



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**Respectfully submitted by**

Meryam Bouadjemi, Chair

Secretary Harry Coker, Jr., Department of Commerce

401 East Pratt Street

Baltimore, MD 21202

January 2026

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## **Mission**

The mission of the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council (MEIC), established by Chapter 434, Acts of 2023, is the following:

- 1) Assess Maryland's existing assets, opportunities, and competitive position within the film, television, and entertainment industry.
- 2) Study Maryland's State, local, and private assets that currently support Maryland's film, television, and entertainment industry, including key infrastructure, existing workforce, workforce pipelines, scenic profile, emerging specialties, and independent creative communities; (ii) existing State programs, agencies, offices, grant programs, and commissions across State agencies that support the film, television, and entertainment industry; (iii) models, competitive profiles, methods, and legislation that states have utilized to incentivize necessary infrastructure and workforce to support the film, television, and entertainment industry; (iv) industry needs, disruptive trends, and emerging technologies within the film, television, and entertainment industry; and (v) complementary industries, aligned businesses, and potential corporate, philanthropic, and other partners for the film, television, and entertainment industry.
- 3) Make recommendations on the development of a coordinated, comprehensive strategic plan to position Maryland as an emerging leader in the film, television, and entertainment industry.

In further support of the industry and to broaden the Council's impact, the Maryland General Assembly passed House Bill 1487 in 2024, which was signed by Governor Moore and renamed the Council to the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council. The Council's capabilities were also expanded, terms were staggered, the sunset provision was removed, and the submission of an annual report was mandated.

## **Membership**

The enactment of House Bill 1487 of 2024 altered the Council's membership by adding 12 individuals who have general experience in the film, television, or entertainment industries, the Secretaries of Commerce, Labor, and Housing and Community Development, and a representative of the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates respectively. As of July 2024:

- A) The Council may consist of:
- 1) One member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
  - 2) One member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
  - 3) The Governor's appointed Senior Advisor on Film, Television, and Entertainment
  - 4) The Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary's Designee;
  - 5) The Secretary of Labor or the Secretary's Designee;
  - 6) The Secretary of Housing and Community Development or the Secretary's Designee;
  - 7) The following 19 members appointed by the Governor, in consultation with the Secretary:

- I) One expert in the business of the film, television, and entertainment industry, such as an executive, producer, studio representative, or an individual holding a leadership role within the industry;
  - II) One expert in workforce development or higher education related to the film, television, and entertainment industry;
  - III) One expert in emerging technologies or specialties of the film, television, and entertainment industry, such as an expert in gaming, artificial intelligence, visual effects, animation, post-production, or another related specialty;
  - IV) One expert in legal or policy fields specific to the film, television, and entertainment industry;
  - V) One representative of the independent film and television community;
  - VI) One representative of nongovernmental entities or philanthropic institutions that support film, television, or entertainment directly or creative economies more broadly;
  - VII) One representative of organized labor in the entertainment industry;
  - VIII) 12 individuals who have general experience in the film, television or entertainment industries;
- B) The Governor may appoint up to three additional individuals as honorary cochair of the Council who are:
- I) Individuals with extraordinary cultural capital and commanding significant influence within the film, television, and entertainment industry;
  - II) Business leaders commanding a significant stake within the film, television, and entertainment industry; or
  - III) Individuals who have defined the current cultural brand of the film, television, and entertainment industry within the State.

Meryam Bouadjemi is an Academy Award–shortlisted producer, writer, creator, and industry consultant specializing in artist development, middle-market entertainment economies, and the intersection of technology and media.

She serves as Senior Advisor to Governor Wes Moore and Chair of the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council, supporting the State’s strategy to expand the economic impact of the Media and Entertainment (M&E) sector and position Maryland as a leader in the evolving content economy. She is also the founder of New Market Discovery Foundation, a development fund and policy accelerator focused on building scalable media economies beyond traditional coastal hubs.

Ms. Bouadjemi is a sought-after leader in artist development. She serves as Senior Advisor to the Pillars Artist Fellowship, developed in partnership with Academy Award–winner Riz Ahmed and supported by Netflix and Amazon, and has previously served as Senior Advisor to the Sundance Institute’s Episodic Lab, the industry’s premier laboratory for independent television voices. She also served on the USC School of Cinematic Arts’ Peter Stark Producing Program Alumni Council, helping lead the search and selection of the program’s new Chair alongside senior industry leaders like John Wells, Stacey Sher and David Kramer.

