



Washington County Economic Development Commission Board
Regular Meeting
July 9, 2015

The regular meeting of the Washington County Economic Development Commission Board (EDC) was held at 100 West Washington Street, Room 255. The following members were present: Hugh Breslin (Chair), Julie Rohm (Vice Chair), Ed Lough (Secretary), Paul Crampton, Jim Herbert, Bob Jeffers, Michael Reyka, Janet Stiles Fulton, and Pete Thomas. Excused from the meeting were Jef Bohn and Ryan Daughtridge.

Ex-Officio members attending were Terry Baker and LeRoy Myers, Commissioners for Washington County; Kristin Aleshire and Don Munson, Council Members for the City of Hagerstown; Jill Frick, Economic Development Manager for the City of Hagerstown; Greg Snook, President of the Hagerstown/Washington County Industrial Foundation, Inc. Not present was Commissioner John Barr.

County staff in attendance included Carmen Harbaugh, Leslie Hart, Kassie Lewis, Bob Mandley and Linda Spence of the Department of Business Development; Greg Murray and Sarah Sprecher of County Administration; and Tabitha Porterfield and Aaron Stoner of the Department of Public Relations and Community Affairs.

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order by Chair, Hugh Breslin.

Approval of the Agenda – Jim Herbert made a motion to approve the July 9 agenda; the motion was seconded by Paul Crampton and approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – Hugh Breslin noted a correction was made in the June 11 minutes to a statement made by Council Member Don Munson under the *Elected Officials' Comments* "...a new Class "A" office building will be constructed on West Washington Street, directly across from the USM-H." The statement should have read "...on North Potomac Street across from the University District Parking Deck." Paul Crampton motioned to approve the meeting minutes of June 11, 2015 as amended; the motion was seconded by Janet Stiles Fulton and approved by unanimous vote.

Elected Officials' Comments – Council Member Munson announced Steve Lohr was recently hired to fill the position of Fire Chief due to Chief W. Kyd Dieterich's retirement after 35 years of service to the City of Hagerstown. Commissioner Baker welcomed new EDC Board members and stated he looks forward to working with each in the months to come.

Available Land for Development – Present for the discussion from the Washington County Department of Planning and Zoning were Steve Goodrich, Meghan Jenkins, and Jill Baker. Ms. Baker provided an overview of land in Washington County that is available for non-residential development. The County is in the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan therefore input regarding land use is of the utmost importance. Zoning codes, Medium Range Growth Boundaries (MRGBs), water and sewer, transportation, infrastructure versus quantity (capacity), and Maryland Department of the Environment regulations were discussed. Ms. Baker reiterated many times how finite the County's resources are and the need to extensively review the Plan for the best and most efficient use of resources. She mentioned numerous public stakeholder meetings are being planned to seek input. Hugh Breslin requested Ms. Baker develop a map indicating the County's water and sewer infrastructure and include an overlay with the City of Hagerstown, provide members with the stakeholder meeting dates, and attend the August meeting to discuss further. Ms. Baker anticipates the Comprehensive Plan to take approximately 18 months and be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners early 2017.

Director's Report – Kassie Lewis reported plans to initiate a manufacturing consortium in Washington County to be held this Fall. The consortium will allow manufacturers an opportunity to network with like-minded businesses, discuss challenges and successes, as well as to possibly create a supplier chain among one another. Staff plan to observe the Prince George's County consortium scheduled for mid-August to determine how best

to structure Washington County's event. Ms. Lewis commented on a recent visit to FedEx with Pete Thomas and a representative of the One Stop Job Center. FedEx reported a tremendous amount of difficulty filling part-time vacancies at its Hagerstown facility. Other warehouse/distribution centers in the area such as UPS and Home Depot Distribution Center, etc. are also experiencing labor shortages. It is believed these facilities may need to raise its wages and benefits to make their jobs more attractive in this low unemployment economy. Job sharing with area companies may also be an alternative worth exploring.

Executive Committee – Hugh Breslin reported Executive Committee members discussed the vacant At Large position on the EDC Board; and agreed to nominate Joshua Martin of Volvo Group Trucks to fill the role as a manufacturing representative. *On a motion made by Bob Jeffers and seconded by Pete Thomas, and by unanimous vote, Joshua Martin will be submitted to the BCC for consideration in filling the board vacancy.*

City Center Committee – There was nothing to report this month.

Education and Workforce Development Committee – Bob Jeffers noted he and Pete Thomas attended a *Cradle to Career* event; and plan to meet with Superintendent of Washington County Public Schools, Clayton Wilcox in September.

Marketing and Communications Committee – Julie Rohm reported members discussed the *My Biz Idea* and *Loves My Business* campaigns. *My Biz Idea* is a mailed flyer campaign designed to reach fledging entrepreneurs and those tinkering with a business idea through the County's water bills; the plan is to expand its reach by inserting flyers into personal property tax bills (57,000 tax payers), and through Antietam Cable invoices (60,000+ customers). *Loves My Business* campaign is held in conjunction with the Maryland Economic Development Week which is scheduled September 28 through October 2 this year. Window clings will be mailed again to nearly 7,000 businesses and approximately 25 businesses will be selected to receive special recognition through a Prize Patrol style entourage. Plans to close out Economic Development Week with the *Celebration of Business* event were discussed; and thoughts of holding a breakfast event are under consideration. Members discussed upcoming marketing opportunities such as the Ag Expo and Fair. The Public Relations staff agreed to create advertorials expressing the DBD's appreciation to the agricultural community and educate others on how vital agriculture is to the community; and staff will host a Maryland Department of Business & Economic Development Appreciation luncheon late September/early October. Sarah Sprecher distributed the 6th edition of the *Journal Newsletter*.

Old Business – Kassie Lewis explained Towson University was awarded the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant to conduct the Supply Chain Study. The study will begin mid-July and is expected to conclude by the end of October 2015. Volunteers are needed to assist in conducting scripted company interviews in conjunction with Towson.

New Business – There was nothing to report this month.

Closed Session – Jim Herbert motioned to go into Closed Session to consider a matter concerning the proposal of a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State; or any personnel matters in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland. The motion was seconded by Bob Jeffers. Hearing no discussion the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Open Session – On a motion made by Ed Lough to return to Open Session and seconded by Bob Jeffers, the motion was unanimously approved. Present during Closed Session were Kristin Aleshire, Terry Baker, Hugh Breslin, Jill Frick, Carmen Harbaugh, Leslie Hart, Jim Herbert, Bob Jeffers, Kassie Lewis, Ed Lough, Bob Mandley, Don Munson, Greg Murray, Tabitha Porterfield, Michael Reyka, Julie Rohm, Greg Snook, Linda Spence, Sarah Sprecher, Janet Stiles Fulton, Pete Thomas.

Adjournment – Bob Jeffers made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Ed Lough. Hearing no discussion, the meeting was adjourned.

Linda Spence, Business Support Specialist
Washington County Department of Business Development