

RMC/RMF Joint Planning and Development Committee Meeting
Friday, December 12, 2014
USDA NRCS Offices, John Hanson Business Center
339 Busch's Frontage Road, Suite 301, Annapolis, MD 21409
Minutes

Participants: Mike Thielke, Scott Warner, Bill Barnes, Dan Rider, Lisa Purnell, Kathy Vernacchio, Charlotte Davis

The meeting convened at approximately 12:20 pm.

The minutes from the October 22nd meeting were reviewed. There was a blank under the Youth discussion. Charlotte Davis agreed to insert the current RMC activities in regards to the Youth Engagement and Assessment Initiative currently under way. Bill Barnes motioned to approved the minutes as amended; Dan Rider seconded; the minutes were adopted.

The Committee reviewed the established priorities and discussed potential ideas.

Charlotte Davis led discussion of the health priority. There are opportunities in promoting biking in rural areas. The Council could also develop cue sheets for cyclists to tour in rural areas. Local businesses would be solicited to produce the sheets. This might be a better project for Bike Maryland or the Office of Tourism. The summer feeding program is still a consideration. It would give the RMC visibility and promotion. Also mentioned at the recent youth town halls was the unavailability of scholarships for rural students to study health and then serve in a rural area for a few years.

Bill Barnes discussed Workforce and Economic Development. The Eastern Shore Manufacturing Council is working on the tech bus, a mobile classroom. They have applied for an EDA grant and will hear back in February 2015.

Dan Rider discussed Energy. He suggested that we work on our relationship with the Maryland Hospital Association. There are opportunities to promote biomass in hospitals. RMC should reach out to MHA to discuss this issue.

The Committee discussed the youth initiative briefly. The RMC completed the youth survey, surveying over 2,500 students in Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties. They conducted 8 focus groups of about 30 students each and held three town hall meetings. A final report will be issued along with a dashboard of the results from the Washington College GIS department.

Lisa Purnell discussed Agriculture. She recommended that we continue to look at the summer feeding program and that we invite the person who heads up the Food and Nutrition Services program to attend and speak at the Jan 30th Executive Board meeting. We should also continue to look at the Regional Conservation Partnership Program with NRCS. Funding will be available in May.

Scott Warner discussed Broadband. The RMC staffs the Rural Broadband Coordinating Board. At this time, it shouldn't be resurrected, but it may be in the future. The RMC should provide counties with technical support in comprehensive planning.

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The Committee then discussed the memorandum of understanding received from the Maryland Rural Health Association for a joint conference in the Fall of 2015. Bill Barnes recommended that the Committee advise the RMC Executive Committee to reject the MOU; Lisa Purnell seconded; the motion carried with one vote in the negative.

The Committee discussed the potential work plan outreach with the regional councils. With the Foundation ready to release its Aspire video, it would be better to capture viewer's opinions through a clickable survey link.

Next meeting: January 21, 2015 at 10:00 am at MDA offices in Annapolis