As a producer, Bouadjemi's film Charm City premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and was shortlisted for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Meryam is a proud graduate of the University of Maryland, College Park, and the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

In January of 2025 Governor Wes Moore appointed The Honorable Harry Coker, Jr. as Secretary of the Department of Commerce (Commerce). Secretary Coker is a retired Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) senior executive, former National Security Agency (NSA) senior executive and career Naval Officer. He was previously America's National Cyber Director, serving in the White House from 2023 - 2025. At Commerce, the State's primary economic development agency, Secretary Coker is focused on working collaboratively to help Maryland "Win the Decade" by developing and sustaining an equitable, robust and competitive economy.

## **2025 Meetings**

The Council convened for three official meetings during the 2025 calendar year, supplemented by interim working group sessions and roundtables, thereby demonstrating a consistent commitment to its mandate. This operational cadence ensured regular oversight, timely discussion of key initiatives, and critical decision-making throughout the annual cycle. The initial official meeting was held virtually, while subsequent sessions took place in person at the World Trade Center in Baltimore, with a virtual attendance option for all members. These meetings were strategically spaced across the year, occurring in March, July, and October.

Building on the foundation established in 2024, the Council continued to advance its initiatives in 2025 by leveraging its three established working groups and guiding pillars: Arts, Culture and Major Events; Physical Productions; and the Intersection of Technology and Entertainment.

The workgroups were a result of assessing the State's existing assets, opportunities, and competitive position within the industry by studying:

- 1) Maryland's State, local, and private assets that currently support the State's film, television and entertainment industry (including key infrastructure, existing workforce, workforce pipelines, scenic profile, emerging specialties, and independent creative communities).
- 2) Existing State programs, agencies, offices, grant programs, and commissions across State agencies that support the film, television, and entertainment industry.
- 3) Models, competitive profiles, methods and legislation that states have utilized to incentivize necessary infrastructure and workforce to support the film, television and entertainment industry.
- 4) Industry needs, disruptive trends, and emerging technologies within the film, television and entertainment industry.
- 5) Complementary industries, aligned businesses and potential corporate, philanthropic and other partners for the film, television and entertainment industry.
- 6) Maryland's existing assets, opportunities, and competitive position within the film, television and entertainment industry.

This year, the MEIC prioritized stakeholder engagement, beginning with the Physical Production workgroup. The Council conducted listening sessions and administered a survey to gather valuable insights, feedback, and perspectives. This outreach proved highly productive, enabling

the creation of a SWOT analysis and a focused discussion with stakeholders in the physical production space across the State. This collaboration allowed the working group to receive specific, actionable data to advance its mandate within the Council's framework. Additionally, the Council held roundtable discussions with the Prince George's County film community in partnership with the Department of Labor with the aim to further engage the local creative economy and bolster film production in Maryland.

The Council also extended beyond its formal meetings with two key immersive experiences. In November, the Council toured College Park, MD's Discovery District, which effectively demonstrated how integrating technology, art, and entertainment can drive Maryland's economic development. Some members of the Council also visited the Station North Arts & Entertainment District, Baltimore's first arts district. This visit highlighted Station North's status as the city's creative core, showcasing the talent, network, and ambition necessary for the city and State to compete as a competitive force in the national and international creative economy.

In July 2025, Commerce received a comprehensive set of recommendations from the Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), Local 487. These recommendations were designed to:

- Enhance Maryland's appeal for film and television production.
- Improve working conditions for industry professionals.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of the local entertainment economy.

Commerce and the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council (MEIC) have prioritized the review and implementation of these recommendations since receiving the input. This proactive and collaborative approach underscores the commitment to fostering a vibrant and supportive environment for the creative industries and maintaining a strong partnership with key industry stakeholders like SAG-AFTRA and IATSE, Local 487.

