

Meeting Minutes



Date: Tuesday, July 8th, 2025
Time: 12:00pm EST
Location: McGarvey's Saloon & Oyster Bar

Attendees: **Delegate Ken Kerr**, Maryland House of Delegates
Michael Lore, Deputy Secretary of State
Brian Castleberry, Senior Regional Manager, Office of International Investment and Trade, Maryland Department of Commerce
Rebecca Bellinger, Executive Director, Center for Global Business, Smith School at the University of Maryland
Chris Frech, SVP Global Government Affairs, Emergent Bio Solutions
Erin McNeally, Senior Business Consultant
Interns, Secretary of State's Office

Absent: **Ricardo Benn**, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce
Laura Merritt, President, Diageo
Cassie Folk, Director of Government Relations, Diageo

1. Introductions
 - The group held a quick round table session where each Commissioner introduced themselves and gave a quick summary of their background.
2. May Meeting Minutes
 - The group took a few minutes to review the meeting minutes from May 16, 2025.
 - A quorum was present and the group voted to approve the minutes.
3. By Laws Discussion
 - Delegate Kerr drafted by laws for the Commission as guidance on how business will be conducted as the group works to compile the first report for the Governor.
 - The group reviewed the drafted by laws and recommended the following edits:
 1. Add a note that non-Commission members are non-voting.
 2. Add Arts & Culture to a subcommittee.
 3. Ensure Lighthouse Sectors are incorporated in the subcommittee(s).
 - Attached to these minutes are a final draft of the By Laws.
4. Proposed Workgroups
 - Per the by laws, subcommittees/work groups will be created to promote efficiency and streamline work for the year-end report.
 - Each subcommittee/work group shall be chaired by a Commissioner.

- The following subcommittees/work groups and Commissioner leads were proposed:
 1. Agriculture (**Michael Lore**)
 2. Tourism, Cultural Arts (**Laura Merritt/Cassie Folk**)
 3. Cybersecurity, Information Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Quantum (**Commerce/Erin McNeally**)
 4. Pharmaceuticals, Life Sciences, Computational Bio (**Chris Frech**)
 5. Higher Education & Academic Partnerships (**Rebecca Bellinger**)
- Each subcommittee will compile a report on their respective workgroup/sector(s) including:
 1. Overview of Landscape
 2. Opportunities/Partnerships
 3. Recommendations
- 5. December Report Timeline
 - Final report due and presented to the Governor by December 1, 2025.
 - Draft report ready for final review by November 1, 2025.
 - Need to align on protocol for circulating final draft to stakeholders.
 - Report to include:
 1. Overview of Landscape
 2. Opportunities/Partnerships
 3. Recommendations
 4. Direction of Commission in 2026
 - Remove Sunset
 - Additional Seats
 - a. Potential candidates: Barbara Paca (Historian/Professor/Author) & Kevin Havens (McGarvey's)
 - b. Subcommittees will conduct research in their workgroups and make additional recommendations.
- 6. 2026 Legislation
 - Will need to address membership & sunset as it relates to the report.
 - Additional Legislation Ideas; **Chris Frech** suggested we call these Human Capital Barriers
 1. Acceptance of Ireland Driver's Licenses in Maryland
 2. Double taxation
- 7. Other Business
 - **Delegate Kerr** commented how Thoroughbred Racing is a low hanging fruit for the Tourism sector.
 - **Chris Frech** commented how Maryland's proximity to the various entities responsible for FDA approval is important for the Pharmaceuticals, Life Sciences, Computational Bio sectors.
 - **Michael Lore** presented two books that tie in to the Cultural Arts aspect of the Commission, specifically highlighting Charles Carroll and Frederick Douglas and their ties to both Maryland and Ireland:

- Princes of Ireland, Planters of Maryland: A Carroll Saga by Ronald Hoffman
- Frederick Douglas in Ireland “The Black O’Connell” by Laurence Fenton
- **Delegate Kerr** presented on communications he had with the President/CEO of the Sister States of Maryland.
- There was a brief discussion on the MD 250 commission and how MITC can incorporate ties to Ireland.
 1. The Maryland 250 Commission, established by Executive Order 01.01.2023.10, is tasked with developing and executing a statewide, yearlong commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States, focusing on Maryland's contributions to the nation's history, civics, and service.
 2. The MITC will look to tie in the Frederick Douglas Project, C&O Canal, and/or Irish Worker’s Railroad Museum
- **Delegate Kerr** has been in discussion with Joe Omurchadha, Lead Senior Legal Counsel, Data Protection and Privacy, SAP, on ways to improve business investment opportunities in Maryland. **Erin McNeally** will take the lead on following up with Joe since this falls under Information Technology.
- **Brian Castleberry/Erin McNeally** setting up a meeting with Kelly Schultz to discuss how MITC can partner with the MD Tech Council.
- **Brian Castleberry** gave a brief overview on the trade delegation trip to Ireland in June. The trip included:
 1. Tour of Guinness Enterprise
 2. Tour of University College Dublin
 3. Meeting w/ Platform 94
 4. Trip to the Port of Galway
 5. Tour of the University of Galway
- 8. Next Meetings
 - Commissioners need to complete availability poll for the following upcoming meetings:
 1. Week of August 25th
 2. Week of September 15th
 3. Week of October 13th
 4. Week of November 3rd
- 9. Adjournment