



Maryland Tourism Development Board (MTDB)

General Business Meeting

MINUTES

Thursday, October 27, 2022

MGM National Harbor

101 MGM National Avenue, Oxon Hill, MD 20745

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

I. WELCOME & CALL TO ORDER

Chair Bixler called the meeting to order and expressed our gratitude to fellow Board member Melonie Johnson, President & COO, MGM National Harbor for hosting today's meeting. Tom Riford, Assistant Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce is not able to be with us today. MTDB Board members proceeded with introductions. This meeting was an in-person meeting without a virtual option. All MTDB general business meetings will follow this format.

II. IN ATTENDANCE

Maryland Tourism Development Board

Judy Bixler, Oxford Bellevue Ferry
Ashley Chenault, Charles County
Ben Seidel, Real Hospitality Group
Casey Jenkins, Darker Than Blue
Chris Riehl, Rent-A-Tour

James Mathias, Former Senator, District 38
Melonie Johnson, MGM National Harbor
Rick Howarth, (pending)
Sandy Turner, Cecil County

Destination Marketing Organization (DMO)

Abigail Vitaliano, Baltimore County
Barbara Sopato, St. Mary's
Trish McClean, Visit Baltimore
Matt Scales, Visit Harford

Executive Council to the MTDB

Amy Roher, Maryland Hotel & Lodging Association

Commerce Office of Tourism and Film

Liz Fitzsimmons
Brian Lawrence
Marci Ross

Rianna Wan
Greg Bird
Julia Bouie

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Bixler called for a motion to approve the minutes of 6/21/22.

ACTION ITEM: *The motion was made by Ben Seidel and seconded by Casey Jenkins to approve the minutes. Hearing no request for additions or changes, the minutes were unanimously approved.*

IV. BOARD CHAIR UPDATE

Chair Bixler provided updates on the budget legislative process and Tourism Day coming up in February 2023. Ms. Fitzsimmons responded to questions regarding the current OTD tourism budget and process, DMO reporting/transparency and funding reallocation. There was an ask from the group for more collaboration between tourism-related entities. It was also noted that Ben Seidel and Cassandra Vanhooser are current co-chairs of the MTDB Legislative Committee.

ACTION ITEM: *The Board agreed to form a strategy to work together ensuring that the OTD budget remains intact or increases. Members representing various partnership levels will be contacted to work on the strategy and plan.*

After discussion and with a Board quorum present, Chair Bixler called for a vote on the FY23 Marketing Plan presented in June.

ACTION ITEM: *The motion was made by Chris Riehl and seconded by Sandy Turner to approve the FY23 Marketing Plan. Hearing no request for additions or changes, the plan was unanimously approved.*

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Liz Fitzsimmons presented relevant statistics from the [Tourism Economics Annual Impact Report](#) and the Sales and Use Tax as reported by the Maryland Comptroller (<https://www.marylandtaxes.gov/business/sales-use>). She also led a presentation on the origins, composition and responsibilities of the Board which included:

- HB - 1590 - 1993 - Established of the Maryland Tourism Development Board
- House Bill 690 - 1998 - Established the appointment of private-sector businesses by the Legislature
- Senate Bill 426 - 2007 - Maryland Tourism Development Board – Membership
- Senate Bill 458 - Tourism Promotion Act of 2008
- Senate Bill 87 - 2017 - Maryland Tourism Development Board - Destination Marketing Organization Officials - Voting Rights

- Maryland Tourism Development Board Composition (24) members
- Maryland Tourism Development Board Attendance Requirements (State Government Article, § 8-501 of the Annotated Code of Maryland)

Upcoming events

- Election Day (November 8)
- New Legislative Session (January 11, 2023) and New Rules
- President Ferguson identified mental health, transportation and workforce development as likely priorities for the legislature. Also state leaders need to pay careful attention to the learning and social deficits created by the pandemic.
- First Session with the Balance the State Budget Constitutional Amendment “Let Legislators Change the Budget
- Governor Moore Inauguration (January 18, 2023)
- Recently released FY 2023, Tourism Marketing and Development Plan available at <https://digital.milespartnership.com/publication/?i=774866>.

EDA grant update

- 25 applications reviewed
- Partnership grant applications total \$2.6 million
- Maryland Destination Marketing Organization competitive funding solution - \$2.8 million (proposed)
- \$2.9 million Scenic Byways (advertising and promotion beginning in FY 2023)
- \$2 million in for outdoor recreation

OTD Staff Reports

- Brian Lawrence, Advertising and Content, provided updates including Open for the Holidays, Q1 Deals & Discounts and Welcome Centers graphics updates:
 - Laurel I-95 South - Complete
 - Laurel I-95 North - Complete
 - Bay Country - Complete
 - South Mountain I-70 East - Complete
 - South Mountain I-70 West - Complete
 - Sideling Hill - Installation underway
 - Mason-Dixon - Graphics approved and in production
 - Youghioghenny - Graphics plan underway
- Rianna Wan, Research, discussed the status of the Symphony Dashboard along with current Chesapeake Bay Consumer Research.
- Marci Ross, Senior Assistant Director, provided updates on Chesapeake Bay Storytellers, Maryland Scenic Byways, Civil War Trails, Underground Railroad, African American Printed Products, Trail System Second-To-None, Emerging Initiatives - Accessible Maryland, Indigenous Maryland, Maryland’s Civil Rights Stories, Visitor & Business Support Services and the FY23 DMO Grant Program.

VI. PARTNER REPORTS

Chair Bixler thanked partners and the Board for promoting tourism and looks forward to continuing the work on issues impacting the industry.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bixler called for a motion to adjourn and invited everyone to participate in the tour of the MGM facility and lunch.

ACTION ITEM: *The motion to adjourn was made Sandy Turner and seconded by Ashley Chenault. Hearing no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.*