Substantial and measurable progress has already been achieved across multiple areas identified by SAG-AFTRA and IATSE, Local 487:

| <b>SAG-AFTRA and IATSE, Local 487<br/>Recommendation</b>   | <b>December 2025 Progress Update</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Fill vacancies within the Maryland Film Office.</b>   | The drafting of the position description and the subsequent recruitment for the Film Office Director role have yielded a robust pool of applicants. A thorough review of these applications is presently underway.  |
| <b>Update and modernize the Maryland Film Office website and develop promotional materials to attract productions to Maryland.</b> | The Maryland Film Office's website is now live following a complete redesign. The Maryland Film Office, previously hosted at MarylandFilm.org, has been integrated into the main business attraction website ( <a href="https://business.maryland.gov">business.maryland.gov</a> ). This strategic move |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>retires the standalone film site and instead features film as a key industry within Maryland's broader economic development platform. The new page is designed to serve dual purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Business Attraction: Highlight why film and media companies should invest and grow in Maryland - alongside other priority sectors such as Life Sciences and Cybersecurity.</li> <li>● Industry Resource Hub: Continue to provide key information for filmmakers and production crews (permitting, locations, incentives, etc.).</li> </ul> |
| <b>Compile a list of State-owned resources.</b>                            | The FY26 Commerce Implementation Plan includes the task of identifying State-owned properties suitable for filming.   |
| <b>Proactively market Maryland at events and in industry publications.</b> | The position description for the new Maryland Film Office Director now includes proactive marketing of Maryland at industry events and in publications.   |

Council members consistently provided valuable industry intelligence which helped guide the Council's focus and direction throughout the year. Key discussion points included strategies for enhancing the State's competitiveness, developing and supporting the industry workforce, establishing an innovation hub potentially modeled after an AI lab, leveraging the resources of the Maryland State Arts Council, integrating the film industry and Lighthouse Sectors, and identifying potential areas for hyper-specialization to attract new business to the State.

Looking ahead, the Council's primary objective for 2026 is to finalize its strategic agenda and ensure the complete operationalization of its three working groups to enhance Maryland's competitive position within the global M&E sector.

Details of each meeting can be found in Appendices B, C, and D.

### **2026 Meetings**

The 2026 meetings will take place on a quarterly schedule with the first meeting scheduled for January 15, 2026, from 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM. Additional dates and times will be posted to the Council's webpage.

### **Closing Statement**

The Maryland Entertainment Industry Council was founded with a simple mission: to expand the economic impact of Maryland’s Media and Entertainment sector. That means attracting more investment, creating more jobs, fostering innovation, and opening more opportunities within the creative economy for Marylanders.

From the outset, we anticipated significant disruption ahead. In response, the administration adopted a diversified approach—assembling an interdisciplinary group of experts across film, television, independent media arts, and technology. This Council was charged with mapping Maryland’s assets, listening closely to stakeholders, and helping shape a strategic direction that could remain resilient through uncertainty.

That foresight has proven prescient. The future has arrived faster—and with greater force—than many of us could have predicted. Artificial intelligence has altered production and labor dynamics. Historic labor strikes put pressure on workers and reshaped the industry landscape. Market corrections, consolidation, and widespread layoffs have reverberated throughout the sector—all while the State of Maryland has confronted its own historic structural challenges.

And yet, in this Chair’s view, this past year marked our most impactful year to date. In 2025, Maryland welcomed a new Secretary of Commerce: the Honorable Harry Coker, Jr. The Secretary’s administration has brought renewed strategic focus and operational capacity to the work of the Maryland Entertainment Industry Council. With the addition of Chief Strategy Officer Judy L. Smith and Director of Strategic Engagement Afiya Bey, in particular, the Council has been able to translate stakeholder input into action, while laying the groundwork for longer-term, strategic investments. The activities throughout this report reflect that intention and momentum.

As we look ahead to 2026, it is clear that the media and entertainment industry will continue to face volatility. The task before us is not to resist that reality, but to meet it with clarity, coordination, and intention. This work is necessarily collaborative and long-term—and progress measured not only by individual initiatives, but by the systems we build, the trust we earn, and the capacity we leave in place.

I am proud of the Council’s work to date and confident in its role to support The Maryland Film Office, strengthen existing infrastructure and inform bold, strategic action that reflects both present realities and future opportunity.

