next five years.

A discussion was held as to whether to continue the Nominating Subcommittee. A motion was made by Mr. Jacob, seconded by Mr. Rahenkamp, and carried unanimously to continue the Nominating Subcommittee. Current members, as defined by the ETDC Bylaws, are the Director (Jamie Williams), ETDC Chair (Joanne Rich), and no more than two members of the ETDC (David Bowman).

Bradley Moore, Town Planner and Zoning Administrator, Town of Chestertown, and Carler Gerber, Kent County Office of Planning, Housing, and Zoning, will be invited to speak at a future meeting.

Dan Divilio, Kent County Public Schools, shared that the architect and project manager will be on hand on Thursday, September 11, 2025, at the Kent County Middle School to present the proposed plans for the new middle school. These plans were developed over the past year with assistance from the Maryland Stadium Authority and the architect.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Jacob, seconded by Mr. Rahenkamp, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:36 p.m. The Commission will meet again on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD
Director