



**REDI Board of Directors Meeting
MINUTES
January 26, 2023, 7:30 am.**

**Hybrid Zoom/In-Person Meeting
51 Monroe Street, PE20, Rockville, MD 20850**

Board attendees virtual: Richard Alvarez, Ben Anstrom, LaVonne Torrence Berner, Nikhil Bijlani, Rob DiSpirito, Alton Henley, Bei Ma, Dan Mallon, Carla Merritt, Suzanne Osborn, Todd Pearson, Nancy Regelin, Michael Scott, Bill Tompkins, Cliff Veirs, Justin Yang

Board attendees in person: Bridget Newton, Susan Prince, Morgan Sullivan

Absent Board Members: Angela Chaney, Marji Graf,

Other in-person attendees:

Staff: Cindy Rivarde, Richelle Wilson, Danette Nguyen, Amanda Bosland, Rachele Williams, Karen Kalantzis (virtual), Rhonda Devan (D & D CPA/Virtual)

Visitors: Ricky Baker (Director CPDS), Mark Pierzchala (City Councilperson)

Presenter: Jo Anne Schneider (Chrysalis Collaborations)

Other Virtual attendees:

Beryl Feinberg(City Councilperson), Monique Ashton (City Councilperson), Barack Matite (Deputy City Manager), Jenny Snapp (Deputy Director CPDS), Katie Gerbes (CPDS)

Presenter: Clare Sherlock (Technometrica Market Intelligence)

1. Call to Order, Welcome, and Remarks – Susan Prince

- a. Susan Prince called the meeting to order at 7:40 am
- b. Ms. Prince discussed the upcoming Board Retreat to have the Board select a Saturday date in Late March/Early April. Mrs. Rivarde wants the Board to send her Saturdays in March and April that they can't attend, and then a date will be chosen that best works for all.

2. Operational Items

- a. Approval of Minutes (November) – Susan Prince
ACTION: Mayor Newton made a motion to approve the November minutes, which was seconded by Todd Pearson and passed unanimously.
- b. Treasurer's Report – Todd Pearson/Rhonda Devan

- i. Mr. Pearson went over the second quarter financials, which were in the board packet.
- ii. The SBA FY19 Audit is still pending a response from the SBA.
- iii. Mrs. Rivarde noted that we are on track with MWBC SBA reporting that is due to be submitted at the end of January for the CORE, and the Bowie Center will be due in March.

3. CEO Report

- a. CEO Accomplishments Fourth Year – Cindy Rivarde
Mrs. Rivarde went over her annual accomplishments as she recently completed her fourth year leading REDI. She went over achievements in the areas of:

- Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion/Incentives
- Marketing/Tourism
- City Projects
- Small Business Support/MWBC
- Workforce/Talent Alignment
- Creative Industries and Placemaking
- Administration of the Organization including Finance, Board, Staff and Office Management

Major items included a business survey of over 7,000 businesses (with presentation today); attraction of Arcellex, Tetracor and the Guatemalan Consulate; retention of Mas Panada; and assistance with writing a Life Science Report with Dr. Bei Ma for the new Governor's economic development transition team. There was significant support of the Life Science Sector this year with both economic development services and marketing. Explore Rockville was launched, and social media and press/videos featuring REDI increased. REDI also celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a well-attended event at Glenview Mansion. Ms. Rivarde served on several teams for City projects this year including King Farm Farmstead, the Rockville Metro Station, the City's re-branding effort and new website, the business forum series, analyzing neighborhood shopping centers, and helping to hire key city positions.

Ms. Rivarde assisted REDI in obtaining a second \$150,000 SBA grant for the Bowie State location, which is a historically black university, which will tailor programming to engage students as well as the business community. A new MWBC Advisory board was created that developed a strategic plan for the program. A partnership with Version brought in over \$12,500 to MWBC and assisted over 150 local entrepreneurs. An agreement with the Lulac Institute brought in \$8,400 for trainings to support persons with disabilities in entrepreneurship. The Vet BizLady Start Program, Childcare programs, We Grow, Shop Local Incubator, SHE Pitch (Frederick), and Coffee and Connections were all successfully implemented. A cocktail event was held in November to thank funders and clients.

This year REDI received an unmodified audit from SnyderCohn, and the reserve was increased by \$60,000 for a second year. A settlement was reached with the SBA for a FY2018 audit, which was paid through professional liability insurance. The CARES Act grant was closed and the PPP loan was forgiven.

This year a nominating committee was convened. The Board held a strategic planning session focused on placemaking. The board terms were aligned with the original classes in the By-Laws, and approved by the Mayor and Council. The Board approved updated Finance Policies and Procedures, Vaccination Policy and MWBC policies. A new MWBC Managing Director was hired, and staff was restructured to meet the requirements of the second SBA grant, resulting in promotions of several staff members.

b. Economic Development –Richelle Wilson

Ms. Wilson reported that REDI assisted two companies relocating out of Lake Forest Mall. Tenants were informed that the mall is closing and will have to vacate their space due to new development plans for the site. So far, plans for that site include about 1600 homes, about 500,000 feet of retail, and about 750,000 feet of office, R&D, or light manufacturing. Ms. Wilson met with CTIS, a health informatics company looking to vacate its current space at 1 Research Ct. They're occupying 25-27,000 square feet of space and need to contract in space. She is working on space options that keep them within a 5-mile radius of NCI.

The small business impact fund has expanded from Rockville Town Center and Twinbrook performance areas and now encompasses the entire City of Rockville. Staff is working on updating all marketing and applications ahead of the next deadline on 4/30/23.

