

Meeting of the Board of Directors of
Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation
Board Meeting Minutes: December 18, 2015
Buchanan Partners
9841 Washingtonian Boulevard, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD, 20878

The following directors were present:

Bob Buchanan, Partner, Buchanan Partners (Chair)
Ola Sage, CEO, e-Management, CyberRx (Secretary)
James Brady, Vice President, Finance, MedImmune
Robby Brewer, Principal, Lerch, Early & Brewer (Vice Chair)
Angela Graham, President & CEO, Quality Biological
Cidalia Luis-Akbar, CEO, M. Luis Construction
Terry Forde, CEO, Adventist Healthcare
Ronald Paul, CEO, EagleBank
Sanjay Rai, SVP for Academic Affairs, Montgomery College (Treasurer)
Lily Qi, Director of Special Projects, Office of the County Executive (Ex-officio)
Jacob Sesker, Senior Legislative Analyst, Montgomery County Council (Ex-officio)
Mike Gill, Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce, State of Maryland (Ex-officio)
Ben Wu, Deputy Secretary of Commerce, State of Maryland (Ex-officio)

The following director(s) were absent:

Tien Wong, CEO, Lore Systems, Tech 2000, Opus8, Inc.

Other attendees were present, consistent with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act and in accordance with the Corporation's Bylaws.

Proceedings: Meeting called to order at 1:13 pm by Chair, Bob Buchanan. Alison Wakefield of the Office of the County Executive was designated to take minutes.

Item 1: Approval of minutes, discussion, and announcements

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the November 9, 2015 Board meeting. Minutes were unanimously accepted.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the November 12, 2015 Board meeting. Minutes were unanimously accepted.

Continued discussion of the Legislative Engagement Session on economic development held on December 17th, hosted by the County Executive and his Business Advisory Group.

Board members were asked to attend the official opening of the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence on February 8th.

Item 2: Board meeting dates and Board retreat date

The Board scheduled a retreat for January 21st from 12:00pm-4:00pm at the North Bethesda Conference Center.

The Board agreed to schedule monthly Board meetings the second Monday of each month from 9:00am-11:00am. Locations are to be determined.

Item 3: Ratification of hiring Council Baradel as Corporation counsel

Vice Chair Robert Brewer presented a proposal from Council Baradel, Kosmeri & Nolan, P.A., a firm with expertise in the State of Maryland's Open Meetings Act to provide counsel to the Board on their legal obligations under the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and the Public Information Act (PIA). A motion was made and seconded to engage their services, specifically those of Suellen Ferguson, Esq. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item 4: Presentation of Open Meetings Act, Public Information Act obligations

Ms. Ferguson gave a presentation on the OMA and PIA and steps needed for the Board to comply with these laws.

The Board agreed to house MCEDC Board minutes with the Office of the County Executive until a permanent location for the organization has been secured.

Item 4: Report and recommendation of ad hoc CEO Search Committee

Terry Forde, chair of the ad hoc executive search committee, reported that the committee conducted in-person interviews with three executive search firms: DHR International, Jorgenson Consulting, and The McCormick Group. The Board then discussed the qualifications and distinguishing features that led the search committee to recommend selecting DHR International to lead the search for MCEDC's executive director. A motion was made and seconded to engage DHR International. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item 5: Report and recommendation re: public relations firm hiring

Board members made suggestions of PR firms the Board could consider engaging to assist in communicating with various media outlets, create and maintain MCEDC's website, and promote events for the next six months. Requests for Proposals were sent to three recommended firms. The executive committee reviewed the proposals and recommended RMR and Associates to the Board for approval. Following discussion of the firm's qualifications, a motion was made and seconded to engage RMR and Associates for a 6-month contract. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item 6: Discussion and adoption of Corporation policies

The Board discussed a draft "Protocol for Response to Press Inquiries," which was modeled after that of the Montgomery County Business Development Corporation (MBDC). One change was requested: change "high-paying" to "medium to high-paying jobs" in the section entitled,

“Requesting and Evaluating Whether to Respond.” A motion was made and seconded to approve the “Protocol” with the specified change. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Board discussed a draft “Conflict of Interest Policy,” which was modeled after that of MBDC. A motion was made and seconded to approve the Policy. The motion was unanimously approved. Signed “Conflict of Interest Annual Affirmation and Disclosure Statements” were collected from some Board members present at the meeting. Remaining Board members were asked to submit the signed Declaration to Vice Chair Brewer.

The ad hoc vendor supply committee presented recommendations for how MCEDC should manage vendors and procurements to ensure the consistent application of an open and fair process. During the transition period, the ad hoc vendor supply committee will lead procurement activities for services including, but not limited to banking, insurance, accounting, and property brokers for MCEDC. For some time sensitive services such as banking and insurance, interim vendors may be engaged for the next six months until long-term vendors are selected. The vendor supply committee will initiate a search for permanent accounting services. The Board discussed short-term and long-term options for office space. The Board also discussed when and how payments for services will be made.

Item 7: Report from County Executive’s Office, MBDC, DED on pending County marketing and economic development initiatives

Sally Sternbach, Acting Director of the Dept. of Economic Development, gave a presentation of the Department’s existing portfolio of programs. Holly Sullivan, President of the Montgomery Business Development Corporation, gave a presentation of MBDC’s existing portfolio of responsibilities and programs. The Board discussed the need to determine what programs MCEDC will continue in the future.

Item 8: Discussion on draft Comprehensive Economic Strategy

Not discussed at the meeting.

Item 9: Other new business

The Chair asked the Board members to reflect on the past few months and discuss their initial impressions and desired next steps.

The Chair reminded Board members to submit resumes to Robby and Sanjay as soon as possible for candidates for the part-time administrative staff who will assist the board.

Meeting adjourned at 4:19 pm
Minutes submitted by Alison Wakefield