



Economic & Tourism Development Commission

February 26, 2025

Commission Members Present: Charlie Athey, Paula Reeder, Judy Gifford, David Bowman, Judy Crow, and Dick Story.

Commission Members Absent: Sandy 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. Mr. Athey called the meeting to order. Mr. Athey requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2025, meeting. On a motion by Ms. Crow seconded by Mr. Bowman, the minutes of January 8 were unanimously approved.

Mr. Athey thanked the members of the Commission for submitting their thoughts on 2025 priorities. Mr. Athey shared that the new Mexican restaurant, El Rancho is open, and the former Pizza Hut location has been purchased to potentially open as an Asian Noodle restaurant. Mr. Athey attended the Queen Anne's County Economic Development Committee meeting online.

Erin Silva, GISP, Project Manager, Eastern Shore GIS, to continue her review of the Delmarva Index, Kent County Data that she brought before the Commission in November 2024. All information shared can be found at [Delmarva Index](#). The website is currently being redesigned and will be launched in the next couple of months.

Ms. Williams advised that at least one member of the Commission is required to be certified in the Open Meetings Act (OMA) training and inquired if any of the members currently were certified. Ms. Reeder stated that she holds the certification. Ms. Williams will share the OMA training information with all members.

Economic and Tourism Development staff have been busy following proposed legislation. The Department is working on the FY2026 budget request that will be presented on April 1, 2025, to the County Commissioners. Ms. Abbott continues to work with the Information Technology Department on the new website and staff is reviewing the Visitor's Guide for updates. The 2025 Upper Shore STRT1UP Roadshow takes place at Washington College on April 15, 2025, from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m. Ms. Williams and Ms. Abbott are leading the planning efforts for that event. Ms. Osborn continues to work on the Museums of Kent brochures and is waiting to hear back on the grant submitted to Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc., to cover the cost of printing. The Department is beginning to plan for Maryland's 250th Anniversary with a Kent County focus. The Micro Ag Grant is accepting applications through Friday, February 28, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. Economic and Tourism Development Commission Interest Forms and the Micro Ag

Grant were advertised in the Tidewater Trader, included in the newsletter, and the information was pushed out on social media.

Ms. Williams explored strategies to enhance the Commission's engagement and support its impact on the Department's initiatives. Commission members were encouraged to follow the department on social media, engage with posts, and stay informed through monthly newsletters and weekly staff reports.

Ms. Williams shared the BRE initial summary report with the commission members, noting that business data will be updated in HubSpot. She outlined the department's goal to conduct three to five business interviews each month, in addition to an annual goal of 50 responses collected from an online campaign.

Mr. Athey shared that he would like to narrow down the list of 2025 Priorities that were submitted by the Commission members to schedule speakers relevant to the priorities identified and allow time for further discussion. A motion was made by Ms. Reeder to confirm Cindy Genther as the speaker at the March meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Story and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Athey shared that he would like to understand the regulatory limits on growth due to water and sewer capacity allocations. Ms. Williams was asked to invite Dan Mattson, Director of Public Works to speak at an upcoming meeting. Commission members requested Scott Boone, Director of Information Systems, also be contacted as a future speaker.

Ms. Williams provided an update on the Village of Kennedyville, noting that the Public Works Agreement is under review by the County Attorney. It will be presented to the County Commissioners at their next meeting before being advertised, allowing for submission of letters of intent.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Crow seconded by Ms. Gifford, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:17 p.m. The Commission will reconvene on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD
Director