BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2025 | 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
In-Person: WTC, 401 E. Pratt Street, 17th Floor | Baltimore, MD 21202

MEMBERS PRESENT
Harry Coker, Secretary of Commerce
Henry Fawell
Bret Foelber
Capt. Eric Nielsen
Micha Weinblatt

MEMBERS PRESENT VIRTUALLY
Laura Van Eperen, Chair
Sen. Cheryl Kagan
Leon Bailey
Ericka Covington
Ali von Paris
Linda Thornton Thomas
Dionne Joyner-Weems

MEMBERS ABSENT
Sila Alegret-Bartel
Shannon Prudhomme
Delegate Kris Valderrama

MMP STAFF
Sherri Diehl, Executive Director
Robert Scherr, Partnership Manager

COMMERCE STAFF
Lutisha Williams
Saundra Jones
Carolyn Hammock
Julie Miller
Maggie Whitescarver

I. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Executive Director, Sherri Diehl at 10:00 a.m. Executive Director Diehl called the roll of the members. Quorum was established.

II. WELCOME

Chair Laura Van Eperen welcomed everyone who attended the meeting and extended a special welcome to the new Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Harry Coker and newest member of the board, Micha Weinblatt.

III. COMMERCE UPDATE – SECRETARY HARRY COKER

Secretary Harry Coker thanked everyone for the welcome and referred to the MMP's message of branding Maryland as a great place to live and work; and to market the state's assets to out-of-state businesses (key part). Based on the branding message, Secretary Coker would like to dig deep on how we're doing and what our plans are. He said he's glad to accept the challenge of being more assertive in our outreach to businesses.

Secretary Coker shared a little bit about his academic background/career and public servant – 20 years in the Navy, 20 years between CIA and NSA. He looks forward to applying his experience to continue to make the great State of Maryland better. The idea is to create and disseminate the narrative. He referred to the Strategic focus that the Governor's been talking about of *Winning the Decade* and within that area, "Lighthouse Sectors." These lighthouse sectors target – Life Sciences (Computational Biology), Technology (Quantum Technology) and Aerospace (Position, Navigation and Timing). These are emerging areas in which Maryland is in a position to win.

As it relates to this year's budget and the Decade Act, Secretary Coker expressed that the Moore-Miller Administration goal is to make Maryland as business friendly as possible to grow its economy.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 2024

Executive Director Diehl called for a motion to approve the minutes. Henry Fawell moved to approve. Brett Foelber seconded the motion. The minutes were approved and accepted. No opposition.

V. FINANCIAL REPORT **(Leon Bailey, Treasurer)**

Leon Bailey presents the financial report, highlighting the contributions from partners, expenses and projected expenses. This financial report exhibits the financial performance from partner

contributions and State appropriations. It also covers FY25 *(to-date)* fiscal highlights and expenses paid as well as anticipated expenses through June 2025.

On the revenue side, MMP Partner contributions in FY25 *to date* are: $268,332 and on the expense side, total expenses *to date* are: $2,249,061. The projected balance at the end of FY 25 is: $3,794,803 (includes revenue from partners to be collected through FY25). Executive Director Diehl asked for any questions or comments regarding the financial report and a motion to approve. There were no questions or comments. Executive Director Diehl called for a motion to approve the financial report. Henry Fawell moved to approve; Ericka Covington second. No opposition. Financial report approved and accepted.

VI. ADVERTISING UPDATE - PLANIT

Planit representative Debbie Norris provides a preview of the Spring 2025 ad campaign that runs January – June consisting of three target audiences: a) Business Attraction, b) Workforce, and c) Business Retention.

VII. BUSINESS ATTRACTION SITE

Julie Miller from the Commerce marketing team shared the new and improved website, business.maryland.gov.

VIII. PR PROGRAM UPDATE – ABEL COMMUNICATIONS

Abel Communications representatives provided an update on PR activities. Nick Jones from Abel mentioned the north star is to raise awareness that Maryland is a place for economic success and quality of life. They discussed new efforts to elevate our thought leaders and leveraging Sec. Coker nationally.

PUBLIC MEETING CLOSES

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m. Next meeting scheduled for June 2, 2025 | 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the World Trade Center, 401 E. Pratt Street – Baltimore, MD.