

Worcester County Economic Development Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 18, 2018

The Worcester County Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) met on Wednesday, April 18, 2018 in the East Room at the Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, MD 21811. Staff present: Kathryn Gordon, Deputy Director, Kathy Shubert, Administrative Assistant. EDAB members present: Robert Fisher, John Glorioso, Natoshia Owens, Greg Shockley, Ralph Shockley, William Sparrow, Thomas Terry. Guest: John Bailey, General Manager, Ocean Pines.

Call to order: Bob Fisher

Minutes: Tom Terry motioned to approve the January 31, 2018 minutes. Billy Sparrow seconded the motion.

Deputy Director's Report:

Kathryn Gordon opened the meeting and introduced John Bailey, General Manager of Ocean Pines. Bailey gave an update on Ocean Pines and discussed upcoming events.

1. SBDC Quarterly Workshops – The SBDC (Small Business Development Center) is located at Salisbury University and is an arm of the SBA (Small Business Association). Tim Sherman, SBDC Business Consultant, works out of WCED's office two days per week to assist individuals looking to open a business in Worcester County. Tim assists in developing business plans and financial projections to present to lending agencies, with no cost to the client. Ms. Gordon learned of the SBDC workshops from an economic developer in Orange County, VA, whom she met during a training class. Mr. Sherman and Ms. Gordon kicked off Ready, Set, Go!, the first of a three part workshop on Tuesday, April 17th at the Community Center in Ocean Pines. The workshop highlighted key points needed in a business plan that any lending agency will want to have included. Five people attended and expressed interest in attending future workshops. The next workshop is tentatively scheduled for next month. Ms. Gordon's long term goals for WCED is to stay connected to the different municipalities in Worcester County and to focus on building relationships with new and existing businesses. This workshop is just one step in reaching those goals.
2. Quarterly Industry Specific Networking Events – WCED will be hosting networking events for the different industries in Worcester County, offering a location for professionals to connect and strengthen relationships. Several real estate professionals that attended the 2017 Commercial Real Estate Tour, enjoyed the opportunity to network with fellow colleagues and expressed interest in attending similar events in the future. These networking events can expand a professional's networking base and create an opportunity for growth in Worcester County.
3. Feature Friday – WCED will be implementing weekly social media posts showcasing different businesses located in Worcester County. The feature will include photos of the small business and a brief interview with the business owner highlighting the reason

Worcester County was chosen to establish his or her business. Feature Friday will begin in the southern end of the county and each week a new business from a different municipality will be featured. So far a list of 36 businesses has been created and hopefully will spark new businesses to open.

4. Growth of Farm Breweries – Ms. Gordon mentioned that interest in the Farm Brewery Industry is growing in Worcester County as well as across the state of Maryland. The layout of the business is very similar to the existing Vineyards/Wineries. The zoning district in question is the A-1, Agricultural District. Many counties throughout the state are amending the regulations to include Farm Breweries to attract this business. Chief Administrator Officer, Harold Higgins, requested a meeting with Tourism, Development Review and Permitting, and WCED to discuss an action plan that would entice breweries to establish in Worcester, but still hold the purpose and integrity of the A-1 district. The WCED office performed a preliminary research on the different counties and found similarities on the requirements of Farm Breweries (i.e. minimum acreage, acreage required for ingredients in products made). Ms. Gordon stated she is remaining proactive with this industry as that could be a strategic economic growth for Worcester. Tom Terry said he likes Ms. Gordon’s proactive approach regarding Farm Brewery’s and that we need these types of businesses to happen. Greg Shockley recommended contacting Kevin Atticks, Executive Director for the Maryland Wine Association. Mr. Shockley states Mr. Atticks is very knowledgeable in this subject.
5. Advisory Board Discussion – Ralph Shockley asked where we stand on the Sports Complex. Ms. Gordon said Worcester County is still collecting information from landowners who are interested. Tom Terry asked about the dredging. Ms. Gordon said the Commissioners are continuing to look for funding in order to continue with the study and the long term goal of keeping the inlet dredged. Bob Fisher asked about the budget and where it stands. Ms. Gordon said she presented it to the Commissioners last week. She asked for an increase in advertising in order to get our name out there and to help build relationships, not only in Worcester County but also in the surrounding areas.

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Billy Sparrow and seconded by Greg Shockley.