Sincerely,  
Meryam Bouadjemi  
Chair, Maryland Entertainment Industry Council

## **APPENDIX A**

### **MEIC MEMBERS**

#### **Maryland Entertainment Industry Council:**



|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| Meryam Bouadjemi, Chair | Senior Advisor on Film, Television, and Entertainment, Office of the Governor  |
| Jimmie Briggs           | Principal, Skoll Foundation  |
| Jane Brown              | President and Board President, Robert W. Deutsch Foundation  |
| Harry Coker, Jr.        | Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce   |
| Jake Day                | Secretary, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)   |
| Andy Forssell           | Former Head, HBO Max, Former CEO, Hulu   |
| Renard Jenkins          | President of the Hollywood Professional Association, Past President of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers (SMPTE) |
| David O’Ferrall         | Business Agent, Mid-Atlantic Studio Mechanics & Broadcast Technicians, Local 487, IASTE                                |
| Sumi Parekh             | Executive Director, Group Effort Initiative  |
| Judee Ann Williams      | Global Head of Impact, Creative Arts Agency (CAA) Sports   |
| Portia Wu               | Secretary, Maryland Department of Labor  |

**Commerce Staff Support:**

|               |                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Afiya Bey     | Director of Strategic Engagement |
| Judy L. Smith | Chief Strategy Officer           |

**Appendix B**



March 7, 2025  
Virtual  
1:00pm – 3:00pm  
**Minutes**

**Members in Attendance:**

Meryam Bouadjemi, Chair  
Jane Brown  
Harry Coker, Secretary  
Andy Forssell  
Renard Jenkins  
David O’Ferrall  
Sumi Parekh

Office of the Governor  
Robert W. Deutsch Foundation  
Department of Commerce  
Formerly HBO Max, Hulu  
Formerly Warner Bros. Discovery  
IASTE Local 487  
Group Effort Initiative

**Guests:**

Catherine Batavick  
Steven Skerritt-Davis  
Cori Duggins  
Walter Donoghue  
Brad Fallon  
Christy Wyskiel  
Jerel Registre  
Manny Welsh

Department of Commerce  
Department of Commerce  
Department of Commerce  
Governor’s Office  
Governor’s Office  
Johns Hopkins University  
Department of Commerce  
Governor’s Office

1) **Meeting called to Order**

Chair Meryam Bouadjemi called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

2) **Meeting Minutes - October 4, 2024**

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, the amended minutes of October 4, 2024, were approved.

### 3) **Briefing from the Governor's Office**

Chair Bouadjemi invited Manny Welsh and Brad Fallon from the Governor's Office to provide updates on the state of Maryland's economy. Mr. Welsh began by thanking the Council members for their dedication to Maryland's entertainment industry and their service to the State. He emphasized that strengthening Maryland's presence in the entertainment sector is essential for maintaining the State's competitiveness and diversifying its economy.

Mr. Welsh pointed out that 5% of Maryland's workforce is tied to the federal government, making the State particularly vulnerable to policy changes in Washington. He assured the Council that the Governor and the Department of Labor are working diligently to support and advocate for laid-off federal workers. He also noted that the administration faces significant fiscal challenges, including a \$3 billion budget deficit and a \$200 million reduction in revenue projections for FY 2025.

Mr. Fallon added that the administration is pursuing a comprehensive approach to economic development, recognizing the interconnection of various issues. He highlighted that 66% of those migrating out of Maryland fall within the 17–34 age group. Factors such as housing, quality of life, and employment opportunities contribute to this trend. As the administration works to broaden its revenue base, addressing this out-migration is a key priority.

Additionally, Mr. Fallon discussed the DECADE Act, which revises the designation, administration, and objectives of certain economic development programs to increase the State's return on investment. Regarding the MEIC, the relevant provisions include lifting the cap on tax credits and maintaining \$20 million in funding for film production incentives over the coming years. Additionally, the Procurement Reform Act is expected to expand opportunities for smaller businesses and several bills focused on apprenticeships are also being introduced during this legislative session.

