



August 16, 2022
Visit Baltimore, 400 E. Pratt Street, 10th Floor, Baltimore
12:00pm-2:00pm
Agenda

Commissioners in attendance:

Margaret Wood, D.A. PMP	Co-Chair, WOOD Consulting Services
Ed Coleman	Co-Chair, Ameren
Kenneth Banks	Banks Contracting Company
Susan Chambers	Strouse
August “Augie” Chiasera	M&T Bank
Jeanette Glose Partlow	Maryland Chemical
Kai Hirabayshi	Amazon – Call in
Julie Lenzer	Advanced Regenerative Manufacturing Institute –Call in
Gwen McCall	F&L Construction and Solid Waste, LLC – Call in
Aris Melissaratos	St. John Properties
Laura Neuman	Entrepreneur
Leon Pinkett III	Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO) – Call in
Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman	LG TEK
Gary Ruddell	Total Biz Fulfillment
Eugene Silverman, PhD	Berkeley Springs Instruments

Ex-Officio Members:

Secretary R. Michael Gill	Department of Commerce
Secretary Tiffany Robinson	Department of Labor

Guests:

Mayor Brandon Scott	City of Baltimore
Ted Carter	City of Baltimore
Al Hutchinson	Visit Baltimore
Deborah Ivy	Visit Baltimore
Ari Hamilton-Gery	Visit Baltimore
Anthony Parker	Visit Baltimore
Mia Blom	Visit Baltimore
Craig Vay	Visit Baltimore
Paul Wood	WOOD Consulting Services
Emmalee Strosnider	WOOD Consulting Services
Laura Breidigam	WOOD Consulting Services
Emily Haskel	Maryland Legislative Services – Call in

Commerce Staff:

Julie Woepke	MEDC Executive Director
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Signe Pringle	Deputy Secretary
Tom Riford	Assistant Secretary
Liz Fitzsimmons	Managing Director
Kyle McColgan	Chief of Staff
Jennifer LaHatte	Managing Director
Jayson Knott	Senior Director
Michael Siers	Economist
Margaret Whitescarver	Administrative Assistant

I. Call to Order

Co-Chair, Dr. Margaret Wood, called the meeting to order at 12:01 pm and welcomed Commissioners and guests. She thanked Al Hutchinson, President and CEO, Visit Baltimore and his team for hosting the meeting. Dr. Wood then introduced Mayor Brandon Scott, the 52nd Mayor of the City of Baltimore. Bio on file.

II. Welcome

Mayor Brandon Scott welcomed the Commissioners and stated the City is ready to partner to build out the economy and tourism. He stated the importance of the reinvestment process in the city and commented on the success of the Orioles Baseball Team and referenced other important sporting events that draw tourism dollars. He noted that 25% of the Federal American Recovery and Rescue Act (ARRA) funds were directed to housing and economic development. He stated he is working with stakeholders, partners and communities to reimagine Baltimore and transform the city. Mayor Scott referenced a focus on government modernization, reduction on violent crime, and stressed the need to work together to address crime – City, State and Federal governments to bring any change.

Mayor Scott addressed questions from Commissioners on the progress of the goals he set when he took office and measures to produce better outcomes.

VI. Visit Baltimore Update

Al Hutchinson, President & CEO, presented an update on the state of Baltimore tourism; new brand review, recap of advertising campaigns; the organization and City's commitment to Diversity Equality and Inclusion, (DEI); and destination analysts research. Overall, he stated that domestic travel to Baltimore is up and overnight trip spending is increasing. However, he state that workforce shortage continues to pose challenge for the industry and addressed steps to address the shortage.

Mr. Hutchinson then discussed the Baltimore Convention Center and stressed that two-thirds of the center is owned by the state and one-third by the city. The Center needs investment into modernization of technology and new customer friendly improvements. He added that sport events drive much of the tourism and is a great marketing activity. He then reviewed the new brand for Baltimore which was developed through research and inclusion of broad range of stakeholders. The new brand was intended to be rolled out in 2020, however, the COVID-19 pandemic pushed back the release. The marketing of the city will address all neighborhoods. He continued by describing the research tools, ads, DEI training and student engagement. He concluded by reviewing data analytics and marketing funds.

Mr. Hutchinson answered questions and comments from the Commissioners. In response to the top needs to assist the tourism in the City, he stated 1) resources to amplify Baltimore's tourism story beyond a 300 mile radius; 2) fix the Inner Harbor development; and 3) fix the Convention Center. Comments from Commissioners included the discussion of Lexington Market and the need to clean up the area; connect west side to the downtown; more police presence; break up large groups of youth who are intimidating to visitors;

and more parking is needed at the convention center. To address safety, he stated Federal gun control was needed.

Deputy Mayor of Economic and Community Development Ted Carter informed the Commissioners that a community group is being formed around Lexington Market to address safety concerns, cleanliness and attractiveness to make the market a success.

Presentation on file.

III. Department of Commerce Update

Secretary Mike Gill began the Department's presentation by stating he has asked the team to develop the top 20 priorities for the department to finish the year and administration strong. He added that he is preparing for the transition and is noting a number of new opportunities for the next administration. He then provide an update on a number of new programs and an award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for a Goods Jobs Challenge grant. Labor Secretary Tiffany Robinson who Department led the grant application with 16 partners and the Department of Commerce then reviewed aspects of the grant that will transform wind energy workforce. Secretary Gill added that the industry will create \$10 billion impact over the next 10 years.

Deputy Secretary Signe Pringle continued the presentation by updating on the business and expansion opportunities since the last meeting. She reviewed recent wins; existing pipeline; and opportunities, prospective jobs, and capital expenditure by region.

Managing Director of the Office of Tourism and Film, Ms. Liz Fitzsimmons addressed the Commission and provided an update on recent research to guide marketing and product development efforts. She compared the State's marketing resources to other states which is much lower. Maryland's marketing budget is currently \$16.8 million; West Virginia is \$25 million and New York is \$450 million.

She then described the top five (5) tourism attractions/initiatives than few other states possess and described two (2) film productions occurring in the state.

Ms. Fitzsimmons answered questions from the Commissioners.

Presentation on file.

IV. Review and approval of May 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the May 11, 2022 meeting minutes approved.

V. Rankings & Research Subcommittee

Ms. Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman, Chair, Rankings and Research Subcommittee reported the Subcommittee met last week to review the latest Rankings Report and discuss in particular the latest CNBC Top States for Business rankings. Ms. Rendón-Sherman and Commerce Economist Mike Siers reviewed the Rankings report and the methodology for the CNBC ranking. No discussion occurred regarding the report.

VI. Good of the Order

No additional information was exchanged by the Commissioners.

VII. 2022 Meetings: 11/15/22 – Annapolis

VIII. Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 1:45pm.