



Rural Maryland Council (RMC)

Quarterly Executive Board Meeting

Friday, April 4, 2025 – 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Banneker-Douglas-Tubman Museum, 84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Minutes

Participants: Chair Susan O’Neill, Jamie Williams, Scott Warner, Gregory Padgham, Danny Thompson, Steve McHenry, Melissa Kelly, Dan Schneckenberger, Bob Zimberoff, Bill Valentine, Abby McNinch, Patricia Eleazer, Patricia Watson, Roderick Lewis, Kimberly Kratovil, Sara Seitz, Hanna Teklit, Nancy Jean Fields, Bill Murphy, Richard Blair, Rick Hemphill, Michael Pokorny, Anne Shepard, Grayson Middleton, Jonathan Cribbs, Keith Cornish, Jose Prieto, Alice Settle-Raskin, Jessica Cook, Liz Connelly, Darrell Carrington, Shelly M. Gross-Wade, Ruth Daurica, Chris Abell, Bill Reid, Jay Bethune, Cindy Stone, John Hartline, Kurt Fuchs, Matt Teffeau, Chris Kaselemis, Letitia Nichols, Don Mulrine, Kelsey Keadle, Elizabeth Stahlman, Dr. Heidi Anderson, Sue Wagner, John Wagner, Anne Litz

RMC Staff: Charlotte Davis, Megan D’Arcy, Molli Cole, Leeza DeCheubel

LeRonn Hebert, Administrative Manager & Special Assistant of the Banneker-Douglas-Tubman Museum, shared a welcome on behalf of the venue and thanks participants for coming.

Jose Prieto, Owner and Operator of The Bay Mushrooms, was featured as a business spotlight where he shared the story of how his venture began and has continued to grow over time. Mr. Prieto graciously offered samples of his mushrooms to participants.

Michael Pokorny, Chief Executive Officer, MCIC, was featured as a guest speaker. Mr. Pokorny informed participants of the role of MCIC and his newly appointed position.

Chair Susan O’Neil welcomed participants and initiated the business portion of the meeting at 12:59 pm.

Participants were asked to review the minutes of the February 26, 2025, meeting. Grayson Middleton motioned to approve the minutes; Chris Abell seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Charlotte Davis presented the FY2025 budget. Richard C. Blair motioned to approve the budget; Sara Seitz seconded the motion. The FY2025 budget was unanimously approved.

Scott Warner, Chair of Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) Committee, spoke to attendees regarding FY2026. Mr. Warner presented the FY2026 Breakdown of Funds. Steve McHenry motioned to approve of the suggested breakdown; Daniel Schneckenberger seconded the motion. The FY2026 Breakdown of Funds was unanimously approved. Mr. Warner also reviewed the FY2026 Guidelines and Criteria, in addition to the FY2026 Notice of Funding Availability [NOFA] that is set to be released. Kurt Fuchs motioned to approve the NOFA; Richard C. Blair seconded the motion. The FY2026 NOFA was unanimously approved.

Kurt Fuchs, Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee, reviewed the presented 2025 Bil Tracker and Testimony from RMC throughout the current legislative session. Mr. Fuchs also announced that the Legislative Committee is in search of another Co-Chair. The committee's next meeting will be on Monday, April 21, 2025, for a legislative review.

Ms. Davis reviewed provided updates regarding the Rural Maryland Foundation. The Transfer of Wealth subcommittee is scheduled to meet on Friday, April 25, 2025. Steve McHenry presented the most recent draft of the Rural Maryland Preservation and Advancement Trust. RMF will meet on Thursday, June 12, 2025.

Sara Seitz, Chair of the RMC Health Committee, presented an update on the committee. Members last met on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, and are scheduled to meet next Wednesday, May 14, 2025.

Ms. Davis provided an update on the RMC Rural Housing Working Committee. Members last on Thursday, February 27, 2025, and featured Mr. Pokorny as a guest speaker. The committee is scheduled to meet next on Thursday, May 29, 2025.

Ms. Davis provided an update on the RMC Agriculture Committee. Members are currently looking to find a member to sit on GICA. The committee's next scheduled meeting is TBD.

John Hartline, Chair of the Joint Planning and Development Committee, presented the University of Baltimore-Schaefer Center for Public Policy Proposal. Participants reviewed the proposal to find the best route to proceed. Steve McHenry motioned to move forward with Option 3; William Reid seconded the motion. The motion to move forward with UB's Proposal-Option 3, was unanimously approved. The committee is scheduled to meet next on Thursday, June 5, 2025.

Ms. Davis presented RMC Staff Activity Reports. In addition, she presented the FY2026 Workplan. Kurt Fuchs motioned to approve the workplan; Gregory Padgham seconded the motion. The FY2026 Workplan was unanimously approved. Ms. Davis also discussed Rural Summit Planning. The 2025 Rural Summit is scheduled to take place on November 19 & 20, 2025, in Annapolis. In addition, RMC and MARBIDCO have plans to reschedule the Secretaries Tour that was originally set for May. More information regarding the tour will be announced shortly.

Ms. Davis reviewed new business ideas with participants and asked that Board members review the RESI draft prior to the next meeting, The Executive Board is next scheduled to meet on Friday, September 19, 2025, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm – Location TBD. Ms. Davis then dedicated a special thank you to sponsors that have made these events possible over the last few months. In addition, she thanked members of the General Assembly, including Delegate Jeff Ghrist, Delegate Patterson, Delegate Sample-Hughes, and Delegate Steven Arentz for their continuous work throughout session.

Kurt Fuchs motioned to adjourn the meeting; Jamie Williams seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 1:48 pm.