



**RMC Quarterly Executive Board Meeting  
and Legislative Luncheon  
January 26, 2024, 12:00pm – 2:00pm  
Location: Rams Head on Stage  
33 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
Minutes**

**Participants:** RMC Executive Board Members and RMC Staff

- A. Welcome and Agenda Overview (pg. 1) Susan O'Neill, Chair
- B. Ceremony Welcoming Remarks Francis Gray, Tribal Chair,  
Piscataway Conway Tribal Council
- C. Business Spotlight Bill and Christina Schindler,  
Modern Stone Age Kitchen, Chestertown, Maryland

**Business Meeting**

- D. Approval of the November 13, 2023, Annual Meeting Minutes (pgs. 2-3)  
1) Motion to approve Minutes: Made by Matt Teffeau, seconded by Lindsay Thompson
- E. Board and Committee Reports
- 1) Financial Report (pgs. 4-5) Charlotte Davis, Executive Director
- a) FY2024 Budget
1. Charlotte Davis provided an update on the FY2024 Budget, including that a majority of the FY2024 budget, \$7.6 million had been allocated with only a few grants left to distribute funds fully to.
  2. Motion to approve the FY2024 Budget: Made by John Hartline, seconded by Chris Benzing.
- b) FY2025 Budget
1. Charlotte Davis provided an update on the FY2025 Budget as it currently stands. The Rural Maryland Council currently remains level funded, and first budget hearings are scheduled for the following week. Davis concluded that members contact legislators and stay active in following the budget process for continued support of the budget for the RMC.
- 2) Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund Scott Warner, Chair
- a) Scott Warner provided an update on the committee and expressed support for the current level funding of the Rural Maryland Council to continue awarding grants at the level the council has been. Warner further thanked the Governor and his administration, the RMC staff, and the grant review boards for their continued work as grant requests have been steadily increasing every year.
  - b) Warner asked the board to review the RMPIF report made available in materials for the meeting.
  - c) Warner also reminded any grant recipients attending the meeting that interim reports are due in the following week.
- 3) Legislative Committee Lindsay Thompson and Chris Benzing, Co-Chairs
- a) Lindsay Thompson provided the Legislative Priorities draft to the board meeting and further expressed gratitude for the proposed level funding in the FY2025 Budget. Thompson also announced a reminder that the RMC Legislative Committee meets every other Monday during the Legislative Session, with meetings typically starting at 2 p.m.
  - b) 2024 Legislative Priorities
    1. Motion made to approve the 2024 Legislative Priorities: Made by Dan Rider, seconded by Matt Teffeau.
  - c) Legislative Events
    - Rural Maryland Day, February 8, 2024
    - Chris Benzing announced that RMC was looking for volunteers to sign up with the virtual Rural Maryland Day.
    - Maryland Day, March 25, 2024

4) Agriculture Committee

Matthew Teffeau, Chair

- a) Matt Teffeau gave an update on the status of the Agriculture Committee. Teffeau elaborated that the committee is waiting to hear from the Governor's office regarding seating members on the Maryland Agriculture Commission, as well as the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission on Agriculture. There will be an Agriculture Committee meeting in the spring, date to be announced.

5) Health Committee

Sara Seitz, Chair

- a) An update was provided regarding recent work the Health Committee has done, including the discussion of how to expand primary and dental care access in rural areas, as well as a discussion on telehealth and its future in Rural Maryland. The committee had met in December and discussed the health breakout sessions that were part of the 2023 Rural Summit hosted by the Rural Maryland Council. The committee's next meeting is Wednesday, February 21, 2024.

6) Joint Planning and Development Committee

John Hartline, Chair

- a) John Hartline, new RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee Chair provided the RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee report. He stated that a letter was sent to the University of Maryland's Institute of Government and Research to terminate the 2024 Rural Issues Survey contract. He also mentioned that the committee has decided to have two half-day meetings with Ms. LaCharla Figgs to discuss the RMC strategic plan. The committee reviewed the draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement that was included in the meeting materials.

b) DRAFT DEI Statement (pg. 6)

- 1. Motion to approve the DEI Statement: Motion made by Chris Benzing, seconded by Scott Warner.

7) Rural Maryland Foundation

Dan Rider, President

- a) Dan Rider reported that the foundation is currently focusing on Transfer of Wealth and the Think Tank Rural Research Project. Charlotte Davis mentioned that the foundation is expecting a proposal from Steve McHenry for Transfer of Wealth by the next foundation meeting. Rider also mentioned that the foundation is planning to have its own strategic plan. The committee discussed having a separate meeting with LaCharla Figgs to discuss the topics for the foundation's strategic plan. Davis mentioned that she would reach out to her to discuss the idea.

8) Rural Housing Working Committee

- a) Charlotte Davis provided the RMC Rural Housing Working Committee report. She stated that the Rural Housing Survey for Local Government has been sent out to municipal and county leaders to assess the capacity and gaps in rural housing. She mentioned that the survey results will be presented to the legislature and that the responses are due today.

9) Executive Director's Report (pgs. 9-17)

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director

- a) Davis highlighted that the RMC staff has been hard at work since Session started and that RMC looks forward to maintaining level funding for the FY2025 Budget Year, and took the time to acknowledge and thank the Governor's Office and administration, elected officials present, Secretary Atticks, and the variety of staff joining the RMC today for the meeting. Davis also mentioned that she and the RMC staff are looking forward to the Value-Added Agriculture Summit set to be hosted this year by Cultivate and Craft, formerly Grow and Fortify.

b) Staff Activity Reports

c) FY2023 Annual Report

- 1. Davis announced that hard copies of the 2023 RMC Annual Report were now available and could be found at the back of the room for the board to take with them. She thanked those who reviewed the report for their help.

F. New Business

- a) Announcements

G. Adjourn

**Next Meeting: Friday, April 5, 2024, 12 pm -2 pm**

**Location: Banneker-Douglass Museum, 84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401**