



Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 21, 2024

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Held virtual via Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89827743604>

Meeting ID: 898 2774 3604, + 1 301 715 859

Call to Order:	Arquilla Ridgell, Chair		Respectfully Submitted by: Meghan Pazmino, Secretary			
Date/Time:	November 21, 2024, 7:00 PM ET					
Attendees:	X	Arquilla Ridgell (Chair)	X	Serge Thomas (Vice Chair)	X	Liza Smith
		Carol Kosary	X	Lee Rubenstien		Debra Liverpool
	X	Gary Fellman (Parliamentarian)	X	Ben DuGoff	X	Joan McDermott
	X	Meghan Pazmino (Secretary)	X	Phillip Ardanuy		Jonathan Chambers
	X	Rob Fox		Rick Gross		VACANT
Staff:	Talia Beaulieu-Hains, Luisa Cardona					
Guests:	Hannah Wilcove (Councilmember Glass' Office), Dianne Whitaker (MCPL), Naddia Clute (Montgomery County Business Center), Guzman (MCBC Liaison)					

Time	Topic	Notes
7:03	Call to Order & Welcome Meeting Protocols Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board chair called to order. Chair reviewed meeting protocols and recognized guest speakers.
	Agenda Minutes	<p>Board acknowledges they had reviewed agenda. Chair called for motion to approve the agenda. Liza made a motion to approve the agenda for tonight. Gary: 2nd</p> <p>September and October Meeting Minutes: Chair called for a motion to approve. Liza made a motion to approve the minutes. Meghan 2nd Chair: Minutes for September and October are approved.</p>

7:06	Hannah Wilcove, Councilmember Glass' office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduced UVISA: Uplifting Victims and Immigrant Safety Act - Helps victims feel safe reaching out to police to report crimes as well as help them get services from different agencies who support crime victims. Montgomery County has a 10 year statute of limitations on police helping victims apply for a U-Visa. ● MOVE Act - Make Office Vacancies Extinct - That grant program is now accepting applications from businesses looking to expand or move to Montgomery County. They can receive up to \$150,000 to offset lease costs. <p>Questions:</p> <p>Serge: In light of the change of administration, will this protect victims of a crime from possible deportation?</p> <p>Hannah: This isn't us inventing a new legal status, this is us making it easier for people to get the legal status that already exists. It's to help them without fear of deportation.</p> <p>Liza: In regards to the budget, if money is cut from our education budget, is there anything in the works to generate funds for that area?</p> <p>Hannah: We approve the funds, it's specifically the Board of Education who determines where those funds go. The Superintendent Dr. Taylor will be presenting his recommended budget very soon. That budget will have the sources of money for each line item--what's being paid for by county/state/federal funds. Councilmembers are looking at this very seriously and looking at funding sources across the county.</p> <p>Liza: Marriott and the 800 people they are going to layoff is also a big hit for the county.</p> <p>Hannah: Don't know specifics, but CM is aware of and is taking very seriously. We know this is going to have an impact and we are trying to minimize the impact on workers. If you want specifics, you can reach out and Joy will probably respond to you: councilmember.glass@montgomerycountymd.gov</p> <p>Phillip: How vulnerable is MCPS to federal funds?</p> <p>Hannah: Don't have a number off hand, but Title I funding is the biggest thing. It's allocated through the states but it's federal money. For more specifics, you can email: Hannah.wilcove@montgomerycountymd.gov</p>
7:23	Presentations: Montgomery County Business Center	<p>Naddia Clute, Small Business Navigator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Montgomery County Business Center is part of the County Executive Office ● Our role is to help small businesses start and grow, whether it's starting here, expanding here, or moving here. ● Retail, food service, or service--licensing, permitting, procurement ● All support is provided free of cost ● We have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An innovation network or business incubators

- Business Support
- Business Liaisons--They are strategically spread out through the 5 regions
- Identify and reduce problems between county agencies and business owners. For example, businesses having difficulty with getting a permit for themselves or a client.

Guzman- Business Liaison

- I divide my time between those trying to start their business and the other half my time I do outreach in the community going door to door having meetings and being in contact with business to try and provide them assistance.
- Identify problems clients are facing and provide assistance and work with the community.
- A great resource for the community and for those who would like assistance in Spanish.
- We literally focus on going door to door knocking and telling them the county wants to help them. We have a casual conversation, we learn about their business, and we track the interaction and what support we are providing.
- Contacts with different agencies and organizations to support and connect for additional help.
- Montgomery County Loans:
 - Life Asset--\$500-\$10,000 in a group of 3-5 like-minded entrepreneurs.
 - Latino Economic Development Center - \$500-\$250,000 - Traditional lending process
- MOVE Grant:
 - For businesses signing its first commercial lease or expanding
 - At least 36 months, for a commercial space, and within 180 days of execution date
 - Excluded businesses--retail and restaurant
 - First come, first serve due to limited funding; award amount depends on square footage, maximum of \$150,000.
- J.O.B.S. Program - Job creation
 - To incentivize creation of new job; salaries must be at least \$100,000 and awards are up to \$10,000 for new job or \$50,000 for eligible capital projects.
 - Founder's Equity Fund--investing in underserved businesses, awards up to \$100,000 for early and growth-stage companies in Montgomery County.
- Innovation Network Facilities
 - Silver Spring, Rockville, Germantown
 - Incubator Offerings--short term, move in ready, bridges a gap between a home office to transitioning to commercial spaces