Ms. Wilson met with N5 Sensors, a sensory technology company that was a spin-off from the University of Maryland. They have been working out of a satellite office off Shady Grove Road and need about 15,000 sf of space. She is working to find options in the City that meet their requirements as they need to relocate by the fall of this year. She also met with Facility Logix, which focuses on providing life science and biotech companies with project management, feasibility studies, and marketing solutions. Facility Logix proposed organizing a tour of their projects throughout the capital region.]

c. MWBC – Danette Nguyen

Mrs. Nguyen contacted the MWBC Advisory Board members to schedule coffee and introductions. So far, Madam Chair Nancy Regelin and Tameka Montgomery from Core Strategy Partners are upcoming. There are several Q1 SBA reports and semiannual reports with our locality partners due by the end of this month. March is Women's History Month, and we will run a social campaign that features how MWBC has impacted the clients we serve or their business by utilizing their success stories to promote one woman per day for the entire month. Additional information will be going out in the monthly MWBC Newsletter.

Ms. Rivarde noted that Morgan Wortham, the immediately prior MWBC Managing Director is interested in being on the MWBC Advisory Board, and that retaining her expertise would be beneficial.

ACTION: Nancy Regelin made a motion to appoint Morgan Wortham to the MWBC Advisory Board, which was seconded by Dan Mallon and passed unanimously

4. Presentation

Business Survey Results– Jo Anne Schneider of Chrysalis Collaborations/ Clare Sherlock of Technometrica Market Intelligence

After an RFP process, REDI selected Ms. Sherlock and Ms. Schneider to conduct an intensive business survey to understand the Rockville business needs as well as how Rockville is perceived by brokers and site selectors. After almost a year and a half of research, surveys and focus groups, they came to present the final report to the Board. The final report will be sent to Board Members and Mayor and Council by next week.

Ms. Schneider and Ms. Sherlock presented the REDI Business Needs Assessment Report, which is a multi-methods analysis for REDI focused on business needs and commercial real-estate issues in Rockville. The report identified current business needs that REDI or the City could address by understanding the desirability of Rockville as a growing business location versus key competitors. The largest group of businesses included professional services, life sciences, and technology, encompassed (51%) of the companies that responded to the survey. Ms. Schneider noted the businesses that participated in this research are primarily small. (82%) employ less than 20 people; nearly two out of three are micro-businesses with less than five employees. Being that micro-businesses are the majority in most industries, addressing their needs should be an important goal for REDI. In terms of awareness, the MWBC has both the highest usage levels of the various services offered by REDI. REDI's recommendations included: additional small business assistance, assistance in location intelligence, exploring programs for home-based, virtual, and hybrid businesses, and developing a community of businesses for micro and small businesses. Ms. Schneider noted that Maryland Women's Business Center (MWBC) is REDI's most known resource, and REDI needs to provide more networking and mentoring opportunities (17%); this is followed by requests for help in funding/grants/incentives (11%), mentoring/training (9%) and promoting local business (7%).

5. Strategic Items

a. Incentive Review Committee – Dan Mallon

The committee met twice - once in December and in early January. There is a lot of progress with discussions around putting parameters around MOVE/Expansion grants and the small business impact fund, analyzing whom they are trying to attract. The group also discussed how to streamline the application process further. The committee received two applications in December, moved forward with one, and will get additional information from the second company before moving forward. The discussion in January

was discussing requirements for how requesting businesses should be able to use the funds.

- b. Marketing Committee - Bei Ma/Amanda Bosland,
The Marketing Committee is working on the initiatives that were started last year. The next meeting will be sometime in early February. Ms. Ma stated that if anyone wanted to join the committee to contact her or Amanda Bosland.
- c. MWBC Advisory Board – Nancy Regelin
Ms. Regelin had no new updates beyond those presented by Ms. Nguyen.

6. Brief Partner Updates:

- a. Rockville Chamber of Commerce – Marji Graf
Ms. Graf was not present.
- b. The City of Rockville – Rob DiSpirito
Mr. DiSpirito noted that Mayor and Council had about six council meetings, and they had their 2023 state legislative priority. He encouraged review of the City report. The Mayor and Council received a briefing from Katie Gerbes, Comprehensive Planning Manager, on the status of the near-term implementation items in the Rockville 2040 Plan. She reported that staff had contacted neighborhood associations to obtain feedback on their priorities for implementation steps that affected their community. The Mayor and Council approved the authorization for the City Manager to execute the 10th Amendment to the Interim Management Agreement to temporarily manage certain privately owned areas in the Town Square Commercial District and the Town Square Street and Area Lighting District and to manage the city-owned public plaza in Rockville Town Square temporarily.
- c. MCEDC – Bill Tompkins
Mr. Tompkins stated that there was a press release on venture capital in Montgomery County, announcing that 28 out of \$29 billion in venture capital was in Rockville. REDI has shared the press release on its website. Mr. Tompkins noted that the Maryland Assembly is back in session, discussing the historic transition and ensuring Montgomery County and Rockville are better represented in focus and attention.
- d. Maryland Department of Commerce – Carla Merritt
Ms. Merritt noted that the new Secretary of Commerce Kevin Anderson would start on February 1st. She also reported on a revolving loan fund for start-up childcare businesses, as well as the project restore grants in December 2022 with eight organizations being recipients in Montgomery County.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 am.

Upcoming Important Dates:

Marketing Committee	TBD
Incentive Review Committee	TBD
MWBC Advisory Board	TBD

Executive Committee Meeting February 14th, 4:30 pm.

Finance Committee Meeting February 14th, 5:30 pm.

Board Meeting February 23rd, 7:30 am.