



March 26, 2021

Via Google Meet, [meet.google.com/kbn-ftfb-mzg](https://meet.google.com/kbn-ftfb-mzg), Phone Numbers: (US)+1 240-428-7959 PIN: 460 466 281#

12:00pm – 2:00pm  
Minutes

**Commissioners in attendance:**

Margaret Wood, D.A.	Vice Chair, WOOD Consulting
Ken Banks	Banks Contracting Company, Inc.
Howard Blackwell Bowen	Ewing Oil Company, Inc.
Susan Chambers	Strouse
Augie Chiasera	M&T Bank
Ed Coleman	Ciox Health
Annemarie Dickerson	Formerly Francis Scott Key Family Resort
Kai Hirabayshi	Amazon
Arnold Jablon	Venable
Manish Kothari	Sheladia Associates, Inc.
Julie Lenzer	UM Ventures
Gwen McCall	F&L Construction and Solid Waste, LLC
Aris Melissaratos	St. John Properties
Mike Miller	OGOS Energy, LLC
Laura Neuman	Entrepreneur
Jeanette Glose Partlow	Maryland Chemical Company, Inc.
Leon Pinkett III	Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO)
Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman	LG-TEK
Gary Rudell	Total Biz Fulfillment
Saif Rehman	NexGen Consulting
Paul Silber, PhD	Blu Venture Investors
Goeff Turner	Choptank Transport, Inc.
Eugene Silverman, PhD	Berkeley Springs Instruments
Robert Wallace	BITHGROUP Technologies

**Ex-Officio Members:**

Secretary Kelly Schulz	Department of Commerce
Robert Brennan	Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO)
Troy LeMaile-Stovall	Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)

**Guests:**

Allison Mayer	Office of the Governor
Meredith Wimbrow	Office of the Governor
Emily Haskel	Maryland Legislative Services

## **Commerce Staff:**

Julie Woepke	MEDC Executive Director
Signe Pringle	Deputy Secretary
Tom Riford	Assistant Secretary
Kyle McColgan	Chief of Staff
Rhonda Ray	Managing Director
Jayson Knott	Senior Director
Heather Gramm	Senior Director
Jessica Reynolds	Senior Director
Nancy McCrea	Research Director
Michael Siers	Economist
Roger Venezia	Director. Operations & Special Projects
Allyson Redpath	Director, Entrepreneurship

### **I. Call to Order**

Vice Chair Dr. Margaret Wood called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm and welcomed attendees and guests. Roll call of the Commissioners was taken.

### **II. Introduction of New Commissioners**

Vice Chair Wood announced that since the last meeting, one (1) Senate Appointee had been named and several Governor Appointees. She welcomed all new Commissioners and introduced each Commissioner who provided a brief background.

### **III. Review and approval of December 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the December 14, 2020 meeting minutes stood approved.

### **IV. Scorecard Review**

Commissioner Ed Coleman, Chair, Rankings and Research Subcommittee, reviewed the updated Scorecard highlighting the areas of job growth; gross domestic product (GDP); business climate rankings; education and innovation; venture funding; workforce and wages; population; and City of Baltimore indicators. Discussion occurred among the Commissioners on the process developed to select the indicators; race and ethnicity of the labor force and unemployed; migration and the results of the Subcommittee's study on migration; and additional measures for Baltimore City.

Subcommittee Chair Coleman welcomed the discussion and encouraged Commissioners to provide feedback. Nancy McCrea, Director of Research was available to answer any questions.

Ms. Allyson Redpath, Director of Entrepreneurship addressed 2020, a record year for venture funding. She stated there was an increase in investments such as crowdfunding and from investors outside the state. Ms. Redpath noted an increase in investments into artificial intelligence and quantum computing industries. She then reviewed findings of a study conducted by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation on entrepreneurship, startups and job creation. Ms. Redpath selected specific state comparisons to discuss. There was discussion among the Commissioners and Ms. Redpath on the types and racial and ethnic background on the businesses reflected the study and whether the State has

data on technology related startups versus the retailers, service providers and other common startups. Ms. Redpath indicated she would work with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) for the data.

Presentation and Scorecard on file.

## **V. Department of Commerce Update**

Secretary Kelly Schulz began her presentation by reporting new internal communication activities enacted to support the team that included a reflection and celebration of the anniversary of teleworking. She then presented the Bi-Partisan Relief Act of 2021 programs to support businesses.

Economist Mike Siers continued the Department's presentation by reviewing an overview of the State's economic recovery. He highlighted unemployment rate, monthly payroll, labor force drops, most impacted industries, and indicators for a stronger economy moving forward. Discussion occurred with the Commissioners related to attraction of seasonal workforce to the Eastern Shore and State support to assist businesses impacted; impact of unemployment benefits to labor force participation; and the shift in industries most impacted by the pandemic.

Senior Director Jayson Knott continued the presentation by providing an update on major opportunities representing at least 50 new jobs since the last meeting. He highlighted five (5) recent wins, pending business attractions, expansion announcements and projects in the current pipeline. He then introduced Roger Venezia, Director of Operations & Special Projects to provide an update on the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Headquarters relocation from the District of Columbia.

Senior Director Jessica Reynolds began her presentation by providing an overview of the Office of International Investment and Trade to orient the new Commissioners. She described the Office's strategic initiatives, and locations throughout the world that provide assistance to Maryland businesses. She concluded by describing upcoming virtual events. Ms. Reynolds answered questions from the Commissioners related to previously participated trade shows and the effectiveness of virtual meetings and trade shows.

Assistant Secretary Tom Riford addressed the Commission and provided an update on the Maryland Marketing Partnership (MMP). The MMP currently has 30 partners ranging from large corporations to entrepreneurs. He described the placement of digital and new print ads to reflect Maryland Innovators; the introduction of ads to niche trade publications; increased ad buy; and a custom supplement on Maryland in partnership with FORBES Magazine. Mr. Riford continued by describing the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry. While the pandemic continues to have negative impacts on tourism, he stated that Deep Creek reported its best year ever as did State and National Parks in the state. He concluded by providing an update on the upcoming tourism advertising campaign.

Commissioners discussed the impact the pandemic has had on the creative economy. Mr. Riford cited the involvement and engagement of the Maryland State Arts Council noting many of the programs including funding.

Senior Director Rhonda Ray then provided a legislative update on the Department's priorities, many focusing on the tax credit programs, alterations to the Arts and Entertainment District and Partnership for Workforce Quality Programs and authorization of distribution of grants in states of emergency. She then described the FY22 budget priorities that keep intact the Department's funding programs.

All presentations on file.

#### **VI. TEDCO – Quarterly Report**

Mr. Troy LeMaile-Stovall, CEO/Executive Director gave a brief update on the Q2 FY21 report of investments noting two (2) were made. Given that the program reopened in November, Mr. Stovall indicated that applications and investment expect to increase. He also provided an update on the Rural Underserved Business Recovery from the Impact of COVID-19 (RUBRIC) Program that attracted 40 applications of which 17 were awarded funds.

#### **VII. Good of the Order**

No additional exchange of information provided.

**VIII. 2021 Meetings:** June 14, September 13, December 6

#### **IX. Adjournment**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.