



Economic & Tourism Development Commission

July 8, 2026

Commission Members Present: Creigh Rahenkamp, Joanne Rich, Benjamin Tilghman, Ben Legow, and Judy Crow

Commission Members Absent: David Bowman and Cathy Bramble

Also in Attendance: Jamie Williams, Director, 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. Ms. Rich requested a motion to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2026, meeting. On a motion by Mr. Tilghman, seconded by Ms. Crow, the minutes of the June 10, 2026, meeting were unanimously approved.

Ms. Williams shared that the Small Business Community Impact Reimbursement Grant Program is open and that applications are due July 15, 2026. We have received 4 submissions as of this meeting.

The review committee for the Kent County Housing Study evaluated 17 proposals and narrowed the list to three. We are now scheduling 30-minute interviews with them.

The Request for Proposals for the Strategic Plan for the 2027 Economic and Tourism Development was published on Thursday, July 3, 2026. https://www.kentcounty.com/government/request_for_proposal

Our team is busy preparing for the Summer MACo Conference. We will start covering the Chestertown Visitor Center on Tuesdays again, through the end of 2026.

Ms. Osborn is working on scheduling an Economic and Tourism Development update with each of the Towns. Chestertown and Betterton have been scheduled. Ms. Williams asked if the commission members would like an invite. They stated they would appreciate the opportunity. In addition, Ms. Williams will be meeting the Rock Hall town manager on Tuesday, July 14, 2026.

Window clings and table tents to complement the new Visitor Guide are due in the next few weeks. The [oyster video](#) for Outdoors Delmarva, WBOC, has been completed and was shared at the meeting.

Ms. Boulden is working on another visit with Jess Dutra from Mix 106.5, Rock Hall focus this time.

Dr. Chad Rooney, Town Manager, Town of Chestertown, shared that he has been actively getting to know the Town Mayor, Council, Commission Chairs, and Commissions. He is establishing a close relationship with the community and businesses. He is doing this by walking around town and personally observing and talking to people. Mr. Rooney shared that an open line of communication with the County and the weekly staff reports from Ms. Williams help bridge the gaps between the Town and County. He

shared that he has had inquiries regarding business and entrepreneurship training. Ms. Williams requested that those businesses be referred to our office, noting that there are numerous free resources and community mentors available to support them.

Mr. Rooney shared that the Town Council will soon discuss a potential Short-Term Rental (STR) Ordinance to address ongoing concerns such as parking and related issues. Ms. Williams reported that, with the implementation of the Short-Term Rental identification software, County-wide STR revenue is projected to exceed \$500,000 this year. Next steps include coordinating with the Towns to ensure that all registered properties meet the requirements established by each incorporated municipality and that payments are being made accurately, a feature the current software actively tracks. She further emphasized that balancing short-term rental activity with the need for affordable housing remains a central focus of the Housing Study.

Ms. Williams shared that Victor Sensenig, PhD, Chief of Staff and Vice President for Planning and Policy, Washington College, will present at the August meeting.

Invitations will be extended to the Chestertown Main Street Executive Director and the Rock Hall Town Manager to attend and present at an upcoming meeting.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Rahenkamp, seconded by Mr. Tilghman, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 3:44 p.m. The Commission will meet again on Wednesday, August 19, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD
Director