



RMC Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, July 23, 2024

Time: 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Location: Wye Research Center

Attended: Delegate Jeff Ghrist, Bill Valentine, Greg Padgham, Lindsay Thompson, Scott Warner, Debbie Simpkins, Grayson Middleton, Matt Tefteau, Steve McHenry

RMC Staff: Charlotte Davis, Molli Cole, Megan D'Arcy

A. Call to Order 12:26 p.m.

B. Review of April 15, 2024, Minutes

1. Motion to approve minutes made by Steve McHenry and seconded by Gregory Padgham.

C. Speaker – Delegate Jeff Ghrist

Delegate Ghrist provided an overview of recent budget cuts and their implications for the administration's priorities as we approach the next legislative session.

During the discussion, committee members expressed a shared interest in examining the processes of the Board of Public Works before the upcoming session. It was noted that the state is facing a structural deficit of over four billion dollars, with the Kirwan program being a significant contributing factor. Overall, the discussion emphasized the importance of fostering bipartisan partnerships and conversations to strengthen connections for the RMC's priorities in the next legislative session, including the RMC budget.

D. Interim Legislation Topics

1. SDAT Legislation

- i. Thompson: overview on history of current SDAT legislation and the most recent session, interagency problems with communication led to withdrawal status for bill
- ii. Tefteau: New SDAT Director and Assistant Director. Suggesting the Agriculture Committee do some outreach to them in how we can assist in this problem. No SDAT representative at GICA meetings, and it is not on agendas that have been seen as of now. Going to follow up with MDA Secretary regarding GICA requests.

2. Rural Housing

- i. Davis: providing update on the current state of the Housing Committee. Looking at local zonings and inclusionary zonings that will benefit rural communities.
- ii. The challenge is that part of this comes down to the local areas.

3. State Fair

- i. Helping state board fairs look at their deficit they are operating under. Charging an extra dollar in admissions could help mitigate these issues.

4. Cooperative Development

- i. We are supporting SB85, a worker cooperative bill, and are exploring ways to gain support for this legislation this year, likely through cross-filing.

E. Rural Broadband Shortfalls and Concerns

1. Funding Source for ACP
2. Overall leadership and plan
3. NTIA
4. Digital Equity
5. Telecommunications Tax Reform – [HB1492](#)
 - i. Davis: providing history on this bill and how to render this kind of legislation to be revenue neutral and it could be more appealing to those who the bill would affect.
 - ii. Cut existing tax for existing providers
 - iii. Teffeau: Sales and Use Tax Bill, looking for fiscal impact since this has been in effect.
 - iv. Funding would go into the Rural Broadband Assistance Fund
 - v. Looking to reach out to the Comptroller regarding these ideas and if this would implement the same amount of funding or has too much changed since the fiscal note is over a decade old.

F. Events

1. MML Housing Symposium, August 1, 2024, Crowne Plaza, Annapolis, Maryland
2. MACo, August 14-17, 2024, Ocean City, Maryland
 - i. RMC will be tabling at MACO again this year, those attending are welcome to stop by and pick up their Tawes tickets or help give out RMC materials.
3. Tawes Crab and Clam Bake, September 25, 2024, Crisfield, Maryland
 - i. More information will be forthcoming regarding RMC tickets for this year's clam bake, look for information from Molli in the coming weeks.

G. Next Meeting

1. RMC Staff is looking at dates in October at this time, but subject to change as we look for new co-chairs for this committee.

H. Other

1. Thompson joining Providence Strategies and resigning as Legislative Chair as of August 1, 2024. Reach out to RMC Staff for suggestions on who should take over chair.
2. McHenry: Bus tour with Korman and subcommittees to build relationships with legislators that may not know RMC and our work as well.
 - i. May be too late this interim to be trying to host a tour as most book out earlier in the interim.

I. Adjourn

1. Motion to adjourn was made by Grayson Middleton and seconded by Matt Teffeau.
2. Adjourned 2:05 p.m.