Contact:

- businesscenter@montgomerycountymd.gov

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ www.montgomerycountymd.gov/business <p>Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serge: Communication and outreach--are you still encountering language barriers and access to services? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language hasn't been that big of an issue, we do have a need for more bilingual staff. As we submit our budget request we hope we can get additional staff to eventually be able to cover the top five languages. ○ There is a translation unit who can help the business in their own language. ● Rob: Is there awareness of these programs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Every day we encounter people who don't know about these resources. The Business Center is only maybe 2 years old, prior to that it was the Business Advancement Team and now the team is about 9 staff members. ● Gary: Are taxes incentivizing people to keep empty storefronts? People are opting to find places that don't charge for parking. These things run counter to what your office is trying to do. Our vacancy rate is more than 3 times the national average. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Based on data on vacancy rates, it was much higher for business not retail, which is why they made changes to the MOVE Grant. ● Lee: Do you advise or consult on generic things like insurance needs, employee hiring, ownership reporting requirements? Things owners might not be thinking about when they are getting started? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, we help them look at immediate needs and also long term, like if they wanted to eventually want to hire employees, thinking about what they need to do ahead of time. ● Arquilla: You talked about challenges with businesses in getting permits. What are some of the challenges they face? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Biggest issue is timelines--how long things take, what is the process? They sign a lease and think they can be open in 60 days, but in reality they may not even have a permit to build in 60 days. Sometimes contractors say they have submitted everything and say we are waiting for DPS, but when the business owners call, we find out they are waiting on the contractor. Business owners could use better access to the status of their permit. ○ We have quarterly meetings with the department of permitting.
8:03	Board Business	<p>Arquilla: Budget Letter--Gary will make updates from Joan and get the letter out tomorrow.</p> <p>Luisa: One more vacancy on the Board, more info will be coming soon. MCCAB was one of the only boards who got their paperwork in on time.</p>

	<p>Mid-County Director Report, Luisa Cardona</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A lot of changes with the change of administration ● Looking at spaces leased by the federal government--none in Mid-County, but a lot in Silver Spring and Bethesda. Impact if the Federal Government stops leasing those spaces. ● Also looking at the impact of loss of jobs and the reduction of the safety net. ● Analyzing finances, policies. Not exactly sure what to prepare for, but looking at different angles. In terms of communities and community response, the Office of Community Partnerships is working hard to create strategies. ● Hate crimes--we are creating a new reporting system--completely anonymous, can do on your phone or by calling 311. ● We are prepared for any changes that may come and we think there will be a significant impact on our social safety net programs--food, housing assistance, rental assistance. We are in preparation mode. ● Working closely with the congressional delegation ● Compared to other jurisdictions in Maryland, we are better off. Not that things won't be bad, but we're in a better situation. ● Please share any info you have or anything you think we might need so we can be a part of this preparation. <p>In BelPre there was a community that lost power and lost fire alarms, so the building was condemned. We set up a shelter at the Mid County Rec Center for three days. A lot of people found shelter elsewhere, but we did house about 20 people, about 12 of whom were children. Thankful for the Red Cross who stepped in to help.</p>
<p>8:35</p>	<p>Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee Report</p>	<p>Luisa shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No quorum at the last meeting so they couldn't vote on new positions ● Wheaton streetery is closing for the winter but reopening in March with support from One Montgomery Green--no actual funding for this project ● Luisa presented on potential budget cuts they are being asked to do--reducing the amount received for street scaping and for marketing
<p>8:50</p>	<p>Community Concerns</p>	<p>Joan: No notice given that new curb cuts were coming. There seems to be a lack of communication with the county and residents, creating unnecessary irritation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arquilla suggested inviting the departments into meetings ● Better communication is needed all around at the start of projects--posting, door hangers, some kind of notification ● They should be using the civic associations lists to send out information ● We could write a letter as a board making suggestions or requests. Joan will try and put something together.
<p>9:00</p>	<p>Meeting</p>	<p>Phillip moved to adjourn the meeting.</p>

	Adjourned	<p>Serge 2nd. Meeting adjourned by Chair at 9:02 p.m.</p> <p>NEXT MCCAB MEETING: December 19th, 2024 NEXT EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING (members only): December 5th, 2024</p>
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