

**Maryland Tourism Development Board Business Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, November 14, 2018 9:30 a.m.**  
**Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort, Spa and Marina**  
**100 Heron Blvd**  
**Cambridge, MD 21613**

**Call to Order/Roll Call**

MTDB: Donna Abbott, Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Judy Bixler, Bunkie Ebersberger, Monroe Harrison, Rick Howarth, Michael James, Casey Jenkins, Cara Joyce, Matt Neitzey, Dan Spedden, Ruth Umbel  
MDMO: Jason Aul, Bernadette Bowman, Lisa Challenger, Ashley Chenault, Hilary Dailey, Amanda Fenstermaker, Kreistn Goller, Amanda Hof, John Fieseler, Kelly Groff, Greg Pizzuto, Sandy Turner, Cassandra Vanhooser, EDC: Kevin Atticks, Rachelina Bonacci, Deb Carter, Cailey Locklair Tolle, Mary Pressley, Amy Rohrer, Roseanne Souza COMMERCE: Greg Bird, Lucy Chittenden, Liz Fitzsimmons, Rich Gilbert, Brian Lawrence, Cynthia Miller, Marci Ross

**Welcome – Rick Howarth, President, Six Flags America**

Rick welcomed everyone to the board meeting and announced new board member Monroe Harrison, Director Public Affairs, Gaylord Hotel, National Harbor

**Board Member Comments/Highlights (not all inclusive)**

Casey Jenkins– discussed matching grant program along with Liz Fitzsimmons’s input on description of program and its policies and procedures which are still being developed. Will be in line with the creative direction of ‘Open For It’ set to launch in June. Casey mentioned the recognition of funds being left on the table and they are looking to bring a more diverse group into the target advertising.

Dan Spedden- Washington County has one hotel under construction with two more being planned. Shopping for a flagship for second hotel first set to open in Spring. Washington County hosted USA Cycling championship in July, surprised at the length of stay, people came a week early. There was so much website engagement that they spiked in numbers like never before. Won World Canal Conference in 2021. 108 federal positions will be coming to Williamsport due to relocation of HQ for C&O Canal National Park.

Cara Joyce- Hoping that weather gods will be nicer next year. Business is a little down this year due to weather. Hoping to have good news to report at next meeting.

Monroe Harrison- Gaylord National has its ICE opening this Friday, brings in 2 million pounds of ice from 35 artisans sculpting into a winter wonderland, and will bring in approximately 200,000 people. Opens from Nov. 16-Jan 1. Montgomery Co, PG Co and DC regulated short-term rental industry. Legislation will be introduced to properly collect and remit state sales tax during session.

Matt Neitzey- As we are entering the holiday travel season it’s a great time to visit to ICE and Christmas on the Potomac. A newly added feature is Cirque Dreams from the Cirque de Soleil team which is an indoor show at the atrium at the Gaylord. We are trying to utilize the grant funds we receive from OTD through the destination marketing grants. We will begin a 12 month domination of the southwest baggage claim area at BWI. You will see PG County brand images with historic sites and attractions. There are several new hotels opening. New County Executive Angela Alsobrooks has been elected. There is a floating replica of Air Force One is at the Pier at National Harbor.

Donna Abbott-Good summer in Ocean City. There were weather challenges but good August. Record-breaking SunFest attendance in September. Expressed thanks to Governor for Post labor Day School Start which has really made a difference. Families vacationed well into August. Winter Fest of lights kicks off this weekend. New hotels have opened and more will be opening.

Judy Bixler- hasn't been the best year for the boating industry however the World Star Sailboat Races were held in Oxford which was an amazing event. Judy thanked the Tourism Office and MD Sports for their help. Talbot County is engaged with OTD to work towards creating Frederick Douglas events. They are hoping to partner with the Harriet Tubman trail. Christmas activities are abundant.

### **Chairman's Report**

Rick gave an update on Six Flags and a glimpse into the upcoming season.

### **Executive Update**

Liz gave a budget overview, and mentioned her state of the state of tourism report would be delivered during the OTD luncheon which everyone will be headed to at the conclusion of this meeting.

**Staff updates:** Non due to condensed meeting schedule.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made, seconded and unanimously approved, the meeting was declared adjourned.