

Mt Airy, MD Economic Development Commission – 28 April 2021

Pledge of Allegiance - 7:00 PM

Roll Call

In Attendance:

- Josiah Timmerman
- Jimmy Linton
- Dan McNeill
- Donnamarie Needle
- Darlene Davidson-Union

Others In Attendance:

- Melissa Thorn (Town of Mt Airy)
- Tony Burke (Mt Airy Messenger)
- Alice Settle-Raskin (MAMSA)
- John Breeding (Town of Mt Airy)

Town Council Updates – Pamela Reed (provided written update)

- Brand Ambassador program is still looking for ambassadors for some business segments
- The GreenTree development project is active again – expecting a pattern book from the developer at the next Planning Commission meeting (patter book is pre-concept plan with schematics, elevations, statistics, etc.)

Community Development Updates – Melissa Thorn

- I Heart Mt Airy was today – the winner of the Restaurant Week Dine to Win drawing was chosen
- Hometown Heroes program is wrapping up –an order was placed for 37 more banners. These may include interactive links in the future.
- No new updates for the Community Map project
- Met today with Frederick County Office of Economic Development to discuss their “Empower” program which aims to assist minority business owners with promotion, mentorship, other support programs
- Met recently with the Maryland Women’s Business Center regarding a business incubator program in Rockville. It may be something to pursue in Mt Airy.

Partner Updates – Alice Settle-Raskin (MAMSA)

- April Membership Meeting – discussed COVID relief grant. \$181,500 of \$213,525 was awarded to businesses, which leaves \$32,025 left over for promotion of local businesses. Ads in print, cable TV, and radio are being developed, as well as 360 videos promoting downtown businesses
- There will be four open seats on the MAMSA board, with an election happening soon
- 20 vendors have been accepted for the Farmer’s Market. MAMSA is currently looking for sponsors, and volunteers to assist with setup and teardown each week.

Approval of March Minutes

- Seconded and approved by Commission members

Old Business

- Donnamarie provided a recap of the meeting on April 6th regarding the Welcome Wagon project. They are considering a “mixer” social gathering during which welcome bags could be distributed. Storage space for pre-assembled gift bags is needed.

- Donnamarie provided a recap of the meeting on April 13th with local property owners regarding the Envision Mt Airy tour. Close to 10 property owners were in attendance. The Mt Airy Master Plan was also discussed.
- John Breeding presented a video demonstrating the capabilities of the Town's new streaming video equipment.

New Business

- Melissa presented a proposed budget to the Commission for consideration. The budget is currently requesting \$92,741 for the EDC – a \$30,000 increase over last year. Donnamarie suggested removing \$1,990 from the “Envision” tour, \$3,000 from the business card program, and moving it to the Business Incentives category. A motion to approve \$5000 to the Incentives category was seconded and approved by the Commission – the budget will be sent to the Mayor.
- The Mayor would like the EDC to revitalize the “Building a Better Future” business grant program. Donnamarie proposed a number of provisions, including promoting retail on street level, concerns over e-commerce language, questions regarding reimbursement vs. pre-payment of funds. The Commission will discuss this at the next meeting before taking the proposal to Town Staff for review. A motion was made to make this a matching grant, which was seconded and approved by the Commission.
- The Town Staff would like the EDC to provide inputs to the 2023 Master Plan. Josiah, Donnamarie, Jimmy, and Darlene agreed to meet May 5th at 11:00 at Superfoods on Main to go over the details. A second meeting will take place on May 20th if necessary.

Public Comment

- Nothing to note

Motion to adjourn, Seconded at 8:56 PM. Next meeting is May 26th at 7:00PM via Zoom