



May 8, 2020
Via Teleconference 1-720-739-2828 PIN: 414 621 439#
12:00pm – 1:00pm

Commissioners in attendance:

Anirban Basu	MEDC Chair, Sage Policy Group
Howard Blackwell Bowen	Ewing Oil Company, Inc.
Scott Burger	Lolli & Pops
Ed Coleman	Ciox Health
Annemarie Dickerson	Former owner Francis Scott Key Family Resort
Kai Hirabayshi	Amazon
Martin Knott, Jr.	Knott Mechanical, Inc
Manish Kothari	Sheladia Associates, Inc.
Julie Lenzer	UM Ventures
Aris Melissaratos	Former Secretary, Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development
Mike Miller	OGOS Energy, LLC
Laura Neuman	Entrepreneur
Jeanette Glose Partlow	Maryland Chemical Company, Inc.
Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman	LG-TEK
J. Blacklock Wills	The Wills Group
Margaret Wood	Wood Consulting

Ex-Officio Members:

Secretary Kelly Schulz	Department of Commerce
Secretary Tiffany Robinson	Department of Labor
Robert Brennan	Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO)
Linda Singh	Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)
Brian Feldman	Senator. District 15, Montgomery County

Guests:

Allison Mayer	Office of the Governor
Meredith Wimbrow	Office of the Governor
Montana Williams	Evans & Associates, LLC
Holden Wilen	Baltimore Business Journal

Commerce Staff:

Julie Woepke	MEDC Executive Director
Signe Pringle	Assistant Secretary
Tom Riford	Assistant Secretary
Rhonda Ray	Managing Director

Jessica Reynolds
Allyson Redpath
Nancy McCrea
Mike Siers

Senior Director
Director
Research Director
Economist

I. Call to Order

Chairman Basu called the meeting to order at 12:00pm.

II. Chairman's Updates

Chairman Basu began his remarks by addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Maryland and Virginia's economies, which he said are faring better than many other states. He stated he believed the economic downturn is short and ambitious with expectations of improvement in the third and fourth quarters the calendar year. In reference to facing empty storefronts, he said this is the time for entrepreneurship. He concluded by stating that the Commission and the Department must pursue the growth of the entrepreneurship ecosystem as much as possible to turn the tide.

III. Consent Agenda

- a. March 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes – Senator Feldman offered a correction to the minutes. Correction accepted by the Commission unanimously.
- b. TEDCO FY20 Quarterly Report

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the Consent Agenda was approved.

IV. Commerce Secretary Update

Secretary Kelly Schulz began her presentation by outlining the rapid response by the Department to perform continuous operations during the pandemic. She highlighted the four (4) steps of rapid business response – 1) Communications/Outreach, 2) Funding, 3) Marketing, and 4) Recovery. Secretary Schulz summarized the multiple forms of communications and outreach to the business community; launching of the Relief Loan and Grant Funds; and the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) Manufacturing Fund that has sparked innovation, collaboration and solutions. She also described the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) Emergency Grants and emphasized the appreciation of the collaboration of volunteers from multiple State Agencies to assist with the processing of applications. She noted the Department's due diligence to prevent fraudulent or duplicative applications for funding.

Secretary Schulz reviewed budget impacts from COVID-19; and reviewed the impact to international travel; the vetting of foreign products and services; assistance to Maryland businesses seeking to market internationally; and reduction and/or cancellation of Trade Missions and Shows. With respect to marketing, she reported the repositioning from business attraction to directing Maryland businesses to potential resources. She highlighted the launching of the COVID-19 Business Resources on Maryland Business Express website; launching of the new loan and grant programs; creation of new online applications; and significant messaging of Maryland businesses doing COVID-19 work. She added that the Open for Business Campaign is on hold. She encouraged the Commissioners to review the video created to highlight the innovativeness of businesses during the crisis.

Secretary Schulz stated the next steps to recovery include input from 13 Industry Advisory Groups and two (2) Non-Profit and Faith-based Advisory Groups to guide in the recommendations of the procedures to reopen businesses. She said one-page documents are being prepared to guide industries on the process for safely reopening of businesses. Tourism, the industry hit hardest by the pandemic, has paused advertising but continues social media outreach. She added a new concept for tourism advertising was developed and best practices as part of the Tourism Task Force were drafted. Secretary Schulz concluded her presentation by stating that business development, while not as robust as earlier in the year, continues with a few new projects. (Presentation on file.)

Secretary Schulz then addressed the Chair's question in reference to fraudulent loan or grant applications.

V. Department of Labor COVID-19 Updates

Secretary Tiffany Robinson addressed the Commission and provided a detailed review of the impact COVID-19 has had on employment. She stated that to date, the State has awarded over \$9M to 454 employers for the Layoff Aversion Fund of which 98% of employers have received the grant. This has resulted in assisting nearly 9,000 Marylanders to keep their jobs. Secretary Robinson then described the improved and rapid deployment of a new BEACON One-Stop system to process unemployment benefits. She described the recent increase in unemployment insurance filings due in part to the addition of the gig economy being eligible through the Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 that allows 47,000 more individuals to file for unemployment benefits. Secretary Robinson also reported the importance of due diligence and the prevention of fraudulent activity related to the benefits.

Secretary Robinson highlighted the additional personnel hired to process applications and noted the increase in call center hours and days. She then provided resources and information on Divisions working to train and retrain individuals to enter new jobs and the extension of professional licensing application deadlines. (Presentation on file.)

VI. Good of the Order

Commissioner Michael Miller inquired of Secretary Schulz the mechanism used to advertise the Grant and Loan Programs. Secretary Schulz replied that the programs were advertised through all media outlets - the websites of Department of Commerce and other State Agencies and the Office of the Governor, in addition to Press Releases and social media.

VII. 2020 Meetings: Chairman Basu announced the upcoming meeting dates of September 8, and December 14, 2020.

VIII. Adjournment

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm.