

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

September 3, 2025

PRESENT

Kelly McVeigh rep. Mary Bolt (Cecil College), Kristina Brown (Delmarva Power), Rebecca Clark (Dep. Director, OED), JoAnn Dawson (Fairwinds), Danny DeMarinis (NEMD URP), Joe DiNunzio (Artesian Water), Amy DiPietro (MRA), Sandra Edwards (OED Director), Vince Fiorelli (Chesapeake Utilities), Jake Herman (OED), Kimberly Justus (SWN), Dr. Jeffrey Lawson (CCPS), Jeff Martindale (City of Newark), Sandy Maruchi-Turner (Tourism Mgr.), Robert Palsgrove (Citizen), Joan Pirrung (Christiana-Union), Michael Ratchford (W.L. Gore & Assoc.), Mike Travers (Cecil Dancer)

ABSENT

Woody Jackson (Citizen), Ed Jones (Northrop Grumman), Dr. Carl Roberts (BDC), Rachel Wright (CCPL)

GUESTS

Randy Baynes (DPL), Michele Burch (Patterson Schwartz), Alicia Calhoun (Elkton Alliance), Scott Flanigan (CC DPW), Nekoro Gomes (GBC), Adam Gould, Christie Griest (Tourism), Rebecca Hamilton (Council), Laura Hannan (FHNC), John Ness (WCHC), Brigitte Peters (Commerce), Kim Ray (Tourism), Jack Schammel (Cecil Co. Chamber of Commerce), Dan Schneckenburger (CC Director of Admin.), Samuel Shoge, Toni Sprenkle (BDC), Kelly Tarver (GBC), Clyde Van Dyke (CC P&R), Maura Van Syckle (SBDC), Karen Zuccardi (TEDCO)

Call to Order & Welcome – Sandra Edwards

- Meeting called to order at 8:00am
- June 2025 meeting minutes approved

Chairman's Report – Mike Ratchford

- Races at Fair Hill this past Saturday – revival of old Cecil County tradition
 - Great turnout; good opportunity to promote County
- MD 5 Star coming up in October

Director's Report – Sandra Edwards

- Races returned on Aug 30th
- Aug. 13-16 – MACo; Sandy & Terri did a fabulous job on the County's booth as always
 - Econ Dev discussions revolved around next legislative session and Decade Act
 - Econ Dev affiliate group ready to make sure EZ program remains intact
- 80-acre Enterprise Zone Expansion proposed at request of the Town of Elkton for 3 separate projects – Belle Hill Rd & Rt 279 (Ayers Property ~ 60 acres) 3 warehouses proposed... 164,000, 211,000, and 403,000 SF), McConnel Companies ~ 10acres, one warehouse proposed, 253 Maloney Rd ~10 acres proposed utility training facility
 - Public hearing held Tuesday evening, County Council to vote on Sept. 16
- Bainbridge Logistics Center has first signed lease with tenant for Building B (existing 1 million SF building)
- Zaxby's coming to Chesapeake Overlook

- Northrop Grumman's Propulsion Innovation Center (will be new engineering and administration building) expected to be completed by end of year
- Having a marketing audit completed (Phase 1 of Strategic Plan)
- Shifting into high gear on MD 5 Star – the Tourism Tent and the County's Chalet events
- Tourism Updates:
 - Hosted 2 successful fishing tournaments this summer
 - Developing Journeys of Courage (part of Network to Freedom/underground railroad) web pages; will unveil short video later this month
 - CBS New York visited Chesapeake City as part of segment on national scenic byway – hasn't aired yet
- Upcoming Events:
 - Sept. 4 - Tech & Start Up Mixer, 5:30pm – 7:00pm on Terrace at Chesapeake Inn – Presentation by Matt Lippman from Fluoron followed by networking
 - Sept. 20-21 - National Association of Historic Baseball Clubs Championship tournament is in Rising Sun - GWL is host hotel
 - Sept. 24 - Harvest Dinner, 5:30pm – 8:30pm at The Wellwood
 - Oct. 16-19 - MD 5 Star at Fair Hill
 - Oct. 20-25 - Economic Development Week in MD
 - Oct. 22 – Sec. of Commerce visit - will be tours and a roundtable with business leaders
 - Commerce handling invites
- Ariel resigned; position of Agribusiness Development Coordinator has been posted

A presentation was given on Baltimore Regional Economic Brand by Kelly Tarver, Director, Creative Branding for Greater Baltimore Committee

- Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is regional economic development organization for Baltimore region, including Cecil County
- Collective of 300 organizations representing all sectors across regional economy, including anchor institutions and nonprofits and startups
- GBC has developed all-in 10-yr economic opportunity plan for Baltimore region
- GBC Annual Meeting next Friday in Baltimore – go to website to register: <https://www.gbc.org/events>

Kelly Tarver's presentation is attached

Comment – Dan Schneckenburger

- Had excellent meeting with GBC
- Excellent presentation to give better understanding of where brand is and how Cecil fits in
 - What is Cecil's role to promote region and ourselves, individually and collectively

Updates:

Administration – Dan Schneckenburger

- Received \$100,000 grant from Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC) for workforce development services

Cecil Chamber/GRC – Jack Schammel

- Sept. 4 – Tech Mixer, Chesapeake Inn, 5:30pm

Elkton Alliance – Alicia Calhoun

- Sept. 19-20 – Elkton Fall Fest

CCPS – Dr. Jeff Lawson

- Off to good start on 1st Day of School: 15,000 kids, 2,200 employees, 1 minor bus accident
- No teaching vacancies, fully staffed
- See uptick in certified teachers coming back into system; Universities report undergrad numbers for teachers climbing back up
- Test scores moving but not kind of growth want to see

Cecil College – Kelly McVeigh rep. Dr. Mary Bolt

- Fall Semester off to great start
- Sept. 18 - Cecil College Foundation hosting “Little Black Dress” women-only event @ The Wellwood, 6pm-9pm; theme is “Going Country”; Proceeds go directly to student scholarships

FHNC – Laura Hannan

- Continuing Music in the Meadow series toward end of month; Visit website: Fairhillnature.org
- Final Music in the Park to be presented at MD 5 Star
- Foxtrot 5K, one of largest fundraisers, to be held at MD 5 Star this year.
 - Sign up, get t-shirt, free entrance to MD 5 Star; receive W.L.Gore (title sponsor) swag bag
- Oct. 11 - Night at the Nature Center (big fundraiser) Only selling 100 tickets

Susquehanna Workforce Network – Kim Justus

- Training grants available to businesses for training current employees
- OJT grants available for bringing on new employees

Fairwinds Farm – JoAnn Dawson

- Oct. 3 – North East Chamber event “Hoedown and Hooten Nanny” @ Tailwinds Farm, 6-10pm
 - Line dancing with Braden Krause, hayride, bonfire, barn tour, lasso lessons, photo ops, cash bar
 - Catered by Your Personal Chef
 - Sign up through North East Chamber

Christiana Union Hospital – Joan Pirrung

- Have been officially named permanent campus president for Christiana Union Hospital; taking place of Dr. Arsalan Sheikh

REMINDER: Our next meeting is scheduled to be VIRTUAL on October 1, 2025. Details to follow.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:59am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri Springel
Administrative Budget Assistant