



March 20, 2024
Governor’s Reception Room
100 State Circle, Annapolis
3:00 – 4:30pm
Minutes

Commissioners in attendance:

Dana Stebbins, Chair
Paxton Baker
Dr. Nia Banks
Sherri Blount
August “Augie” Chiasera
J. Russell Fugett, PMP
M. Elizabeth Georg
Seth Goldman
Reginald Hilton
Arnold Jablon
Israel “Izzy” Klein
Ginger Noble, MBA
Leon Pinkett, III
Darius Stanton
J. Kevin White
Miguel Wilson
Scott Zakheim

The Cornelius Group, Inc.
PKB Enterprises – Virtual
Beaux Arts Plastic Surgery, Art of Balance Spa
Fitch Even Tabin & Flannery
M&T Bank
Jumla Network – Virtual
Managing Attorney, Deep Creek Title Group
Eat the Change – Virtual
EZRA, Coaching LHH
Attorney
Klein/Johnson Group
Business Operations & Tax Preparation
Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO)
The Stanton Group, Inc. – Virtual
Global Vision 2020, Inc.
Miguel Wilson Collection, Inc.
Landmark Ventures

Ex-Officio Members:

Deputy Secretary Signe Pringle
Secretary Portia Wu
Tom Sadowski
Troy LeMaile-Stovall

Department of Commerce
Department of Labor
Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO)
Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)

Guests:

Michael Lore
Marco Avila, P.E.

Deputy Secretary of State
Chairman of the Board & President, Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Commerce Staff:

Julie Woepke
Heather Gramm
Jen LaHatte
Jerel Registre
Carolyn Hammock
Julie Miller

MEDC Executive Director
Assistant Secretary
Managing Director – Virtual
Chief of Staff
Director of Digital Marketing
Digital Content Manager

I. Call to Order

Chair Dana Stebbins called the meeting to order at 3:27pm due to a traffic accident on Route 50 which closed all travel lanes.

II. Review and approval of November 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of November 14, 2023 were approved.

III. Chair's Report

Chair Stebbins began her comments by recognizing the work and contributions of the women serving on the Commission in honor of the National Women History Month. She invited Commissioners to state their names and titles to acknowledge their contributions. She also recognized the women of Commerce in attendance.

Chair Stebbins then updated the Commission on the Maryland Economic Council (MEC) who has been meeting monthly since December. She stated the Council was created by Executive Order to advise the Governor on macroeconomic factors impacting the State's economy as opposed to the MEDC which is statutorily established and reports to the Legislature. The MEC has forwarded two (2) recommendations to the Governor – one relates to establishing the Office of Business Advancement to provide a concierge service for businesses and the other related to regulatory reform. The MEC has also provided letters of support related to legislation.

Next, Chair Stebbins discussed the Strategic Planning Process of which the Commission is statutorily required to develop. She stated the Department has contracted with a consultant to work with the Commission, Department and stakeholders to develop a plan that will set the course for the Department in future years. To stay connected with the consultant, she announced the formation of an informal subcommittee of Commissioners and announced the members: Izzy Klein, Christy Wyskiel, Russell Fugett, Sherri Blount and Paxton Baker.

Chair Stebbins added that if there are Commissioners that would like to express opinions related to the plan, she invited them to forward comments to Jerel Registre or Julie Woepke to share with the informal subcommittee.

IV. Strategic Plan

Chair Stebbins then introduced Jerel Register, Chief of Staff, Department of Commerce who is serving as project manager. Mr. Registre stated a consultant had been selected and the first meeting to begin the in depth review of existing plans will be the first week of April. He stated there will be coordination among the various entities undertaking plans in specific industry sectors, i.e. the Maryland State Arts Council, the Maryland Economic Council, the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council, and others. He provided a timeline of the Strategic Planning process.

Mr. Registre answered questions from the Commissioners.

V. Commerce Update

Chair Stebbins then introduced Deputy Secretary Signe Pringle to provide the Commerce update. Ms. Pringle reported that the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council, led by Meryam Bouadjemi, has been meeting since February and is working on several short term initiatives to engage and bring attention to the media and entertainment industry in addition to preparing to undertake a study of the industry and recommendations to advance and promote the great assets and opportunities in Maryland. The Study will be in coordination with the Strategic Planning process.

She stated the short term Entertainment Industry Council initiatives include:

- a. Outreach to business, organizations and agencies as sponsors for the Governor's Signature Service Year Program.
- b. Partnering with the Maryland Film Festival and its 25th Anniversary to elevate the importance of the film industry by hosting a Governor's VIP reception prior to opening night.
- c. Engagement with the Governor's Innovation and Civic and Impact Council to seek philanthropic support for initiatives.
- d. Coordinating with the Maryland State Arts Council.
- e. Engagement with Universities and advancement of programs.

Ms. Pringle then introduced Ms. Jen LaHatte, Managing Director, Office of Policy, Research & Government Affairs to provide an overview the pending Departmental Bills. Presentation on file.

Ms. LaHatte answered questions from the Commissioners.

Deputy Secretary Pringle then introduced Ms. Carolyn Hammock, Director of Digital Marketing and Ms. Julie Miller, Digital Content Manager to review the recently launched marketing initiative for business and workforce development. They reviewed the marketing objectives, target audiences and markets, paid media mix, campaign performance, print ad creative, digital ads to include video and website. Presentation on file.

Ms. Hammock and Ms. Miller answered questions from the Commissioners who overall commended the team for the work and great video and website.

VI. Good of the Order

Secretary Wu brought to the attention of the Commissioners pending legislation HB 1128, Talent Innovation Program and Fund in support of their efforts and indicated information would be forwarded to the Commissioners.

V. Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 4:43pm.

Members available were then invited to an informal no host networking at Harry Browne's Restaurant.