



Rural Maryland Council (RMC)

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, January 13, 2023

Time: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Type: Hybrid – Maryland Inn/Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Susan O'Neill, Lindsay Thompson, Dan Rider, Dr. Heidi Anderson, Chris Benzing, John Hartline, Matt Tefteau, Charlotte Davis, Amanda Clevenger, Megan D'Arcy

Chair Susan O'Neill welcomed everyone and convened the meeting at 12:06pm. **Susan asked for a motion to approve the November 9, 2022 meeting minutes. Mr. Chris Benzing made the motion to approve the meeting minutes, Mr. Matt Tefteau seconded the motion. The 11/9/2022 meeting minutes were unanimously approved. Chair O'Neill asked for a motion to approve the November 16, 2022 ad hoc meeting minutes. Mr. John Hartline made the motion to approve ad hoc meeting minutes, Mr. Matt Tefteau seconded the motion. The ad hoc meeting minutes for 11/16/2022 were unanimously approved.** Chair O'Neill asked the Committee to review the meeting minutes for the December 1, 2022 Annual Executive Board meeting.

Ms. Charlotte Davis provided the financial report stating that there are plenty of funds available for operations. Ms. Davis stated that most of the grant funds have been sent out but there are currently five outstanding grant agreements totaling a little over \$200,000. **Dr. Heidi Anderson made the motion to accept the financial report, Mr. Chris Benzing seconded the motion. The financial report was unanimously accepted.**

Ms. Charlotte Davis reviewed the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative (ESRGC) contract for the Grant Impact Dashboard with the Committee. Ms. Davis stated that the dashboard will help visualize the spatial distribution and impact of grants administered by the RMC. The cost of the project is \$10,470 and includes a 15.5% indirect cost recovery for Salisbury University. **Mr. Chris Benzing made the motion to approve the ESRGC Grant Impact Dashboard project, Dr. Heidi Anderson seconded the motion. The ESRGC Grant Impact Dashboard project was unanimously approved.**

Ms. Charlotte Davis presented the Maces Lane FY23 grant application that will help with the consultant services and marketing for the Maces Lane Community Center. Ms. Davis stated that the Council had an issue with their FY23 grant as DHCD erroneously denied the grant due to misinformation. Ms. Davis stated that the application is for \$45,000 to pay for two consultants – one to help with the programming piece and the other to help with the marketing. She further stated that the cost will come from RMC's operating funds, and the Council has supported them in the past. **Mr. Chris Benzing made the motion to approve the Maces Lane project at \$45,000 from the RMC's operating funds, Mr. John Hartline seconded the motion. Chair O'Neill asked if there was any discussion. Committee members asked if there were matching dollars associated with the project. Ms. Davis stated that DHCD is funding the Maces Lane Community Center, which is a multimillion dollar project. Committee members asked if there would be reporting requirements associated with the project. RMC staff replied that it will be treated as a FY23 grant and will follow the same process with required interim and final reporting. The motion to approve \$45,000 from RMC's operating funds for the FY23 Maces Lane grant project was unanimously approved.**

RMPIF Committee Chair Mr. Scott Warner reported on the RMPIF Committee. Committee Mr. Warner reported that President Ferguson attended the Legislative Breakfast held that morning and staff were able to talk to him and share the Council's request for level funding. Mr. Warner reviewed the Legislative priorities with the Committee and associated materials. Ms. Charlotte Davis asked if the Council should reach out to the Moore administration by sending the legislative priorities card to Eric Luedtke and Moore's Deputy Legislative Officer. The Committee agreed that the Council should send additional information to the

administration. Mr. Warner stated that Mr. Eric Luedtke and Ms. Molly Byron were the guest speakers for the Eastern Regional Council Luncheon. He stated that the Regional Councils talked to Mr. Luedtke and Ms. Byron about RMPFI.

Legislative Committee Co-Chair Mr. Chris Benzing reported that the first Legislative Committee for the Legislative Session was held on Monday, January 9, 2023 and there were thirty attendees. Mr. Benzing stated that the Committee will meet every other Monday unless additional meetings are needed. Mr. Benzing reported that the Legislative Breakfast was held that morning and was successful with a good turnout. Mr. Benzing stated that the Legislative Priorities were in the packet. Ms. Charlotte Davis reviewed the dates for the upcoming Legislative related events, which include Maryland Day on February 9, 2023 and Maryland Day on March 24, 2023. Ms. Davis reviewed updates made to the legislative priorities that include a request for \$100 million for Broadband, additional language under transportation, workforce development, and MARBIDCO. **Mr. Chris Benzing moved the motion to accept the 2023 Legislative Priorities, Dr. Anderson seconded the motion. The motion to accept the 2023 Legislative Priorities was unanimously approved.**

