



Washington County Economic Development Commission Board

February 11, 2016

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), Jef Bohn, Bob Jeffers, Joshua Martin, and Janet Stiles Fulton. Ex-Officio members in attendance included Council Member Don Munson, and Jill Frick.

Excused from the meeting were Michael Reyka, Commissioner LeRoy Myers, and Greg Snook. Members not present included Paul Crampton, Jim Herbert, Commissioners Baker and Barr; and Council Member Kristin Aleshire. Others attending were Dawn Hatzler and Andrew Sargent.

County staff in attendance included Carmen Harbaugh, Kassie Lewis, Bob Mandley, Greg Murray, Tabitha Porterfield, Linda Spence and Sarah Sprecher.

Call to Order – Hugh Breslin called the meeting to order.

Approval of the Agenda – A motion to approve the meeting agenda for February 11 was made by Bob Jeffers, seconded by Jef Bohn and unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes – Hugh Breslin noted January's meeting was devoted to the Supply Chain Study presentation therefore minutes were not recorded.

Elected Officials' Comments – Council Member Don Munson commented on the upcoming City elections, the primary in April, and the election in November. He announced a Housing Summit will be held on June 21 at the downtown library from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Jill Frick, on behalf of the Mayor and Council, stated how pleased they were with the message the County Commissioners and County Administrator gave during the recent State of the County event. They were very encouraged hearing the County's message of partnership building, emphasizing the need and desire to build stronger downtown. The Mayor and Council, along with City Administrator, Valerie Means looks forward to meeting with County representatives in moving forward. Ms. Frick added that the Mayor and City Administrator would also like to attend future EDC Board meetings to continue this momentum forward for the betterment of the community. Hugh Breslin resonated the sentiment of encouraging words heard at the State of the County Address; and welcomed both the Mayor and City Administrator to all EDC Board meetings.

Director's Report – Kassie Lewis reported the first Manufacturers Roundtable event was held in late December, hosted by HBP, Inc., and was well received. Workforce development dominated the discussion. In response, a second Manufacturers Roundtable event focusing on education and workforce development has been scheduled for March 31. The session will be hosted at Hub Labels and feature Clayton Wilcox and Dr. Pugh of the Washington County Public Schools as guest speakers. Dr. Wilcox mentioned he is rethinking and redirecting the Career Technology programs and is excited to be part of the conversation. Hugh Breslin reported that Dr. Wilcox would like the DBD to arrange tours of manufacturing facilities for school Guidance Counselors to provide them a first-hand look at what modern day jobs entail. He suggested that in addition to manufacturing jobs, we work to ensure tours are scheduled that show a diversity of skills and training are covered, such as at call centers, retail facilities, warehouse and distribution, etc. Ms. Lewis noted the DBD partnered with the MD Department of Commerce in providing an Export Forum for Washington County, MD. The forum was very informative and another is being planned for May that would include more accounting firms, attorney offices, and business clients of such firms. The DBD worked in concert with Volvo Group, and

the Western Maryland Consortium to pool available together that were provided to employees that were recently told of their pending layoff. The group, the Washington County Rapid Response Team, was able to provide employees with unemployment assistance for MD, PA, and WV; along with resources to start a business, community and social services assistance programs, etc. Joshua Martin noted employees were appreciative of the efforts put forth on their behalf. Kassie Lewis stated a preliminary meeting will be held this week to discuss the development of a Procurement Workshop to encourage businesses to do business with the County, State and Federal governments.

Executive Committee – Ed Lough announced the selection of two candidates to fill EDC Board vacancies due to the resignations of Ryan Daughtridge and Peter Thomas. Proposed candidates are Dawn Hatzer, Executive Director of the Western Maryland Consortium and Michael Fitzgerald, local developer. Mr. Fitzgerald is proposed to be the City of Hagerstown’s representative however his recommendation has yet to be confirmed by the Mayor and Council. *Bob Jeffers made a motion to put forth Dawn Hatzer and Michael Fitzgerald, pending City approval, as candidates to fill vacancies on the EDC Board for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was seconded by Joshua Martin and approved unanimously.* Mr. Lough explained he is looking ahead to fill three additional EDC Board vacancies when terms expire at the end of June. Two candidates are under consideration at this time and are Gary Bockrath and Andrew Loble. A third would be a Maryland Municipal League representative therefore Mr. Lough will contact Mayor Skip Kauffman for a recommendation. He encouraged members to submit names of other potential candidates for discussion and consideration.

Education and Workforce Development Committee – Bob Jeffers noted Dawn Hatzer and Joshua Martin have both joined the committee. Their current focus is on lifelong learning opportunities and instilling that message starting with 9th and 10th grade students. He hoped future efforts will be devoted to assisting and serving unemployed and underemployed adults.

Marketing and Communications Committee – Nothing to report this month.

Water and Sewer Infrastructure Committee – Nothing to report this month.

Old Business – Julie Rohm, at the request of Bob Jeffers, agreed to provide the Board with an updated retail report for Washington County at a future meeting.

New Business – Linda Spence explained the annual Financial Disclosure Statement is due at this time for activities in 2015. Please complete the document and return to her for follow-up with the County Attorney’s office. Janet Stiles Fulton noted she was asked by a prominent business person to inquire about updating the website and stated that it is in need of sprucing up. Sarah Sprecher stated some items have been recently updated. Greg Murray stated many updates to the County’s website have been updated within the past six months, including new ordinances, press releases, contact information, etc. While he acknowledges more improvements are needed, the County expects to do a full overhaul of all county websites in the future but not in the immediate future. The goal would be to make the website more user friendly and mobile accessible. The estimated cost to bring it up to date is estimated between \$25,000-\$50,000 (or more) and find the cost hard to justify at this time.

Closed Session – *Jef Bohn 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 Ed Lough. 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 Janet Stiles Fulton, the motion was unanimously approved. Present during Closed Session were Kristin Aleshire, Jef Bohn, Hugh Breslin, Jill Frick, Carmen Harbaugh, Bob Jeffers, Kassie Lewis, Ed Lough, Bob Mandley, Joshua Martin, Donald Munson, Greg Murray, Tabitha Porterfield, Julie Rohm, Andrew Sargent, Linda Spence, Sarah Sprecher, and Janet Stiles Fulton.

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

Linda Spence, Business Support Specialist
Washington County Department of Business Development
and
Recording Clerk for the Washington County Economic
Development Commission Board