



February 15, 2022  
Anne Arundel Community College  
Room 219 Cade Building, Arnold  
12:00pm – 2:00pm  
Minutes

**Commissioners in attendance:**

Margaret Wood, D.A. PMP	Co-Chair, WOOD Consulting
Ed Coleman	Co-Chair, Ameren
Susan Chambers	Strouse
Augie Chiasera	M&T Bank
Manish Kothari	Sheladia Associates, Inc.
Julie Lenzer	Advanced Regenerative Manufacturing Institute
Aris Melissaratos	St. John Properties
Gwen McCall	F&L Construction and Solid Waste, LLC
Leon Pinkett III	Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO) – call in
Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman	LG TEK
Gary Ruddell	Total Biz Fulfillment
Saif Rehman, PhD	NexGen Consulting
Eugene Silverman, PhD	Berkeley Springs Instruments

**Ex-Officio Members:**

Secretary R. Michael Gill	Department of Commerce
Tom Sadowski	Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO)
Troy LaMaile-Stovall	Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)

**Guests:**

Dr. Dawn Lindsay	Anne Arundel Community College
Sandy Jones	Anne Arundel Community College
Alex Choi	Office of the Governor – call in
Hunter Marsh	Office of Delegate Brian Crosby, District 29B – call in
Erika Schissler	Maryland Legislative Services – call in
Emily Haskel	Maryland Legislative Services – call in
Jim Rzepkowski	Department of Labor

**Commerce Staff:**

Julie Woepke	MEDC Executive Director
Tom Riford	Assistant Secretary- call in
Liz Fitzsimmons	Managing Director
Kyle McColgan	Chief of Staff
Jayson Knott	Senior Director

James Palma  
Michael Siers  
Melissa Brown  
Sarah Sheppard

Research Director – call in  
Economist  
Policy Analyst  
Workforce Director

## **I. Call to Order**

Dr. Margaret Wood, Co-Chair called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm and introduced Anne Arundel Community College President Dr. Dawn Lindsay. Her bio was included in the meeting materials.

## **II. Welcome**

Dr. Dawn Lindsay, the sixth President of Anne Arundel Community College welcomed the Commissioners and attendees. She provided background on the College, emphasizing the public private partnerships to address workforce needs and announced the establishment of the new Clauson Center for Innovation and Skilled Trades to prepare students for the changing job market. She thanked the State for its support of College Programs and facilities and collaborations with the business community.

## **III. Introduction of 2021 Members**

Co-Chair Wood invited those new Commissioners as of 2021 to provide introductions of themselves and their businesses.

## **IV. Review and approval of November 16, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the November 16, 2021 meeting minutes approved.

## **V. Rankings & Research Subcommittee**

Commissioner Elizabeth Rendón-Sherman, Chair, Rankings and Research Subcommittee addressed the Commission and reported that the new Rankings Report had been updated since the last meeting to include information on apprentices, community college enrollment, and associate degree attainment. She added that the Report, Dashboard and Maryland Neighborhood Needs Index (MNNI) was reviewed by Secretary Gill and the Commerce Subcabinet and there were no additional changes suggested. Lastly, Ms. Rendón-Sherman reported that the Research Team is working with the Marketing and Communications team to have the dashboard embedded on the MEDC website for easy access by Commissioners.

Referencing the new Ranking Report, she reported:

- Since the last meeting, Maryland's economic recovery has continued:
  - o Unemployment rate now sits at 5.0%, down from 5.9% since the November meeting.
  - o The state has continued to add jobs. In October, November, and December, Maryland added a combined 30,600 jobs.
- New Rankings updates: According to a new study by the Council on State Taxation, Maryland ranks #1 and has the lowest share of state and local taxes paid by businesses. Maryland also ranks fifth overall in terms of the lowest state and local business taxes paid per dollar of net government spending that benefits businesses. This ranking is down from #1 in 2020, but the State's position is still strong.

## **VI. Department of Commerce Update**

Commerce Secretary R. Michael Gill, addressed the Commission and provided an overview of the progress of the Department and Commission since the beginning of the Hogan-Rutherford Administration. Among the items he discussed were the 2016 Strategic Plan; Commerce Subcabinet and its subsequent expansion; Customer Service Promise and Initiative; Maryland Marketing Partnership; Scorecard; key and emerging industries; additional focus on regionalism; promotion of the Department programs and impacts; and the importance of finishing strong. He then introduced Economist Mike Siers to review the unemployment rate, total employment and manufacturing employment spanning 2015 to present.

MEDC Executive Director Julie Woepke addressed the Commission and reported that the Secretary and the Business Development Team will be actively on the road. She reviewed the number of speaking and meeting requests and highlighted several upcoming Marketing Events.

Mr. Jayson Knott, Senior Director, Business Attraction, addressed the Commission and described the latest Business Attractions and Expansion Opportunities. He described the recent wins; existing pipeline; breakdown by region of the number of opportunities, prospective jobs, capital expenditure and opportunities of at least 35 jobs. He answered questions from the Commission including commonalities with life sciences and manufacturing opportunities; data centers and impact from recent legislation; and the impact of more jobs for Marylanders legislation attracting new projects.

Ms. Liz Fitsimmons, Managing Director, Office of Tourism Film addressed the Commission and provided an update on the impact of the pandemic on Maryland visitor spending, sales tax revenue, and workforce. She also provided bright spots on the tourism horizon highlighting a number of upcoming events, promotions and initiatives. She answered questions from the Commissioners.

Ms. Melissa Brown, Policy Analyst, continued the Commerce Presentation by describing the 2022 legislative priorities and the Department's Budget Priorities. Co-Chair Wood stated that as per Statute requirement, the Department's Budget was reviewed and accepted prior to being submitted. No questions were asked of Ms. Brown.

All presentations on file.

## **VII. Workforce and Economic Development – Building a Strong Workforce**

Sarah Sheppard, Senior Director, Education and Workforce, Department of Commerce addressed the Commission and presented an overview of her role in coordination with industry sectors and workforce partners to identify and initiate programs to support businesses. She highlighted work with the Life Sciences and Manufacturing Advisory Boards, Cybersecurity partners, and TEDCO among others. She noted the successful Maryland Workforce Expressway which provides a central location for all workforce related programs and resources for employers and job seekers.

Ms. Sheppard then introduced Assistant Secretary Jim Rzepkowski, Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning of the Department of Labor who provided a review of the collaborative Federal Build Back Better Grant application as part of the Good Jobs Challenge focused on wind energy. He described the partners involved which included both public and private sector. He said an announcement is anticipated in May/June timeframe.

Assistant Secretary Rzepkowski then provided a comprehensive description of the State’s apprenticeship programs, opportunities for businesses, program statistics and an overview of the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2023 Budget for related programs. He answered questions from the Commissioners.

Ms. Sandy Jones, Assistant Dean, Continuing Education and Workforce Development, Anne Arundel Community College, addressed the Commission and provided an overview of the role of the 16 Community Colleges with workforce preparedness; programs to address workforce shortages; licensure and certificate programs by industry; a description of the new Clauson Center for Innovation and Skilled Trades; and partners in workforce development. She then answered questions from the Commissioners.

All presentations on file.

**VIII. Good of the Order**

Commissioner Gary Ruddell highlighted a supply chain issue impacting a number of small and large businesses due to shipping and activity at the Port of Baltimore. He stated Secretary Gill is organizing a meeting with the Port Administration Executive Director, Bill Doyle to discuss the issues and potential remedies. No additional information was exchanged.

**IX. 2022 Meetings: The remaining meeting dates were announced: 5/17/22, 8/16/22, 11/15/22**

**X. Adjournment**

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