



Economic & Tourism Development Commission

May 14, 2025

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

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; John Price, County Commissioner.

At 2:58 p.m. Mr. Athey called the meeting to order and requested a motion to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2025, meeting. On a motion by Ms. Crow, seconded by Mr. Bowman, the minutes of the April 9, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

Mr. Athey shared that Bob Jacobs was appointed by the County Commissioners to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Story and welcomed him to the Commission. He also shared that O'Connor's has been purchased.

Zack Royston, Vice President, Rural Health Care Transformation, Executive Director, University of Maryland Shore Medical Center at Chestertown was present to give an update on healthcare in Kent County, the new regional medical center on the Eastern Shore, healthcare challenges, and opportunities for partnerships. He acknowledged that healthcare is a cornerstone of economic development within a community. Mr. Royston shared their commitment to maintaining a thriving healthcare footprint within Kent County.

Ms. Williams highlighted several upcoming events. The 2025 MEDA Primer and the Regional Revolving Loan Fund Focus Group are scheduled for May 22, 2025. Kent County will host the June Maryland Destination Marketing Organizations (MDMO) meeting at Crow Vineyard. Ms. Boulden will attend the Southeastern Tourism College in Macon, Georgia, from June 1-6, 2025, as part of a three-year certification course that will culminate in her becoming a Certified Tourism Marketing Professional. A ribbon cutting for Kent Reserve is scheduled for May 28, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. New Visitor's Guides have been distributed, and the mentor recruiting rack card was shared.

Ms. Williams requested that each Commission member provide her with a list of their top three priorities for discussion at the June meeting.

Ms. Williams shared that the County Commissioners approved a grant application to the Department of Housing and Community Development to support an inaugural county-wide housing inventory as outlined in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. The Upper Shore Regional Council has committed

\$13,000 and the grant application requests an additional \$37,000. The study will be inclusive of the five municipalities as well as the County.

On the recommendation of the Nominating Committee, a motion was made by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Ms. Reeder, and passed unanimously to recommend approval to the County Commissioners of Candidate #2 to fill the expired term of Ms. Scott.

At the request of Ms. Williams, a motion was made by Mr. Bowman, seconded by Mrs. Crow, and passed unanimously to move the August meeting from the 13th to the 6th due to the MACo Summer Conference.

Commissioner Price thanked Ms. Reeder and Mr. Athey for their service on the Commission. He shared that the Millington Senior Housing project is moving forward, as well as the 301 Corridor project. He shared that the design phase of the Millington Infrastructure project is approximately 98% complete. Phase II of Kennedyville housing project is expected to go out to bid on May 15, 2025.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Jacob seconded by Ms. Reeder, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 4:32 p.m. The Commission will reconvene on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 3:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie L. Williams, CEcD
Director