



## Washington County Economic Development Commission

November 9, 2017

The regular meeting of the Washington County Economic Development Commission (EDC) was held at 100 West Washington Street, Suite 1401. The following members were present: Julie Rohm (Chair), Gary Bockrath (Vice Chair), Hugh Breslin, Mike Fitzgerald, Jim Herbert, Andrew Lobley, and Theresa Shank. Ex-Officio members in attendance included Emily Keller, City Council Member for the City of Hagerstown, and Jill Thompson, Director of Community and Economic Development for the City of Hagerstown. Excused absences were Michael Reyka (Secretary), Ed Lough, and Joshua Martin. Not present were Donnie Stotelmyer, Commissioners Terry Baker, John Barr, and LeRoy Myers, and Mayor Robert Bruchey.

Staff in attendance included Leslie Hart, Kassie Lewis, Bob Mandley, Lauren Pogue, Rob Slocum, and Linda Spence.

**Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order by Julie Rohm.

### **Work Team Reports**

- City Center Work Team
  - A report will be provided at the next meeting.
- Economic Development Week Work Team
  - 35 businesses were visited and 48 Business Ambassadors participated on a two-day business visit program as part of Economic Development Week.
  - The top two needs were identified as a result of the business visits and included Workforce and Advertising/Marketing.
  - A 3-week Agri Tourism course was recently held at the Ag Education Center. Topics included funding, permitting, zoning, planning, etc.
- Executive Committee
  - Findings from the recent business visits were the key focus of discussion during the joint EDC/BOCC meeting.

### **Elected Officials' Comments**

- There was nothing to report at this time.

### **Staff Reports**

- No comments or questions at this time.

### **New Business**

- Congratulations were expressed as Delegate Brett Wilson has been named Judge for The Circuit Court for Washington County, MD. His replacement will be asked to a future EDC meeting.

### **Old Business**

- The Quarterly luncheon meeting between the EDC and the Board of County Commissioners was held on October 31. Overall it was a very productive meeting. Topics included:
  - Follow-up from the recent business visits, such as Workforce and Marketing/Advertising the County more.

- A recent search on the job advertising site, InDeed, there are currently more than 6,000 jobs available in the Washington County, MD area. We are trying to recruit folks here but we need to do a better job marketing to young professionals.
  - County and DBD website RFPs closed out on November 8 and will be moving forward.
- Washington County, MD Government currently has six positions available, two in the Transit Department, two in the Public Relations and Marketing Department, a Business Leader's position in the Dept. of Business Development, and a Chief Operations Officer's position in the County Administrator's office.
  - Jim Herbert volunteered to be a 3<sup>rd</sup> party interviewer for the positions in the PR Department if desired.
- A Work Team to circumvent issues uncovered in dealing with the Washington County Health Department will be developed. WCHD is a State agency operating under the direction of the MD Department of the Environment. Suggestions were to involve Senator Andrew Serafini and the Maryland Business Representative or Ombudsman to the Governor, Deanna Baldwin.
- Jill Thompson commented on the following City of Hagerstown items:
  - The City and the County are working together with an indoor hydroponics grower.
  - A video boasting the City of Hagerstown as a Gigabit City was recently developed.
  - The Main Street Program will hold its Kris Kringle Market beginning December 2.
  - Blues Fest will be hosted in the City of Hagerstown in 2018; it will be a two-day event, Friday and Saturday only. A national promoter will be hired and pop-up shops will be cross-coordinated with this event.

### ***DBD Reports***

- Project Patriot was discussed.
- The Eggs and Issues event held on November 1, featured keynote speaker, Elizabeth Schultz, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations.
- B&D Consulting has a desire to advance its Apprenticeship Program to middle school students.
  - Members discussed opportunities to connect businesses and educators.
- Gary Bockrath and Andrew Sargent are working together to help connect Antraquip, a Washington County business with State of Maryland representatives who are spearheading the tunnel project throughout parts of Maryland.
- A 3-D metal printer is coming to town and has requested the EDC to assist in identifying customers or suppliers.
- An EDC website will be created that features each member and their area of expertise.
- The Mid-Atlantic Lean Conference is being held November 14-15, 2017. An invitation to attend was extended to two EDC members.
- The Winter Maryland Association of Counties is being held Dec. 5-8, at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake in Cambridge. If one or two EDC are interested in attending, the DBD will pay the conference fee.
- A Farmer's Market will be held again this year at the Premium Outlets beginning Black Friday and running through December 24. It is open Friday through Sunday each week.
- Leslie Hart and Julie Rohm have partnered to bring *Tastes and Tunes* to the Valley Mall. Live bands, select local brews will be available during the holidays. They will be located inside the mall in front of the former Sears store. A Washington County Sheriff will be on hand for safety, as well as certified pourers.

Linda Spence,  
Recording Clerk for the Washington County Economic  
Development Commission