



Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
February 18, 2020  
MCEDC  
1801 Rockville Pike, Suite 320  
Rockville, MD 20852

The following Committee members were present:

Robby Brewer, Lerch, Early & Brewer – Chair  
Ola Sage, CyberRx – Vice Chair  
Angela Graham, Quality Biological – Secretary  
Carmen Larsen, Aquas, Inc. – Treasurer

The following attendees were present, consistent with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act and in accordance with the Corporation's Bylaws:

Ben Wu, President & CEO  
Bill Tompkins, Executive Vice President & COO  
Sarah Miller, VP of Strategy  
Stacey Hardy, VP of Operations

*The meeting was called to order at 8:35 am. A quorum of the Committee members was present. Stacey Hardy was designated to take minutes.*

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the December 2 meeting were approved with one correction.

### **February 14 County Executive Press Conference**

Ben Wu summarized the takeaways from the County Executive's press conference announcing the launch of the Business Connect program. Mr. Wu noted that there was consensus among the state and county partners that offered remarks that economic development is a priority for the County and the need to collectively work together toward that effort.

### **Personnel Actions**

Mr. Wu updated the Committee on recent staff departures and discussed plans to fill the vacant positions. Mr. Wu noted that MCEDC will be increasing its internal capacity to address workforce development and international business development. An independent consultant will also be engaged to focus on technology transfer in March.

### **WorkSource Montgomery Update**

Mr. Wu reported that WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) has notified MCEDC of its intent to relocate to the new job center in Wheaton at the end of March. The Committee discussed the budgetary and programmatic implications of the move. The Committee inquired about the status of current efforts to

address the tech talent pipeline and other business workforce challenges.

Ms. Sage requested that staff review WSM's charter to clarify their role with respect to serving unemployed and underemployed populations and addressing business workforce issues (e.g. tech talent pipeline).

Mr. Tompkins will review WSM's charter and report back to the Committee by March 2. Mr. Brewer requested an update on WSM activities at every Executive Committee and Board meeting.

### **Commerce Cabinet**

Mr. Wu updated the Committee on his conversations with the County Executive to replicate the state of Maryland's Commerce Cabinet at the county level. The Cabinet would function as an inter-agency coordinating body to include agencies that have relevance to economic development (e.g. Permitting, Planning, Housing, Transportation). The cabinet would be responsible for convening the agencies to coordinate on major issues and projects; and making recommendations to streamline/improve current government processes that impact businesses.

Mr. Wu noted that the County Executive has agreed to issue an executive order to establish the cabinet and to name MCEDC as the chair.

### **Augustine Commission**

Mr. Wu discussed MCEDC's intent to work with Norm Augustine to chair a commission to build upon the state's 2015 analysis of its economic development efforts and business climate (as it applies to Montgomery County). The commission would be tasked with developing recommendations to address structural changes at the County level. The Committee questioned the scope of the commission further and requested that Mr. Wu work with Mr. Augustine and the County Executive to ensure the Commission's work is not duplicative of the previous Commission's efforts.

### **March 30 Strathmore Reception**

Mr. Tompkins reported that MCEDC will be hosting a reception at Strathmore on March 30 to formally introduce Mr. Wu to the business community and to introduce the members of the Augustine Commission. The Committee recommended the event be used as an opportunity to share Mr. Wu's vision for MCEDC and how the organization is moving forward (e.g. First 100 Days). No consensus. The Committee requested that the draft of the event agenda be shared for comment before distribution.

### **Joint Statement on Regional Cooperation Among Maryland Capital Region Local Economic Development Organizations**

Mr. Wu reported that MCEDC will be signing the Joint Statement on Regional Cooperation Among Maryland Capital Region Local Economic Development Organizations. A press event is planned for early March.

### **Future Board Communications**

Mr. Wu discussed the staff's effort to restructure and improve Board communications. A weekly email to the Board of current activities and highlight is planned. A sample of the communications will be shared with the Committee for comment. The first communications will be sent to the Board on March 6.

Mr. Wu will meet with Governance Chair (Ms. Graham) on February 26 to discuss governance and Board development activities.

## **Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Request for Funding**

Mr. Tompkins presented a request for funding from the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce to enter into a partnership with MCEDC to include advocacy support/resources; event sponsorship and participation; support for the Veterans Institute for Procurement program; and membership.

After discussion, Mr. Brewer agreed to work with Mr. Tompkins to review the Chamber's request and clarify the metrics and proposed ROI. Mr. Brewer will report back to the Committee the week of February 24.

## **Economic Development Ecosystem Matrix Update**

Mr. Tompkins noted that the Economic Development Ecosystem Matrix will be updated to reflect the establishment of the Office of Business Services and its functions. Mr. Tompkins will present the updated matrix to the Executive Committee on March 2.

## **March 2 Executive Committee Meeting**

The Committee agreed to conduct the next Executive Committee meeting on March 2. Initial agenda items include update on strategic plan metrics; WorkSource Montgomery; and the economic development ecosystem matrix.

## **New Business**

Mr. Wu informed the Committee that Tien Wong has submitted a request for sponsorship to support the East Coast VentureCON Event. MCEDC's Sponsorship Committee will review the request and make a recommendation to the Board. The Sponsorship Committee will review the request by Friday, February 21, and provide comments to the Chair. Mr. Brewer will forward the staff's comments to the Board for consideration prior to the March 16 Board meeting.

Ms. Larsen announced that the Maryland Tech Council is conducting a Digital Transformation Conference on March 30. Ms. Larsen suggested getting the word out about the event and encouraged participation.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 am.

*Minutes submitted by Stacey Hardy*