### 4) **Johns Hopkins University Data Science and AI Institute**

Chair Bouadjemi welcomed Christy Wyskiel to speak about the Johns Hopkins University Data Science and AI Institute. She shared that Hopkins has both received and contributed more investment in AI than Stanford, Harvard, and MIT combined. While the university's primary focus is on medical advancements, many innovations and proposals have emerged from faculty and students in the broader technology space—often with AI serving as the intersection between technology and health. The institute's goal is to commercialize these breakthroughs so that Maryland can be a leader in AI and maintain its status within the life sciences industry.

Councilor Renard Jenkins noted that copyright issues will pose a major challenge in the coming months and years; and suggested that the institute considers how these concerns might impact startups in the AI health industry.

5) **MSAC Updates**

Director Skerritt-Davis explained that Maryland could face up to \$1 million in funding cuts from the National Endowment for the Arts due to recent federal policy changes. He emphasized that, despite these shifts, the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) will remain committed to supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. He then presented a PowerPoint of the economic impact from MSAC.

Presentation on file.

6) **Good of the Order**

Chair Bouadjemi invited Councilman David O’Ferrall to address the group. Councilman O’Ferrall discussed the current film office vacancy and described skills that he thought should be considered for that position.

7) **Adjournment**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 pm.

**Appendix C**

July 11, 2025  
401 E. Pratt Street, 17th Floor Conference Room, Baltimore Maryland 21202  
1:00pm – 3:00pm

**Minutes**

**Members in Attendance:**

Meryam Bouadjemi, Chair  
Jane Brown  
Jimmie Briggs  
Harry Coker, Secretary  
Renard Jenkins  
David O’Ferrall

Office of the Governor  
Robert W. Deutsch Foundation  
Skoll Foundation  
Department of Commerce  
Formerly Warner Bros. Discovery  
IASTE Local 487

**Commerce:**

Catherine Batavick  
Cori Duggins  
Jerel Registre  
Marci Ross  
Steven Skerritt-Davis  
Judy L. Smith

**Guests:**

Len Applefeld  
Beth Bell  
Maeion Bryant  
Kevin Crawley  
Michael Davis  
Ronald Dixon  
Caprina Erinn  
Sarah Fales  
Jack Gerbes  
Ryan Hastings  
Lauran Howard  
Cameron Lawson  
Elena Moscatt  
Tori Pans  
Steve Saadee  
Michaela Sulka  
Amanda Wayman  
Roger Wood  
Christy Wyskiel

**1) Meeting called to Order**

Chair Meryam Bouadjemi called the meeting to order at 1:31PM.

**2) Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2025**

The March 7, 2025 meeting minutes will be updated to reflect comments made during the “Good of the Order” portion of the meeting.

### 3) **Chair’s Report**

Chair Bouadjemi welcomed everyone, especially our visitors, which included IATSE Local 487 and SAG-AFTRA. She thanked Commerce for the work that is being done and stated that we have more to do to market the industry inside and outside of Maryland. She also introduced the concept of Listening Sessions with the goal of gathering diverse opinions, gaining a deeper understanding of perspectives, and identifying areas for improvement. The inaugural listening session will be “Physical Production”.

### 4) **Commerce Update**

Secretary Coker began by saying that the State is functioning in an economically challenging environment. In general, there are fewer resources to address priorities and there is currently a hiring freeze within the State of Maryland. Secretary Coker asked for suggestions on how Commerce can be supportive of the industry and ended with the four priorities of Commerce in support of this industry:

- I.** Fill Vacancies
- II.** Update and Modernize the Film Website
- III.** Compile a List of State-Owned Resources
- IV.** Proactively Market Maryland

### 5) **Maryland Arts Council (MSAC) Update**

Director Skerritt-Davis summarized the Maryland State Arts Council's (MSAC) activities, highlighting its role in supporting the state's arts community. These activities include providing grants to arts non-profits and artists, along with offering technical assistance and professional development opportunities.

MSAC is currently concluding Fiscal Year 2025, processing final grant payments totaling approximately \$32 million. Looking ahead to Fiscal Year 2026, the Council is preparing to open new grant programs and award general operating grants. With the inclusion of federal funds, the total budget for the fiscal year will remain flat, allowing for the allocation of around \$32 million in general operating support, project, and capital grants. MSAC also aims to expand its professional development offerings in FY26.

