

The Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC) held a scheduled Executive Board meeting on October 14, 2020. The meeting was held in person and virtually via web conference due to COVID-19. The meeting was facilitated from the Mid-Shore Regional Council office. Chairman Chase was in attendance in person. Members attending via web conference were Delegate Chris Adams, Allen Nelson, Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, and Kurt Fuchs. MSRC staff Scott Warner and Terry Deighan attended in person.

Chairman Chase called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Action Items

Approval of May 29, 2020 Minutes

Delegate Adams made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All in favor signify by stating aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of June 5, 2020 Closed Executive Session Minutes

Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the closed executive session minutes. Delegate Adams seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All in favor signify by stating aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report

Treasurer Kurt Fuchs presented the MSRC Treasurer's Report dated October 14, 2020. There were no questions.

Next, Mr. Warner presented a financial report for the MSRC's EDA supplemental CARES Act grant dated October 14, 2020. The grant period is two years: FY21 through FY22 (7/1/20 to 6/30/22). He stated having a separate report for this grant makes for easier tracking and communication with the Executive Board. Mr. Warner explained each category listed and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

Delegate Adams made a motion to approve the reports. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All in favor signify by stating aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Approval FY21 RMPIF budget reduction allocations

Mr. Warner informed the Executive Board that since the MSRC approved the FY21 Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) budget there have been reductions to RMPIF by the State.

First, there was a 5% reduction to the RMPIF grants on July 7, 2020.

Second, there was a \$400,000 reduction to RMPIF grants in September. This reduction by Maryland Department of Budget and Management (DBM) asked the Rural Maryland Council (RMC) to hold \$400,000 until the FY21 fourth quarter. The RMC may be able to release these funds if the State does not need to make further cuts to the program. DBM suggested the total amount be withheld from the five regional councils' grants. The RMC Executive Committee did not agree and instead recommended that the reduction be evenly spread among all RMPIF and MAERDAF grantees, as well as, the RMC. The RMC Executive Board agreed with this recommendation during their quarterly meeting. This amounts to a 7% reduction to the MSRC.

Mr. Warner provided a spreadsheet that he used to explain the reductions to the MSRC's program partners. Chairman Chase had been apprised of these suggestions at each phase of the reductions.

Mr. Warner provided an amended FY21 RMPIF budget with complete reductions included.

| | <u>FY21 (original)</u> | <u>FY21 (amended)</u> | <u>second reduction amounts</u> |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| RMPIF funds to be issued to MSRC | 410,705 | 364,199 | |
| Disbursements by program | | | |
| DelMarVa Index * | 30,000 | 30,000 | 0 |
| GIS Circuit Rider * | 30,000 | 30,000 | 0 |
| Online CEDS * | 35,000 | 35,000 | 0 |
| Special GIS/COVID-related projects * | 27,135 | 0 | 20,350 |
| Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center | 125,000 | 117,129 | 926 |
| Shore Gourmet/Chesapeake Culinary Center | 108,500 | 101,500 | 970 |
| Annie's Project | 9,000 | 6,500 | 2,000 |
| Regional Marketing | 5,000 | 3,000 | 1,719 |

The 'second reduction amounts' listed would be disbursed to those programs if the second reduction amount to RMPIF is not necessary in the FY21 fourth quarter and the RMC is approved to release the funds to the MSRC.

* These four programs are partnerships with the ESRGC.

Mr. Warner noted that during the whole process of considering the reductions he has been in touch with all program partners. The reductions will not affect any personnel regarding wages. All partners were very understanding and appreciate the MSRC's support and open communication.

Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the RMPIF budget reduction allocations as presented. Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a

motion and a second, any further discussion? All in favor signify by stating aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Support letter for ESEC grant application to EDA for Workforce Readiness in Agritech & Aquatech Program

Mr. Warner informed the Executive Board members he was sent a request a couple days ago for a support letter for ESEC. Two items were emailed to the Executive Board yesterday afternoon: the grant's executive summary and a draft endorsement letter from MSRC.

Mr. Fuchs made a motion to provide the support letter. Ms. Haddaway-Riccio seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a motion and a second, any further discussion? All in favor signify by stating aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

Future Meetings

MSRC Quarterly Meeting

Mr. Warner stated that the next MSRC quarterly meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2020. He asked the Executive Board should we have it in person or should we hold it virtually like the last two quarterly meetings? He added that the December meeting is normally held in Dorchester County during MACo's Winter Conference at the Hyatt. MACo is not having the conference this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The other location the MSRC holds its meeting in Dorchester County is the Delmarva Community Services (DCS) building in Cambridge. While the DCS room is large enough to socially distance, the internet connection is not very good, and anyone who would like to join virtually may have a problem. He could check with DCS if the room is available and if their internet connection has improved. The Board discussed the length of time between now and the meeting and decided to wait on making a decision.

MSRC Executive Meeting

Mr. Warner asked the Executive Board questions related to their next meeting. When would they like to hold their next meeting prior to the MSRC meeting scheduled for December 9, 2020? Would they like it held in person or virtually? As the MSRC's conference room now has large screen video conferencing equipment, the MSRC could hold it virtually from the office. The group decided the meeting should be held the week before Thanksgiving with the option of attending in person at the office or joining virtually.

CEDS Meeting

Mr. Warner stated the CEDS meeting is usually held in the beginning of October at the Talbot County Free Library in Easton. He has been thinking about holding the meeting in person at venues that could accommodate the committee with social distancing requirements. It would be ideal to hold the meeting in person; however, it could be held virtually. Due to timelines of holding CEDS meetings and work to revise the document, the first CEDS full committee meeting of the year should be held in the near future. He added that he has already reached out

to the project champions to receive their updates and the CEDS slide presentation for the meeting is ready. The Executive Board unanimously agreed it should be held virtually during the last week of October.

Additional Update

Mr. Warner took a few minutes to make the Executive Board members aware of a possible issue with the EDA supplemental CARES Act grants the MSRC and Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland (TCCLES) received to execute the Eastern Shore Economic Recovery COVID-19 Project. The MSRC and TCCLES have been working on an internal MOU with the ESRGC and the counties (Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot). All parties have agreed to sign the agreement. Late last week the EDA Philadelphia Regional Office sent an email to all EDA Economic Development Districts in the region regarding subrecipient agreements and 2 C.F.R.§200.330. This regulation is not something the MSRC is used to dealing with; however, the TCCLES is familiar. Mr. Warner and Mr. Padgham (TCCLES executive director) have questions regarding the appropriate grant status of their partners and have requested a call with EDA Philadelphia Regional Office Director Linda Cruz-Carnall to get her guidance. Depending on the outcome of the conversation the MSRC and TCCLES may have to add an additional agreement to the partners' relationship.

Member comments/requests

None

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 10:40 a.m.