



## RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: May 14, 2021

Time: 11:00 am – 12:30 am

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Chair Mike Thielke, Susan Harrison, Don Mulrine, Scott Warner, John Hartline, Reza Jarfari, Dakota Matthews, Amanda Clevenger, Megan D'Arcy.

### I. Welcome and Introductions

Mike Thielke called the meeting to order at 11:02am and welcomed everyone.

### II. 2020 Strategic Plan Implementation

Mike Thielke informed participants that the Committee will continue to go through the Strategic Plan and review to make sure the Council is meeting existing goals and making progress. Goals 1, 2, and 3 were reviewed at the March meeting.

- a) Membership Survey (Goal 4): Mike Thielke stated that the purpose of goal 4 is to develop protocols for responding to new opportunities and address issues as they arise to ensure relevancy. The first objective of Goal (4.1) relates to the annual membership survey. Charlotte Davis updated the Committee with the plan to push out the 2021 Rural Issues Survey in June and collect survey responses electronically and in paper format in June, July, and August. Ms. Davis further stated that the information would be collated in early September and presented at the next Joint Planning and Development Committee, Executive Committee and Board meetings with the final one-pager prepared for the December Board meeting. Ms. Davis asked Committee members for feedback on the draft survey included in the packet. Susan Harrison suggested that the topics be grouped with priorities listed under each topic to make it easier for the reader. Ms. Harrison offered wordsmithing suggestions as well. Suggestions were made directly to the survey. The Committee discussed whether or not the survey should be anonymous or request surveyee contact information and it was decided to request contact information so the information could be utilized in a strategic manner if needed, for example to seek volunteers or new members to serve on a committee. Objective 4.2 relates to establishing RMC's priorities and Ms. Davis stated that the priorities were established, and the survey influences next years priorities. Objective 4.3 relates to formalizing the criteria and process for evaluating new requests to RMC. The Committee decided that any such request will be brought in front of the Joint Planning and Development Committee to assess and then make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. Mike Thielke asked staff to write up formalized criteria to be presented at the next meeting. Mr. Thielke made a motion for the formalized criterial be presented at the next Executive Committee meeting. Don Mulrine moved the motion and Reza Jarfari seconded. The motion for staff to write up formal criteria as it relates to objective 4.3 was unanimously approved. Objectove 4.4 relates to the calendar of activities to help RMC's leaders see how new requests might affect the operation. Ms. Davis suggested showing the workflow in a chronological order via the workplan. The Committee felt this was a good idea and Ms. Davis will develop it.
- b) Technical Assistance for Grant Analysis: 2 RFPs (Goal 5): Mike Thielke stated that goal 5 is an attempt for RMC to be responsive to the grant funding programs and communicating the impacts to the general assembly. The Chair stated that RMC purchased grant managing software and now it's important to take the next step to help interpret and package the data. Ms. Davis asked the

Committee members how the Council should better identify the highlights in their grant programs and emphasize the Council's impact. Objective 5.1, 5.2, and 5.8 relates to information collected from grantees and analysis of data. Ms. Davis stated that RMC is responsible for reporting Managing for Results to the State and information is currently collected through the online grant portal (Foundant Grant Management Software) in the final report. The Committee discussed the need for both quantitative and qualitative impacts of RCMs grant programs. Ms. Davis shared the results of the RFP regarding the economic data analysis of our grant programs. Ms. Davis stated that two were received 1) Towson University, MD -Regional Economic Studies Institute and 2) Intelligent Analytics and Modeling, Austin TX. The Committee discussed the two proposals. Susan Harrison made the motion to recommend the Towson University proposal to the Executive Committee for review and approval, Reza Jarfari seconded. The motion to recommend the Towson University proposal to the Executive Committee for review and approval was unanimously approved.

- c) Personnel Policy (Goal 6): Ms. Davis updated the personnel policy because it was out of date. Ms. Davis asked Committee members if they had any suggestions. Ms. Susan Harrison provided suggestions that relate to updating type of interview regarding technology and include a rank of candidates selected so the process does not need to be restarted. Mike Thielke made a suggestion for the performance evaluations, suggested to include text on the Executive Director role as the sole spokesperson for the organization, and copyrighting RMC materials.
- d) Continuing Operations Plan (Goal 6): Ms. Davis is working on developing a continuing operations plan for RMC. Ms. Davis stated the main concern is that the State will only reimburse if there is a valid reason. She further stated that the Plan needs to address certain issues, such as if an employee is traveling and something happens and they are stuck, the State will not allow the Council to reimburse expenses. Committee members suggested adding an emergency reimbursement of expenses under unforeseen circumstances section.
- e) Executive Director Succession Plan (Goal 6): The Committee members discussed Ms. Davis incorporating a 6-month transition strategy for a person who can step in on an interim basis in her absence. Mr. Scott Warner suggested developing a model like the Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore for a smooth handoff from one director to the next. Mike Thielke suggested that the Committee look at the organizational staff structure chart and job descriptions at the next meeting.

### III. New Business

Susan Harrison thanked the Rural Maryland Foundation for funding scholarship opportunities for the LEAD program and the next round will be launched on June 1, 2021. Mike Thielke stated that there is interest on the part of the Rural Maryland Foundation to do a Strategic Plan and LaCharla Figgs has been hired to complete another series of sessions with the Foundation Board. Ms. Davis stated that she has invited Ms. Figgs to participate in the next Foundation meeting in June. Committee members stated their interest in participating in the Strategic Plan conversation for the Foundation. Chair Thielke will ask Dan Rider, Foundation President.

- IV. Adjourn: Mike Thielke adjourned the meeting at 12:31pm.

Next Meeting: September 2, 2021, 10:00am to 12:00pm