Rural Maryland Foundation (RMF) President Dan Rider reported RMF is moving along with the MOU ready to sign between the Foundation and the Council and it should be ratified quickly. Mr. Rider stated that the Foundation is working on the development of the Think Tank. Ms. Charlotte Davis reviewed the Rural Research memo from the Foundation to the Council requesting \$50,000 to support the rural issues and research initiative (Think Tank) for this fiscal year. Ms. Davis further reported that the Foundation is seeking grant writing services to leverage rural research funding and to seek additional grant funds. Ms. Davis asked for a vote on the request from the Foundation to the Council to support the rural research initiative for \$50,000 and a vote on the RFP for grant writing services from the Council. **Mr. Chris Benzing moved the motion to approve the \$50,000 for the rural research initiative, Ms. Lindsay Thompson seconded the motion. The Committee discussed the draft RFP for the rural research project and Ms. Davis reported that she has a draft that she will send out to Committee members. The motion to approve \$50,000 for the rural research project was unanimously approved. Chair O'Neill asked for a motion to approve the grant writer RFP. Mr. Dan Rider made the motion to approve the grant writer RFP, Mr. Chris Benzing seconded the motion. The Committee discussed updates to the timing of the RFP and staff will fix it. The motion to approve the grant writing RFP was unanimously approved.** Ms. Charlotte Davis reported that the Foundation held a Transfer of Wealth meeting last month and Susanne Richards drafted a workplan and the Committee is making headway.

Health Committee Chair Sara Seitz reported that the Committee met during the summer, the TCCSMD Transportation Roundtable work is wrapping up, and the Committee will be helping with the development of the 2023 Health Plan. Additionally, Ms. Seitz stated that she will be sending a survey out to Health Committee members to help define and focus on the Committee goals and deliverables. Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that she has received a lot of good feedback from legislators about the work coming out of the Roundtables, especially towards establishing the State Coordinating Committee for Health and Human Services Transportation. Staff reported that the draft Health Transportation report is ready for review.

Agriculture Committee Chair Matt Tefteau reported that the Committee is currently tracking legislation related to agriculture, for example the State Ombudsman bill. Ms. Lindsay Thompson recommended that the Committee should meet with the new Secretary of Agriculture once appointed. Mr. Tefteau reported that the Taste of Maryland Agriculture event will be held on February 2, 2023.

Ms. Charlotte Davis reported that the Joint Planning and Development Committee has been in discussion with the University of Maryland Institute for Governmental Service and Research (IGSR) to develop a robust rural issues survey. IGSR submitted a draft proposal for the RMC Survey Project at a cost of \$49,994 and Ms. Davis reviewed the project objectives, scope of work and timeline with the Executive Committee members. Ms. Davis asked for a motion to approve the proposal. Mr. Benzing asked if the Committee could have access to all of the results when available and Ms. Davis stated that was discussed. Ms. Davis asked for a motion to accept the proposal and a declaration to sole source it since the Council did not complete an RFP due to the special nature of the request. **Mr. Chris Benzing made a motion to approve the declaration to sole source for the RMC Survey Project, Mr. John Hartline seconded the motion. The motion to approve the declaration to sole source the RMC Survey Project was unanimously approved. Mr. Chris Benzing**

made the motion to accept the IGSR proposal, Dr. Heidi Anderson seconded the motion. The motion to approve the IGSR proposal was unanimously accepted.

Ms. Charlotte Davis provided the Executive Director's report and referred to the activity reports and stated that staff are currently planning an Electric Vehicle Symposium to be held February 13, 2023, in partnership with Maryland Heritage Areas and Preservation Maryland at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center and staff are starting to plan the Broadband Symposium, which is scheduled to be held on May 10, 2023 at the Calvert House.

Ms. Charlotte Davis reviewed the Friday, January 27, 2023 agenda for the Executive Board meeting with Committee members. Ms. Davis stated that RMC is partnering with Forever Maryland and the Governor Elect has been invited to the Board meeting. Dr. Heidi Anderson asked if there will be a virtual option. Staff stated that it may be difficult to record at Calvert House but will look into options. **Mr. Matt Tefteau made the motion to approve the 1/27/2023 Board agenda, Mr. Chris Benzing seconded the motion. The motion to approve the 1/27/2023 Board agenda was unanimously approved.**

Ms. Charlotte Davis stated that it was time to start planning for the 2023 Rural Summit and asked for thoughts and suggestions on themes, keynotes, and swag to be sent directly to her. Ms. Davis stated that the Grant Impact Dashboard will be completed to showcase and the raw data for the survey will be available. Committee members talked about highlighting the great things that the rural community colleges are doing and it was suggested to reach out to the First Lady Jill Biden to be a guest speaker. John Hartline suggested that the \$50 million Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund projects be highlighted. Dr. Heidi Anderson shared an update on UMES Physician Assistant Program, which includes a rural focus to add to the health care workforce on the shore and the first class of 16 graduated in December. Mr. Dan Rider announced that with RMC funding, the Maryland Clean Energy Center has organized wood energy educational tours and invited members to join the tours and he will send information to the group.

Chair Susan O'Neill thanked everyone for participating in the meeting. Mr. Chris Benzing made a motion to adjourn the meeting, John Hartline seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 1:07pm.