



## RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2022

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Committee Chair Mike Thielke, Scott Warner, Susan Harrison, Don Mulrine, Robin Cox, John Hartline, Dan Rider, Mary Ellen Waltermire, Sharon Gibbs Cooper, Charlotte Davis, Megan D’Arcy, and Amanda Clevenger

Committee Chair Mike Thielke welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:03am. Ms. Charlotte Davis and Ms. Susan Harrison introduced the guest speakers from the Institute for Governmental Service and Research with the University of Maryland. The Board members introduced themselves.

Chair Mike Thielke reviewed and asked approval of the September 1, 2022 meeting minutes. Chair Thielke reviewed tasks to be completed from the minutes and they were the following:

- Chair Thielke stated that he was supposed to provide an introductory paragraph on the survey for the newsletter but did not. Ms. Davis stated that the newsletter did not go out and there is still time for him to submit.
- Chair Thielke stated that the Committee made a motion to forward approval of the \$15,090 for APG to the Executive Committee. Ms. Davis stated that it was approved.
- Chair Thielke stated that staff were going to reach out to the YMCA Youth Sport to engage them in the Youth Committee. Ms. Davis replied that this was not done and she will do it. Chair Thielke asked if Ms. Davis reached out to Darius Johnson and Ms. Davis replied that she had by phone and have not heard back from him.
- Chair Thielke asked if we hired a consultant for the Ag Committees Livestock Program. Ms. Davis stated that the state appears to be dropping their interest in a State Meat Processing Inspection Program so it’s on hold but still in conversation in the Agriculture Committee.
- Chair Thielke asked for an update on the Non-Emergency Health Transportation Roundtables. Ms. Davis provided a background on the challenge and gave an update on the roundtables that have been held between transportation and health care professionals. Ms. Davis stated that two have been held – the first one in Cambridge and the second one in Rocky Gap and the third one will take place on November 17 at MDA. Ms. Davis stated that a report will be issued in December with recommendations for the group to take to legislation in January when the General Assembly meets.

- Chair Thielke stated that he was supposed to clarify goal 2 of the Strategic Plan and he has not done it but he will get it to Charlotte soon.
- Chair Thielke asked for an update on the MOU between the Foundation and the Council. Ms. Davis stated that it has been approved by both bodies and we are waiting on signatures before executing the document.
- Chair Thielke stated that Committee advance a recommendation to put out an RFP for grant services and Ms. Davis stated that it's on the agenda for December's Board meeting.
- Chair Thielke asked that the discussion on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

**Chair Thielke asked for a motion to approve the 9/1/2022 meeting minutes. Mr. Scott Warner made the motion; Mr. John Hartline seconded it. The 9/1/2022 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.**

Ms. Charlotte Davis provided background on the rural issues survey and the new partnership with the Institute for Governmental Service and Research at the University of Maryland (IGSR) to help develop a better instrument. Chair Thielke stated that we must engage our committees in the process and make sure they provide us with 1 to 2 survey topics. He further stated that the committee's input will help limit the priorities and help drive the work.

IGSR staff member Ms. Sharon Gibbs Cooper led the presentation on the RMC Survey Project. Topics presented on included collecting meaningful data through the RMC surveys by improving the data collected and including respondents beyond the RMC membership; redesign of the survey instrument to include use issues format for each survey item; paraphrase survey items; add demographic items; employ survey platform features to enhance data collection; broaden survey reach (e.g., send to libraries to gain diverse input); gather insights; confirm objectives and recommend direction.

The Committee discussion related to the survey was the following: the survey needs to be as device friendly as possible; follow-up to survey takers and getting them to respond to the surveys; discussed the platform - not yet decided; the goal of the survey is to reach at least 500 people. Ms. Charlotte Davis reviewed the survey timeline that includes updating the survey by the end of April so that it can be pushed out in June, with responses due in August. The final data will be presented to the Board in December. IGSR staff stated that they may need to shift the timeline and analysis between August and end of September and shift data collection to July instead of August.

The Committee discussed the need to collect key demographic information. IGSR stated that they will use the demographics that the census uses to have a standard metric. Chair Thielke asked Mr. Dan Rider if the Foundation should ask questions on the survey, and Mr. Rider replied stating that he felt the Foundation's questions wouldn't be any different than those asked by RMC. The Committee discussed the questions to be asked and tasked Committees with developing 2 to 3 questions they would like to ask. The Committee felt strongly that the questions had to be reinvented to make it a useful exercise. The Committee stated that they were all in agreement that they are looking to

accomplish two things – partly a performance assessment and partly a needs assessment.

Chair Mike Thielke thanked the members from IGSR and turned the meeting over to Charlotte Davies at 10:57am. The Committee agreed to move forward with proceeding to have IGSR draft a proposal to be presented at the next quarterly meeting. **Dan Rider made the motion that the Committee solicit a proposal from IGSR for the RMC Survey Project; Don Mulrine seconded the motion. All in favor. The motion to solicit a proposal from IGSR for the RMC Survey Project was unanimously approved.**

Charlotte Davis presented the 2022 Rural Issues Report. Ms. Davis stated that staff conducted an internal analysis. The analysis showed that the highest response was maintaining existing businesses; recruiting new employers with good paying jobs; keeping and making farming profitable; address issues related to an aging rural population; encouraging providers to install last mile broadband; and, securing more quality healthcare providers and facilities. Ms. Davis stated that the survey received 200 comments and they were included on the survey. She stated that we received comments regarding affordable housing and that it should be included on the survey. Ms. Davis asked for Committee members to review and provide comments. The Committee discussed an action plan in regard to the survey. The Committee felt that it should include the priority funding for the grant program and survey findings should be presented to the respective Committees so they can address the results related to their focus areas.

Charlotte Davis provided an update on the Membership Campaign. Ms. Davis stated that the Council is actively making an effort to gain members and we are two-thirds of the way through and the next steps is a Facebook campaign and another targeted email outreach.

Charlotte Davis stated that Chair Mike Theilke asked the Committee to move to quarterly meeting and they have been scheduled for Thursdays from 10:00am to 12:00pm on March 9, June 8, August 31, and November 16. Committee members stated they will check their calendars and confirm with RMC staff that these dates work.

Charlotte Davis stated that the Council has been approached by two Heritage Areas on the Shore that want RMC to help them expand electric vehicle charging stations into rural and the Council plans to host a symposium on Monday, February 13, 2023. The purpose of the meeting is to prepare the group for an MDOT RFP that will be released at the end of February focusing on money available to build EV charging stations.

Ms. Davis stated that the Council is planning a Broadband Symposium in May/June and Summit Planning will begin in the New Year.

**Don Mulrine made the motion to adjourn the meeting, John Hartline seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:25am.**