



Thursday, May 29, 2025
12:00-1:30 PM
Hybrid Meeting - Virtual & In-person
Maryland Department of Commerce
401 E Pratt Street, 17th floor
Baltimore, MD 21202

DRAFT - Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Mina Izadjoo, Ph.D., Integrated PharmaServices
April Richardson, Food Opportunity
N. Scott Phillips, Scott Phillips Consulting
Luke Chow, Prime Manufacturing Technologies, Inc
Susan Chambers, the Strouse Corporation

Commerce Staff & Invited Speakers:

Benjamin McGlaughlin, Manufacturing Program Manager OSIE

I. Call to Order & Chairman Remarks

At 12:05 pm Benjamin McGlaughlin (temporary chair) called the meeting to order. The start of the meeting to order.

II. Review and Acceptance of the April 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Board members were provided the draft minutes from the April 24, 2025 meeting both via email before-hand and hard copy at the meeting. Ben asked the Board to review the minutes, then requested a motion to approve. A motion was made to approve by Susan Chambers, this motion was 2nd-ed by April Richardson, with no discussion the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Department of Commerce Manufacturing Program Updates

Benjamin McGlaughlin provided updates from the Department of Commerce on current manufacturing initiatives, grant programs, and future strategic opportunities aligned with Maryland's Five Pillars Manufacturing Strategy: Workforce Development, Technology Adoption, Supply Chain Resiliency, Quality & Lean Systems, and Energy Efficiency & Sustainability.

The Office provided an update on its current priorities, including the identification of a

new Board Chair and additional members to the MMAB. A major area of focus continues to be developing a deeper understanding of statewide manufacturer needs. This includes launching a cross-industry manufacturing survey and conducting stakeholder empathy interviews throughout Q2–Q3 of 2025. These efforts will directly inform how Commerce and partner agencies align resources across the five strategic pillars. The Office also reaffirmed its commitment to expanding technology adoption, pursuing additional Manufacturing 4.0 funding, leveraging federal DOE MESC resources for assessment tools, deploying micro-equipment and project assistance grants, and supporting companies through new federal programs such as the SBA 7(a) Working Capital Pilot Program. Additionally, the Office addressed the impacts of the withdrawal of federal MEP funding and emphasized that a forward-looking strategy is being developed to mitigate any negative impacts to Maryland manufacturers.

A detailed update was provided on the Manufacturing 4.0 (M4.0) Grant Program. All M425 awards are fully under contract and currently being funded. Planning is underway for the upcoming M426 program, expected to open around August 1, 2025, with outreach webinars beginning in mid-July. While the M425 program was funded at \$5 million, the M426 budget request of \$6 million was approved at \$2 million by the legislature, indicating continued demand that exceeds available funding.

Program performance metrics from M425 demonstrate significant demand and impact. Of 124 applications, 43 projects (35%) were funded, representing \$5 million awarded out of \$20.75 million requested (24% of total demand). The awarded funds leveraged over \$11.7 million in total project investment, yielding a 2.3x leverage factor. Small manufacturers accounted for 65% of all awardees and received 71% of total funding. Current employment among awarded firms includes 699 FTEs at small companies and 1,790 FTEs at mid-sized companies. Additionally, 26% of funded companies identified as minority- and/or women-owned, though self-reporting is voluntary and actual representation may be higher.

The Board also received a briefing on the AI for Smart Manufacturing Productivity Forum, held on May 13, 2025, at the University of Maryland's A. James Clark School of Engineering. The event drew 124 registered participants, including legislators, with 100 attendees in person. Several actionable learnings emerged from the forum, and Commerce will share follow-up insights and next steps to inform future AI deployment strategies for Maryland manufacturers.

An update was provided on the Maryland MADE Program (Manufacturing Assets Deployment for Energy Efficiency), supported by a \$1.01 million U.S. Department of Energy grant and a \$305,000 non-federal match, for a total program value of \$1.315 million over a two-year period (July 2024–June 2026). The program supports manufacturers in identifying and deploying energy-efficient advanced manufacturing technologies. Additional Commerce funding will provide \$200,000 in 2025 and \$175,000 in 2026 for M4-related technologies. Maryland MEP will serve as a subcontractor to provide technology demonstrations, readiness assessments, and direct technical assistance to participating companies.

Looking ahead, Commerce outlined several future strategic opportunities, including the

development of an AI-focused industrial manufacturing initiative in partnership with The Industrial AI Center at the University of Maryland, which is exploring the establishment of a data repository and research center focused on democratizing Industrial AI for small and mid-sized manufacturers. The Governor has expressed initial support for this concept. Additional opportunities exist to leverage forthcoming DoD, DOE, and Department of Commerce federal funding programs, as well as to expand partnerships with private-sector manufacturing stakeholders statewide.

IV. Board Discussion Re: Advancing Maryland's Manufacturing Sector

The board continued the discussion on how to best understand the needs of Maryland's manufacturing sector. We discussed committee formation to guide MMAB recommendations to the Secretary of Commerce by the end of the calendar year. The following members suggested an interest in working on the highlighted committees below:

1. Advancing Technology - Chambers, Chow, Izadjoo
2. Incentivizing Manufacturing in Maryland - Richardson, Phillip
3. Workforce Development - Izadjoo, Koemer

Committees will be formalized once the Commerce Secretary designates a board chair over the next few months.

V. Public Comments/Discussion

There were no members of the public in the meeting.

VI. Closing Remarks

The next meeting date was not scheduled during this meeting

VII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was received at 1:25pm