

Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
October 4, 2021
MCEDC
Via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

The following Committee members were present:

Robby Brewer, Chair – Lerch, Early & Brewer
Kevin Beverly, Vice Chair
Elana Fine, Secretary – VWG Wealth Management
Carmen Larsen, Treasurer – Aquas, Inc

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
Stacey Hardy, VP of Operations
Sandra Magwood, Executive Assistant and Project Coordinator

Ron Daversa, Member of the public
Sharon Disque, City of Gaithersburg
Cynthia Rivarde, CEO, Rockville Economic Development, Inc.

Chair Brewer called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. A quorum of the Committee members was present. Ms. Magwood was designated to take minutes.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Beverly moved to approve the minutes from September 8, 2021 meeting as presented. Ms. Fine seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Economic Action Plan: Advisory Panel Update

Mr. Wu provided an update on the status of the Economic Action Plan activities. He stated that the plan is being finalized and will be sent to the members of the panel for review this week. Mr. Wu reported that a luncheon to thank the panel members for their participation will be conducted on October 13. In addition, a public launch of the report will be conducted on October 19 at a virtual event with the Washington Business Journal. The event will be free and open to the public.

Mr. Brewer requested that invitations for both events be sent to him, Ms. Fine and Mr. Beverly. The full Board will be invited to attend the Washington Business Journal event.

President & CEO Report

Mr. Wu provided an update on the meeting with Councilmember Evan Glass regarding his Bill 11-21, which would require MCEDC to livestream and archive its Board meetings. The Board Chair and Vice Chair also participated in the meeting. Mr. Wu noted that while MCEDC is already fully compliant with the requirements of the Open Meeting Act, the organization has willingly taken additional steps to increase access to the public. Such steps include the elimination of the advance registration requirement and adding the virtual meeting link to the meeting agenda on the MCEDC website. Mr. Wu noted that MCEDC

will continue this process when in-person meetings resume. The Executive Committee endorsed MCEDC's approach.

Mr. Wu will submit a formal memo to Councilmember Glass' office confirming MCEDC's approach, after which, Councilmember Glass has indicated his openness to withdraw his bill if satisfied with the approach.

Ms. Larsen inquired about when in-person meetings might resume at the Rockville office. Mr. Wu discussed the possibility of conducting in-person off-site meetings in the future to highlight development at Shady Grove or in Silver Spring. It would be useful for the Board members to see these new development opportunities. Mr. Wu will consult with the Chair and the Executive Committee to determine the appropriate time to resume in-person meetings. Mr. Brewer requested that the Executive Committee decide about the location of the November Board meeting at its next meeting on November 1.

Ms. Fine inquired about the metrics that the staff is using to make the decision about resuming in-person meetings and returning to on-site operations. Mr. Wu noted that he wants to ensure that the appropriate precautions are taken to ensure employee comfort and safety while balancing office productivity. Mr. Tompkins noted that the results of its employee survey on return-to-work, Montgomery County government return-to-work status, and private industry will help to inform the decision. Mr. Wu noted that the office is currently open, and that staff have been conducting external meetings with clients both in the office and outside the office. Ms. Fine suggested that the Board could be a good resource for input related to return-to-work plans, as many members have navigated this process.

Draft October Board Meeting Agenda

Mr. Brewer presented a draft of the October Board meeting agenda and asked for comments.

Ms. Fine suggested that future agendas could include an opportunity for the Board to discuss its engagement over the next year and areas that the Board can be helpful. Ms. Fine suggested that the Board be presented with more opportunities to provide input on key questions which will allow the Board to operate in a more strategic way. Mr. Beverly agreed with Ms. Fine's comments and encouraged the staff to engage the Board to achieve its objectives.

As an example, Mr. Tompkins noted that there will be an opportunity for the Board to provide input and respond to the findings related to the Comprehensive Economic Strategy. Mr. Brewer suggested that Mr. Beverly could conduct an update on the status of the early care and education legislation in the future.

New Business

Ms. Larsen engaged the Committee in a discussion about the Silver Spring Business Improvement District (BID) initiative. Mr. Wu noted that the bill authorizing the BID was passed by the Council, vetoed by the County Executive, and his veto was overridden by the Council. MCEDC had not been asked to take a position on the bill by either the Council or the Executive.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 am.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: Monday, November 1, 2021
Next Board of Directors Meeting: Monday, October 18, 2021