A new initiative in FY26, supported by federal funding for Arts & Health activities, involves a pilot arts prescribing program in Maryland. The Chair asked a follow-up question about arts prescribing, and Director Skerritt-Davis explained generally that a contractor will work with insurance companies, health providers, and arts providers to set up a system where arts experiences can be prescribed to individuals with conditions such as mental health.

### 6) **Good of the Order**

David O'Ferrall discussed fundamental challenges hindering attraction and support for productions in Maryland's film industry. A key focus involved identifying and addressing the root causes behind this inability, while simultaneously strategizing the most effective ways to market Maryland, leveraging its brand, showcasing its talent and diverse spaces, and maximizing marketing dollars.

**7) Adjournment**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

**Appendix D**



October 24, 2025  
401 E. Pratt Street, 17th Floor Conference Room, Baltimore Maryland 21202  
1:30pm – 3:30pm  
**Minutes**

**Members in Attendance:**

|                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Meryam Bouadjemi, Chair             | Office of the Governor  |
| Harry Coker Jr., Secretary          | Department of Commerce  |
| Andy Forssell                       | Business Executive      |
| David O’Ferrall                     | IASTE Local 487         |
| Sumi Parekh                         | Group Effort Initiative |
| Portia Wu (Ashley Sharp), Secretary | Department of Labor     |

**Commerce Staff in Attendance:**

Catherine Batavick  
Afiya Bey  
Mark Corbin  
Jerel Registre  
Steven Skerritt-Davis  
Judy L. Smith

**Guests in Attendance:**

Sarah Fales  
Alissa Ferguson  
Linzy Jackson  
Marva Williams  
Roger Wood

**I. Meeting called to Order**

Chair Meryam Bouadjemi called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.



## II. Chair's Report

Chair Bouadjemi highlighted recent significant progress, particularly in the physical production space, crediting the team's efforts. A Listening Session Roundtable for Physical Production was held last quarter, gaining positive feedback and actionable suggestions for future support by deepening understanding of perspectives and identifying areas for improvement. Overall, Physical Production initiatives are advancing satisfactorily.

Other key achievements since the last meeting include the successful posting of the Film Office Director position to support the statewide film industry and a substantial improvement to the Film Office website, featuring an entirely new layout and design, which will be previewed later in the agenda. Additionally, a new production in Maryland was confirmed this week.

Inspiring site visits were conducted at Station North where potential intersections of technology and entertainment were explored. A further highlight was the University of Maryland Discovery District, which adeptly illustrates the connection between the tech industry and the arts. A tour of the Discovery District is currently being arranged for the Council.

## III. Secretary's Report

Secretary Coker updated the Council on the status of recommendations the Department of Commerce received from SAG-AFTRA and IATSE, Local 487 in July 2025.

- 1) Fill vacancies within the Maryland Film Office
  - a. **Update:** The Commerce Film Office Director position has been posted, and the link was shared with MEIC members.
- 2) Update and modernize the Maryland Film Office website and develop promotional materials to attract productions to Maryland.
  - a. **Update:** Great progress has been made with the website and Ms. Catherine Batavick will provide a comprehensive update on that project with a preview of the site later in the agenda.
- 3) Compile a List of State-Owned Resources
  - a. **Update:** Identification of the State-owned properties available for filming will be included as a task within the FY 2026 Implementation plan. Updates will be provided as this initiative evolves.
- 4) Proactively market Maryland at events and in industry and publications.
  - a. **Update:** Proactively marketing of Maryland at events and in industry publications is included in the position description for the film director position. Updates will be provided once the film director position is filled.

## IV. Film Website Update

Ms. Catherine Batavick provided an update on the status of the Maryland Film Office website redesign. The new design and layout will be live in November and fully integrated into the industry page. The plan is to leverage Google Analytics to gain insights into usage and identify areas for improvement. The long-term vision involves ongoing enhancements, including curating collections on topics such as the waterfront and filming locations, and integrating tax credits. The

hope is to also incorporate video content and establish a hotline for local productions to share information.

Council members provided positive feedback to Ms. Batavick and the marketing team for their excellent work on revamping the website. They commended the new site as intuitive, dynamic, impressive, and significantly more user-friendly.

