

The Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC) held a scheduled Executive Board meeting on November 24, 2021. The meeting was held in person and virtually via web conference. The meeting was facilitated from the Mid-Shore Regional Council office. Chairman Walter Chase, James Redman, Kurt Fuchs, and Delegate Johnny Mautz were in attendance in person. Members attending via web conference were Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and Bill Christopher. MSRC staff Scott Warner and Terry Deighan attended in person.

Chairman Chase called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

### Action Items

#### *Approval of May 13, 2021, Minutes*

Mr. Christopher made a motion to approve as submitted. 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 MSRC FY21 independent financial statements*

MSRC Treasurer Mr. Fuchs presented the MSRC's FY21 financial statements. Mr. Warner stated it was prepared by Sump & Associates and is similar to past statements. The Board reviewed the document. Mr. Fuchs made a motion to accept as presented. Delegate Mautz 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 May 13, 2021, Closed Executive Session Minutes with the attached Executive Director's Annual Performance Evaluation May 10, 2021, meeting minutes*

Mr. Christopher made a motion to approve the closed executive session 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.

### *Financial Report*

#### MSRC Treasurer's Report

Mr. Fuchs, MSRC Treasurer, stated all income is on track. A request has been made to MTA and that payment should be made in the next 30 days. Mr. Redman made a motion to approve the report. Delegate Mautz 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.

## 2022 RMPIF Report

Mr. Warner presented the 2022 Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) Report. He stated that checks have been issued as designated on the report, but are sitting in fireproof safe. He and Ms. Deighan have drafted MOU agreements between the MSRC and each partner. These MOUs reflect the scope of work in the RMPIF grants. These MOUs are currently being reviewed by the MSRC attorney Curt Booth. As soon as Mr. Booth has sent the final MOUs back to the MSRC, the MSRC will distribute the MOUs to the partnering organizations. Once signed the checks will be distributed. This is the planned procedure each year moving forward. Delegate Mautz made a motion to accept the report as presented. Mr. Redman 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.

## Eastern Shore Economic Recovery COVID-19 Project Report

Mr. Warner stated that this project is well underway, and the counties have begun to draw down their available funds. Salisbury University has been consistently drawing funds monthly. The MSRC staff has been in constant contact with EDA representatives Alma Plummer and Lucas Martin and expect to have all available funds expended by the June 2022 end date. Mr. Fuchs made a motion to accept the report as presented. Delegate Mautz 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.

## Ratification of electronic vote "Resolution accepting the MTA FY22 MTA Coordination Grant"

Mr. Warner stated that he received 6 responses from the Executive Board, and all were marked "Accept". Mr. Fuchs made a motion to ratify. Delegate Mautz 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.

## Discuss/approve recommendation of the 2022 MSRC Executive Board

Mr. Warner reminded the Board Members of the automatic changes to the Vice Chair positions that occur due to the MSRC By-Laws. They are 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair will be Caroline County, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair will be Dorchester County, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair will be Talbot County. Additionally, he stated the General Assembly member will be Senator Addie Eckardt. After a brief discussion the following 2022 MSRC Executive Board slate was proposed.

- Chairman: Walter Chase
- First Vice-Chairman: Dan Franklin (Caroline)
- Second Vice-Chairman: Ricky Travers (Dorchester)
- Third Vice-Chairman: Chuck Callahan (Talbot)
- Secretary: James Redman
- Treasurer: Kurt Fuchs
- General Assembly: Addie Eckardt
- Member-at-large: Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio
- Member-at-large: Bill Christopher

Delegate Mautz made a motion to accept the Executive Board slate as presented. Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Chairman Chase asked any further discussion; all in favor signify by stating aye; those opposed have the same rights; ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously. The proposed slate will be presented to the full council at their December 8, 2021, meeting for consideration.

## Updates

Mr. Warner provided the following information.

### *Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) – required by EDA*

The MSRC received emails from EDA on November 10, 2021, notifying the following.

- “All EDDs are required to and need to apply for a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) as an EDA MANDATE.”
- “Effective immediately EDA will require all Designated Economic Development Districts to obtain an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from your cognizant agency, EDA.”

Mr. Warner stated that he has spoken with EDA representative Alma Plummer. The MSRC has engaged our accountant Darian Sump on this process and asked him to communicate with the Federal Cognizant Agency to establish the NICRA. The MSRC will keep Ms. Plummer updated on the progress.

### *MSRC membership*

Mr. Warner stated that the MSRC has three voting member openings that need to be filled. The openings are:

- Caroline minority leader – Maria D’Arcy moved out of state; however, Ms. D’Arcy sent an email to Mr. Warner on October 18, 2021, stating:
  - Good morning, Scott, I want to let you know that I am back to Easton from Florida. It was a short journey. If you need any help at the Board, I am available to continue working with MSRC. Thank you, Maria D’Arcy
  - All of the Executive Board members agreed to keep Ms. D’Arcy on the MSRC. Mr. Warner will reach out to Ms. D’Arcy to let her know.
- Caroline private sector/private citizen – Gale Nashold passed away this past year. This position on the MSRC is appointed by the MSRC Executive Board. Mr. Warner has been communicating with MSRC members from Caroline County Dan Franklin and Anthony Casey to get their recommendations on a replacement. As soon as that happens, these recommendations will be brought to the executive board.
- Representative from Maryland Seafood Industries – Kelley Cox passed away this past year. This position is designated by the association. The resource-based associations usually like the MSRC to make recommendations on filling such vacancies. Ms. Haddaway-Riccio and Mr. Christopher offered to send Mr. Warner emails with recommendations in the coming days. These recommendations will be brought to the executive board.

