



## Washington County Economic Development Commission

October 12, 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), Michael Reyka (Secretary), Hugh Breslin, Mike Fitzgerald, Jim Herbert, Andrew Lobley, Ed Lough, Joshua Martin, and Theresa Shank. Ex-Officio members in attendance included John Barr, Washington County Board of County Commissioners, Jill Thompson, Director of Community and Economic Development for the City of Hagerstown, and Greg Snook, President of CHIEF. Excused absence was Emily Keller. Not present were Hugh Breslin, Donnie Stotemyer, Commissioners Terry Baker and LeRoy Myers, Emily Keller, and Mayor Robert Bruchey.

Staff in attendance included Carmen Harbaugh, Leslie Hart, Kassie Lewis, Bob Mandley, Lauren Pogue, Phil Ridenour, Rob Slocum, and Linda Spence. Also in attendance were Jim Kercheval, Andrew Serafini, and Andrew Sargent.

**Call to Order** – Julie Rohm called the meeting to order.

**Approval of the Agenda** – Gary Bockrath motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for October 12, 2017 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ed Lough. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of the Minutes** – Jim Herbert motioned to approve the meeting minutes for September 14, 2017. The motion was seconded by Joshua Martin. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Urban Improvement Plan** – The Honorable Andrew Serafini provided members with an overview of the Urban Improvement Plan.

- Unique project due to its partnerships between the City of Hagerstown, Washington County Government, State Delegation, the Board of Education/Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, the University System of Maryland-Hagerstown, and private entities working together
- \$13-\$14M investment by the Maryland Theatre
- Connectivity for students of the BIFSA for the MD Theatre
- The Urban Academic Center is supported by the legislature
- USM-H will support WCPS students during the day, and college students in the evening
- Walnut Street facility will support Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant programs will be housed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor and Residency for Doctors will be located on the first floor
- We have to work diligently to turn perceptions around for the better and build excitement behind the project!

**On Track Presentation** – James Kercheval presented a summary of the *On Track* Program.

- A board of advisors includes members of the education community, the Greater Hagerstown Committee, and business representatives
- The number of job openings are outpacing the number of new hires for the first time since 2002
- 65% of the country will need to hold a college-degree or a post-secondary education
- Washington County is falling behind the trend

- 11.5M out of 11.6M jobs created since 2010 went to people with more than a high school education, including skilled jobs training
- In 1979, a person in Washington County, MD with only a high school diploma earned 25% less than those with a college degree, as of 2012, the percentage has doubled to more than 50% less earnings
- 42% of county households are struggling to meet basic living costs
- Percentage of shortages in industry skills were reviewed
- Within the next 5-10 years, jobs will be gone due to automation
- We have to change the culture of education, there is a need for life-long learning
- Educate young students how the job market is changing

### ***Work Team Reports***

- City Center Work Team
  - No report at this time.
- Economic Development Week Work Team
  - Ambassadors meeting will be held October 18
  - More than 32 businesses will be visited
  - There is a plan for follow-up
- Executive Committee
  - An At Large representative on the EDC Board is still vacant. The BOCC requires the submission of three candidates for consideration and two names have been determined, Randy Thompson of Thompson Gas and Service, and Dr. John Heiser. Ms. Lewis noted a new manufacturing company, Ring Container Technologies is coming to town. The new plant manager is coming from Fredericksburg, VA and has stepped up and noted a desire to be more involved.
  - Announcements:
    - JGBLI – Global Enterprise Conference at Cascade Town Centre
    - Tour of Cascade Town Centre – TBD
    - Volvo Group Trucks recently made the cover of the MD Chamber of Commerce

### ***Staff Reports***

- No comments or questions at this time.

### ***Elected Officials' Comments***

- John Barr noted his enthusiasm for the Urban Improvement Project and challenged folks to walk the cultural trail. In preparing for the next joint EDC/BOCC meeting (October 31, 2017), members should consider discussion about what they learned from the upcoming Economic Development Week Business visits.

### ***New Business***

- The Fast Track Approval process is designated for commercial development and helps move projects through the permit process.
- Since the retirement of MD State Fire Marshall, Dan Paul, the Washington County is now vacated. There is a real need and desire to ensure this position is filled.
- There is a perception that the Washington County Health Department, who operates under the Maryland Department of the Environment, is a county-agency but it is not. There are concerns with navigating through the Health Department and may need to involve Senator Edwards and/or Delegate Serafini.
- STEM Week is scheduled for November 8 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. HCC is connecting NASA Technologies with entrepreneurs.

**Old Business**

- In-Kind Therapeutics received their license for their medical marijuana facility in Hancock, MD.
- MD Marketing Partnership – As a member of the board, Joshua Martin noted this group meets with site selection groups and is open on how we can market Washington County to be part of the message and how we can take advantage of this group’s message. Joshua Martin will

**Closed Session Project Status Update** – *Ed Lough 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 Jim Herbert. Hearing no discussion the motion was approved by unanimous vote.*

**Open Session** – *On a motion made by Jim Herbert to return to Open Session and seconded by Ed Lough, the motion was unanimously approved. Present during Closed Session were Mike Fitzgerald, Leslie Hart, Jim Herbert, Kassie Lewis, Andrew Loble, Ed Lough, Bob Mandley, Joshua Martin, Lauren Pogue, Phil Ridenour, Julie Rohm, Andrew Sargent, Theresa Shank, Rob Slocum, Greg Snook, Linda Spence, and Jill Thompson*

**Adjournment** – *Jim Herbert made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Theresa Shank. Hearing no discussion, the meeting was adjourned.*

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