

Howard County Economic Opportunity and Prosperity Task Force

Minutes (Approved)

September 17, 2018

C. Vernon Gray Room
1st Floor, George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Members in attendance: Anne Brinker, Ana Cisneros, Maddy Halbach, Leonardo McClarty, Jaykant Parekh, and Lawrence Twele. Peter O'Neil from a subcommittee also attended.

Staff in attendance: Jim Meyd, County Auditor's Office, and Jeff Meyers, County Council office.

Chairperson McClarty called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m.

Due to a lack of quorum, the Task Force was not able to take action on the minutes from its meeting on August 13, 2018; however, no one had any comments on the draft minutes.

The Economic Development subcommittee reported on its progress since the last Task Force meeting. The subcommittee had its last meeting on September 6. The subcommittee recommends that the County should strengthen its local business incentive program. The subcommittee learned that the County Council recently approved the County's Transportation Plan. The subcommittee will review the plan to ensure that it calls for an adequate fleet and frequency of service to meet the needs of low-wage and younger employees. The subcommittee supports the development of master plans for commercial centers in the County and the expansion of workforce training through apprenticeships and similar programs. The subcommittee notes that there is fragmentation and overlap among nonprofits in the County and that more effective outreach to clients and potential clients is warranted. The subcommittee notes that activities related to the arts have substantial positive businesses effects therefore the County should continue to support the arts.

The Education and Workforce Development subcommittee has not met recently and is trying to conduct its business through email. The subcommittee's main concern is about the underemployed. Improving their skills should lead to wage increases, which should ameliorate a host of issues. The subcommittee also believes that the stock of affordable housing should be increased throughout all areas of the County and located convenient to transportation to allow residents to reach employment and education centers. The subcommittee suggests that the encore population is underutilized and efforts should be made to include this group in governmental outreach efforts targeting populations that need various kinds of assistance. The subcommittee also recommends expansion of schooling for children younger than kindergarten age, increasing wages so that families can afford child care, expanding employer-provided health care, adding cultural proficiency, social/emotional learning, and soft skills to school

curricula, expanding the number of traveling art shows, expanding apprenticeship programs, and decreasing the number of people who do not have bank accounts -- the unbanked.

The Housing and Community Development subcommittee has not met since the last Task Force meeting. However, the subcommittee had already reported its recommendations. The subcommittee will reformat those recommendations to fit the pillars chart.

Each subcommittee should submit its recommendations formatted to fit the pillars chart to Mr. McClarty not later than October 3.

Mr. McClarty asked members to use their various networks to help spread the word about the Task Force's public hearing on October 9 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Preceding the hearing, the Task Force will meet at 4 p.m.

The Task Force chairs will convene a drafting group to begin work on the Final Report. The group will consist of the co-chairs of the Task Force and each subcommittee. Mr. McClarty reported on the style suggestions that he had received from Council Member Weinstein and thought that the [Spending Affordability Report](#)¹ is a good model. Another suggestion is to have key stakeholders review the report while it is draft stage.

The Task Force adjourned at 4:44 p.m.

¹ <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=longYN27QgY%3d&portalid=0>