### *Eastern Shore Economic Recovery COVID-19 Project (EDA CARES Act grant)*

Mr. Warner provided an update on the project.

The Eastern Shore Economic Recovery Project (ESERP) Committee has made presentations to each mid-shore county.

- Talbot – July 27, 2021
- Caroline – August 4, 2021
- Dorchester – September 2, 2021

Additionally, the committee made a presentation to lower shore economic development directors on October 14, 2021.

The ESERP Committee had its 32<sup>nd</sup> meeting yesterday, November 23, 2021.

Three projects have been completed:

1) Tax Revenue Dashboards

- Four tax revenue dashboards utilizing data from the State of Maryland Comptroller's Office, Maryland Department of Information Technology, and federal economic stimulus data have been developed. These tools will enable local leaders and decision makers to view trends within and among industries and to better understand the effects of COVID-19 in different segments of the economy and in different regions in Maryland.

2) Eastern Shore Economic Recovery website

- The website utilizes publicly accessible data and resources and provides an interactive and highly customized experience focused on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It provides quick access to relevant information such as unemployment status, uninsured populations, poverty, socially vulnerable populations and more. This data will be presented as interactive dashboards, web mapping applications, interactive reports, key points, summaries, and statistics.

3) Business Sentiment Survey

- The survey engages with local businesses to gain insight on a range of topics including workforce, wages, business conditions, barriers to success, and strategies for improvement. The survey feedback will be used in a variety of ways including to inform future tools developed under these initiative and other unrelated projects and to visualize and present feedback to councils and businesses in the form of dashboards, etc.
- The initial survey was open from June 9, 2021 – July 2, 2021, and had 245 responses. The results have been compiled into a dashboard to allow committee members to better visualize and analyze the data. An infographic of aggregated results has also been developed to share publicly.
- The second survey will be initiated in December 2021
- The survey is planned to be given every 6 months.

The Tax Revenue Dashboard and Economic Recovery website were released in August 2021 and are available at <http://recovery.delmarvaindex.org>.

The committee has also engaged in extensive marketing and outreach activities in order to promote these tools within the local business and economic development communities.

Fourth project – The committee is now working on a Tourism Dashboard.

Possible fifth project – The committee is discussing a workforce survey.

Mr. Warner concluded by stating that it would be great to share the progress of the ESERP at the full Council meeting in March 2022.

### *Regional marketing project for the counties*

Mr. Warner shared the status of this project.

- Mission of the project is to improve the employer/employee relationship and increase Mid-Shore hiring rates.
- The name of the website is Mid-Shore Hires.com.
- The website has three sections: Find Employees, Attracting Employees, and Retaining Employees.
- The Regional Marketing Project Committee will have its final meeting on November 30, 2021.
- The PNC Bank grant report will be submitted in December 2021.

### *State of Maryland EDA non-competitive planning grant*

Mr. Warner gave the following update.

September 2, 2021, Maryland Department of Commerce (MD DOC) representative Nancy LaJoyce (Senior Business Development Representative (serving Caroline, Kent, Queen Anne's & Talbot counties), Office of Business Development) called Mr. Warner to discuss the possible inclusion of the MSRC in the State of Maryland's non-competitive grant application to EDA. This EDA grant opportunity is funded by American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

Later in the day Mr. Warner joined a conference call with MD DOC representatives Jim Palma (Acting Director; Office of Policy, Research, and Government Affairs), Signe Pringle (Deputy Secretary), and Ms. LaJoyce to further discuss the grant application.

On September 3, 2021, after speaking with the Eastern Shore Economic Recovery Project team Mr. Warner sent an email to Ms. LaJoyce summarizing how the MSRC and its partners may be able to assist the State by expanding the Eastern Shore Economic Recovery Project tools to incorporate all of Maryland's jurisdictions.

If the MSRC is included in the grant proposal and it is awarded, the MSRC will then determine if it wants to participate.

To date, no official feedback has been received by the MSRC.

### Upcoming Meetings

The Eastern Shore Regional Councils Joint Luncheon 12:00pm and Mid-Shore Regional Council meeting 1:15pm

- December 8, 2021 (Wednesday), at the Hyatt in Cambridge during the MACo Winter Conference

Mid-Shore Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) meeting

- January 5, 2022 (Wednesday), at 12:00pm at Easton Firehouse

Tentative 2022 MSRC Meeting Dates

- Mr. Warner stated that a document with the tentative meeting dates was distributed with the meeting materials. The dates are:

- Thursday, March 3, 2022 – Talbot County
- Thursday, June 9, 2022 – Caroline County
- Thursday, September 8, 2022 – MSRC Meeting & Tour
- Thursday, December 8, 2022 – Dorchester County

#### Letters of endorsement sent by MSRC

Mr. Warner reminded the Executive Board members of endorsement letters they approved to send. Copies of each letter were included in their meeting packets; the date of each letter is in parenthesis.

- MRDC effort to set up training in student support (7-15-21)
- Update of Eastern Shore Economic Recovery Project to MSRC (7-27-21)
- Support of Dr. Sarah Guy for BEACON Director (7-29-21)
- Support Oyster Aquaculture & Restoration regional cluster grant (10/18/21)
- DCS/DCT renovation & expansion of bus maintenance facility (10/22/21)

#### Member comments/requests

Delegate Mautz stated he would like to discuss a venison donation program with Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio and Kurt Fuchs.

#### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 11:14 a.m.

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