

RMC Executive Board Meeting
September 27, 2019
The Wharves of Choptank Visitor and Heritage Center
3 Crouse Park Lane, Denton 21629
Minutes

Participants:

Scott Warner, Chair
Rick Pollitt
Melissa Kelly
Ron Ensminger
Mike Arntz
Hannah Combs
Steve Umberger
Karen Fedor
Jake Frego
Mary Buffington
Kim Mozingo
Nicole Mihalos
Allan Gorsuch
Debbie Bowden
Theresa Bethune
Robin Rickard
Wilbur Levensgood
Trisha O’Haro
Sen Doug Peters
George Mayer Jr.
Jinhee Kim
Mike McKay
Don Mulrine
Mike Thielke
John Hickman
Lindsay Thompson

Scott LeRoy
Dena Kilmon
Beth Brewster
Roxanne Wolf
Santo Grande
Greg Padgham
Bill Valentine
Susan Banks
John Hartline
Roseanna Vogt
Addie Eckardt
Cindy Stone
Sanita Newsome
Deborah Vornbrock
Terence Collins
Steve McHenry
George Edwards
Linda Edwards
Erroll Mattox
Ryan Snow
Mary Buffington

RMC Staff:
Charlotte Davis
Sam Biddle
Amanda Clevenger

The meeting convened at approximately 12:15pm after Chair Warner called the meeting to order.

The Town Manager of Denton, Don Mulrine, welcomed the group to Denton. Commissioner Wilbur Levensgood welcomed the group to Caroline County.

Members were given an opportunity to give any updates to upcoming events or meetings.

Minutes

The meeting minutes from the April 5, 2019 Winter Quarterly and Executive Board meeting held in Annapolis were presented. Erroll Mattox moved to accept the minutes as presented; Steve McHenry seconded; the meeting minutes were adopted unanimously.

Guest Speakers

Ms. Robin Rickard, Deputy Director, with the Governor's Opioid Operational Command Center gave an update on the State's response to the opioid epidemic. Maryland ranks 7th highest in the country for opioid-related fatalities but the state is currently seeing a downward trend in overdose deaths. Fentanyl continues to be the deadliest substance with trends showing fentanyl replacing heroin as the drug of choice. There is a crisis in rural communities as there is a lack of treatment options and staffing shortages.

Ms. Mary Buffington, Senior GIS Analyst with the Eastern Shore Regional GIF Cooperative, gave a brief presentation on the new broadband assessment tool housed on the RMC's website. The tool gives users the number of broadband providers that are available throughout the state. The tool is interactive and live on the website. It also shows areas that currently lack access to broadband.

Local Business Spotlight

Ms. Nicole Mihalos, Co-founder and Executive Director of Untangled Minds Foundation and Marketing Administrator at Tanglewood Conservatories. Tanglewood Conservatories is a local Caroline County manufacturer of outdoor sunrooms and conservatories. They have a hard time finding qualified workers so they founded the Foundation to help young people develop the skills needed for successful employment in advanced manufacturing. The organization received a MAERDAF grant in FY2020.

Committee Reports

Charlotte Davis presented the FY 2019 year end spending as well as the FY2020 Budget and Financial Report. FY 2019 ended with a small surplus of funds under the RMC operating expenses, but all grant funds were expended. The FY2020 budget was presented with only small changes recommended by the Executive Committee. Small allocations for the Agriculture, Youth Engagement and Health Care Committees as well as some of the designated funds for the State-wide event were moved under personnel to cover employee expenses once PINs are secured. PINs will require the RMC to fund employee health care and retirement plans. There are currently 3 RMC employees without PINs or full state benefits. Reallocating the funds into employee expenses will help with the request for PINs. Mike Thielke moved to accept the FY2019 year-end spending as well as the FY2020 budget; Steve McHenry seconded; the full financial report was accepted as presented.

Susan O'Neill and Matt Tefteau gave a brief report on RMPIF. Currently, all funds have been awarded and grant agreements are in process.

Lindsay Thompson have a brief report on the Legislative Committee. The Committee will meet on Monday October 28th at the Wye Research and Education Center in Queenstown. There are sign-up sheets on the tables for anyone interested in signing up to join the Committee.

Erroll Mattox gave a brief report on the Agriculture Committee. The Governor's Interagency Commission on Agriculture has not met recently.

Mike Thielke spoke on the current efforts to update the RMC Strategic Plan. The Plan should be ready by the Annual Meeting for members to approve.

Greg Padgam announced that the Nominating Committee will be meeting in the next few months to discuss the 2019/2020 RMC Executive Board membership and officers. The election will be held at the

Annual meeting. Anyone interested in serving as an officer should contact him or Charlotte Davis. Anyone who has a suggestion for a new member should also contact him or Charlotte.

Charlotte Davis gave a quick Executive Director's report. Meredith Donaho recently left the organization and Sam Biddle has joined as the Program Coordinator. The Executive Director is currently interviewing for the Program Administrator Position.

New Business

The RMC is seeking nominations for the Rural Impact Awards. Awards guidelines and criteria were distributed to the group. Nominations are due November 5th. Awardees will be recognized at the Dec 11 Annual Meeting

The Rural Summit will be held on December 12 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Annapolis. The planning committee has been meeting and will be sending out registration information shortly.

Announcements

Senator George Edwards suggested that the RMC should ask the Governor for more funding for rural broadband expansion. Time is moving quickly and the Governor only has three more budgets. Senator Edwards made a motion for the RMC to send a letter requesting \$20 million in rural broadband funds for FY2021; Senator Eckardt seconded the motion; the motion was adopted.

Delegate Mike McKay moved to adjourn; Greg Padgham seconded; the meeting adjourned at approximately 2:10pm.

Next meeting: December 11, 2019 7:00pm – 9:00pm at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel, 201 Holiday Court, Annapolis