

**Rural Maryland Council  
Executive Board Meeting  
March 22, 2013  
President's Conference Room, Miller Senate Building  
Annapolis**

**Attendees:**

Executive Committee Members: Scott Warner (Mid-Shore Regional Council), Chair; Mike Pennington (Tri-County Council for Lower Eastern Shore), Mike Thielke (Eastern Shore Entrepreneur Center)

Executive Board members: Doris Mason (Upper Shore Regional Council), Sharan Marshall (Southern MD Libraries), Donna Sasscer (St. Mary's Co Office of Economic Dev), Greg Cole (DBED), Annie Stringer (DHCD), Kevin Brooks (MRDC), Dave Jordan (Wash Co Comm Action Agency), Kathy Beisner (USDA RD), Leanne Mazer (Tri-County Council for Western Maryland), Mike McKay (Alleghany Co Commissioner), Matt Tefteau (MD Farm Bureau), Steve McHenry (MARBIDCO), Erroll Mattox

Executive Director: Charlotte Davis

Guests: Josh Hastings (Eastern Shore Land Conservancy), Annie Kronk, MRHA; Michelle Clark, MRHA; Taleah Parker (DHMH), Rick Pollitt (Co Ex, Wicomico Co), Regan Cherney (Rural Counties Coalition), Linda Prochaska (Sen. Mikulski); Kathy Mackel (Caroline Co. Office of Tourism), Barbara Klein (UMD), Dean Fisher (MEA)

The meeting began at 12:00 Noon with introductions and brief remarks by County Executive Pollitt.

**Minutes:**

The Executive Board reviewed the following minutes from the meetings held on:

- A. December 14, 2012 Executive Board Minutes
  - 1) Mr. Mattox moved to ratify the minutes; Mr. Pennington seconded; minutes were adopted.
- B. January 25, 2013 Executive Board Minutes
  - 1) Mr. Pennington moved to ratify the minutes; Mr. Mattox seconded; minutes were adopted.

**Ratification of Vice Chair Vote:**

The nomination of Doris Mason to become RMC's vice chair was made at the January 25, 2013 RMC Executive Board meeting. Since there was no quorum, the consensus of the Executive Board was to conduct the election via email. RMC's Executive Director sent out an email to RMC Executive Board on February 13, 2013 regarding Doris Mason's nomination as Vice Chair. In response, the Executive Director received 16 affirmative replies with no negative responses or further nominations. The last email proxy received on February 15, 2013.

Mr. McKay moved to ratify the results of the election; Ms. Marshall seconded; the election was ratified.

**Legislative Chair Vacancy:**

There still remains a vacancy of the Legislative Committee chair. Interested persons should contact the Executive Director.

**Financial Report:**

The Executive Committee will be meeting in the next month to review the Fiscal year 2014 RMC budget for presentation at the next full Executive Board meeting.

The Chair acknowledged the support of the Maryland Department of Agriculture. The RMC offices will be moving in with the Marketing Department with thanks to Asst Secretary Pat McMillan.

**Legislative Committee:**

RMC and MAERDAF were still included in the FY 2014 Operating budget. No cuts were made on the House and Senate sides and continued funding looks likely.

**Health Care Committee:**

RMC is working with the Maryland Rural Health Association and submitted joint testimony on several bills. Michelle Clark reported that MRHA focused on 3 telehealth bills that came out of a RMC Roundtable held a few years ago with support from Tom McLoughlin.

**Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF):**

Mr. Pennington reported that since last year was a heavy lift, the focus was to lay low but keep visible and continue to talk about the Fund. The Committee looked at potential vehicles that could direct revenue to the Fund. The Committee will work over the summer to lay the groundwork to seek funding in the Governor's FY 2015 Operating Budget. The Lt. Governor was helpful this year, so hope to work with his office over the summer. This issue could also be a potential topic at the Fall conference.

RMPIF was passed in 2006 during the same year that created MARBIDCO and the Broadband Cooperative, but RMPIF was never funded. The other organizations have been successful. RMC will be asking for \$4 million a year divided into four areas: entrepreneurship, infrastructure, regional council and RMC/MAERDAF. The small town circuit rider program is also included.

### **Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture (GICA):**

RMC has a designated seat on this Commission and has nominated Mr. Mattox to serve as the RMC representative.

### **Other Committee Reports:**

Since the RMC has been in survival mode, the expectation is to get back and fully running. RMC has been reaching out to agriculture. The MD Farm Bureau is represented. RMC has also been reengaged with LEAD Maryland. The Council will be looking to populate and reengage its committees.

Mr. Brooks mentioned the Maryland Municipal League and Maryland Association of Counties Conferences and thought that, in partnership with the Rural Maryland Foundation, RMC should again participate. Mr. Brooks moved that RMC and the Foundation purchase a booth at the MML and MACo conferences this summer. Mr. McKay seconded. The motion was passed.

The Rural Maryland Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit wing of RMC that has provided scholarships to rural leaders to attend development training. The Foundation has approximately \$82,000 and will give a presentation at a future meeting.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation and its Strengthening Rural Families has been a partner with RMC. Dr. Bonnie Braun helped facilitate this arrangement to support low income families.

### **Rural Action Assembly:**

The RMC has taken steps to rebirth the Rural Summit. Tentative dates and a location have been selected. Further details will be shared.

### **Member issues:**

Mr. Brooks mentioned that the Maryland Rural Development Corporation will be subletting some of their office space in Annapolis. Anybody interested please let them know.

Ms. Marshall mentioned two library bills in the Legislature. One changes the capital grant formula to include a wealth equalizer. Old formula used to be a 50/50 match, but now will be on a sliding scale so that rural communities can take advantage of the program.

### **Scheduling future Board meetings:**

The Executive Committee will meet in the next two months and will look to schedule a future Executive Board meeting in the next two months. Fridays are good days for most attendees.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.