**Action:** Commerce will share the link to the draft site with the Council.

## **V. Discussion - Integrating the Film Industry and Lighthouse Sectors**

Ms. Judy L. Smith initiated a discussion on integrating the film and lighthouse sectors, presenting two concepts from Mr. Mark Corbin:

- **Establish Maryland Film-Tech Innovation Center:** A flagship facility in the Discovery District or Station North, merging film production, AI research, and quantum computing. This center would showcase the State's capabilities.
- **Launch Collaborative Pilot Programs:** Partner MEIC with Johns Hopkins MICA and/or Morgan State to develop AI-powered film production tools and virtual sets for educational and commercial use.

The Council found both ideas promising, with the tech innovation center being particularly relevant to Prince George's County stakeholders. Ms. Ashley Sharp suggested a tour of Bowie State University to involve higher education institutions. The discussion also highlighted the potential to attract major tech companies. Chair Bouadjemi raised questions about ethical implications, their potential impact on legal specialties in the workforce, and higher education. It was noted that Morgan State has indicated an interest in developing a focus area on the ethics of AI and additionally that intellectual property in the age of AI will become a significant area for legal professionals.

**Action:** Chair Bouadjemi committed to investigating the University of Southern California's efforts in piloting use cases to understand how they are leveraging spaces for consumers and creators.

**Action:** Following the discussion, Ms. Smith stated she would compile feedback, develop a detailed plan to refine the ideas, and outline steps for assessing their feasibility. She will also organize a meeting with Chair Bouadjemi, Ashley Sharp, and David O'Ferrall to discuss evolving legal specialties at the Entrepreneurship Innovation Center.

## **VI. Maryland Arts Council (MSAC) Update**

Steven Skerritt-Davis, Executive Director of the Maryland Arts Council (MSAC), shared updates on MSAC's 2025 activities and presented the organization's annual report. The report underscored a significant demand for arts investment, with \$14.5 million in funding requests received from every county in Maryland, excluding Carroll County.

He also highlighted the provision of free professional development to creatives both within and outside the State. These virtual programs have attracted participants from as far as Singapore. MSAC is working to develop a toolkit and offer training for arts providers, along with care navigators to connect them with art offerings throughout Maryland.

These activities position Maryland well to expand its arts initiatives, improve accessibility for all Marylanders, and enhance its competitive standing.

## **VII. Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2025**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of March 7, 2025 and July 11, 2025 were approved.

## **VIII. Good of the Order**

- Council member David O'Ferrall announced that the new production, "They Fight," began filming on Wednesday. The shoot is scheduled for 19 days.
- Chair Bouadjemi highlighted the significant success of the independent film "Baltimorons."
- Council member O'Ferrall inquired about the State incentive funds. Commerce staff confirmed their availability.
- Secretary Coker requested that the Council discuss internships at entities that may require interns at a future meeting.
- Secretary Coker asked Ms. Batavick to follow up with him to:
  - **Action:** Share how the Nonprofit Navigator can support the local arts community and film industry with resources.
  - **Action:** Provide details about a potential independent film from Los Angeles that could be filmed at Towson University, to help facilitate the connection.

## **IX. Summary of Key Decisions and Actions**

Ms. Judy L. Smith summarized a series of action items that resulted from the meeting.

### Action items for follow-up:

- Commerce will send the draft Maryland Film Office website link and resend the Film Office Director role's application link to Council members.
- Chair Bouadjemi will research the University of Southern California's experience in piloting use cases to understand how they are leveraging spaces for consumers and creators.

- Catherine Batavick will follow up to inform Secretary Coker about how the Nonprofit Navigator can assist the local arts community and film industry and provide details about a potential independent film from Los Angeles that could be filmed at Towson University, so he could help facilitate the connection.

Action Items for Judy L. Smith:

- Develop a follow-up plan to engage the Council with the two potential concepts presented by Mark Corbin regarding integrating the film industry and lighthouse sectors to determine their feasibility and if the Council should pursue them.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting with Chair Bouadjemi, the Department of Labor, and David O'Ferrall to discuss evolving legal specialties at the Entrepreneurship Innovation Center.

Action Items for Meeting Participants:

- Council members were asked by Secretary Coker to consider and prepare internship opportunities for discussion at future meetings, specifically identifying entities that may require interns.

## **X. Adjournment**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.