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Review and Compliance Committee for the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund

The Mid-Shore Regional council (MSRC) held a scheduled Executive Board meeting on August 24, 2022. The meeting was held in person and virtually via web conference. The meeting was facilitated from the MSRC office. Executive Board members in attendance in person were Dan Franklin, Kurt Fuchs, Chuck Callahan, and Bill Christopher. Senator Addie Eckardt and Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio joined virtually. Others attending in person were Talbot County Manager Clay Stamp and consultant Sarah Guy (Principal, SG Insights, llc.). Caroline County Administrator Jeremy Goldman and Acting Dorchester County Manager Donna Lane joined virtually. MSRC staff Scott Warner and Terry Deighan attended in person.

Chairman Walter Chase was not able to attend due to a medical issue in his family.

In Chairman Chase's absence First-Vice Chair Dan Franklin called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

### Action Items

#### *Approval of June 30, 2022, Minutes*

Mr. Christopher asked a clarifying question regarding the minutes. Mr. Warner provided an answer to Mr. Christopher's satisfaction.

Mr. Fuchs made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. Mr. Franklin stated we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Any opposed? Motion carried unanimously.

#### *Financial Report*

Treasurer Kurt Fuchs presented the Treasurer's Report stating that all expenditures and income are on track early in this fiscal year and he would entertain any questions. Mr. Christopher made a motion to accept the report. Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. Mr. Franklin stated we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Any opposed? Motion carried unanimously.

*Ratification of electronic vote "Approval to adjust the MSRC Executive Board's May 27,2022, recommendation of MSRC investment of Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Funds for FY2023 to (1) include Regional Marketing \$5,000 and (2) reduce Summer Career Enrichment Programs to \$87,100."*

Mr. Christopher made a motion to ratify the electronic vote. Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Mr. Franklin stated we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Any opposed? Motion carried unanimously.

## Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund

The MSRC Executive Board along with the Caroline County Administrator, Dorchester County Manager, and Talbot County Manager are serving as the review/compliance committee for the MSRC's Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund projects.

### Explanation of Process and Compliance

- Mr. Warner provided an overview of the process as determined by the MSRC Executive Board in previous meetings. The process was also related in emails to the MSRC and at their last meeting on June 9, 2022.
- Mr. Warner stated that Dr. Guy sent an email on August 17, 2022, to the review/compliance committee providing a weblink to the projects' applications and a copy of the compliance checklist.

The review/compliance committee reviewed the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund project applications submitted through the MSRC for compliance with eligibility criteria as set forth by the Maryland Department of Commerce.

MSRC is in possession of letters from, Caroline County Commissioners, Dorchester County Council, and Talbot County Council. The letters state the projects that are being submitted by each county ranked in order of priority with the amount of funding for each project and a brief description of each project.

Mr. Warner stated that he and Dr. Guy individually evaluated the projects using the compliance checklist. They then compared their checklists for each project and developed a combined checklist for each project. The checklists were emailed to the review/compliance committee this morning and copies are in the committee's packets.

Mr. Franklin started the review of the projects by county starting in alphabetical order with Caroline County.

Mr. Warner reviewed each project checklist prepared by Dr. Guy and himself and asked for questions, comments, or concerns from the committee members. Any input by the committee was vetted on the criteria of eligibility. There were seven projects submitted by Caroline County with an additional two projects as options if any of the seven were not deemed eligible. All nine projects were vetted and all met the eligibility criteria.

Next, Mr. Franklin started the review of Dorchester County's submitted projects.

Using the same method, Mr. Warner reviewed each project checklist. Each project was discussed by the committee and vetted for eligibility. All seven of the projects submitted by Dorchester County met the eligibility criteria.

Next, Mr. Franklin started the review of Talbot County's submitted projects.

Repeating the same process, Mr. Warner reviewed each project checklist to start the project discussions by the committee members. Talbot County submitted fourteen projects plus an additional project should it be determined that any of the fourteen were not eligible for funding. All fifteen projects met the eligibility criteria.

Ms. Haddaway-Riccio had to leave the meeting at 10:00am during the review process due to another meeting she had to attend.

During the review process Dr. Guy and Mr. Warner noted various comments by the committee that would strengthen and clarify the individual projects' applications. Following this meeting Dr. Guy and Mr. Warner will reach out to the mid-shore counties' economic development directors to have them assist in editing the various projects' applications.

Mr. Warner also noted that if the Maryland Department of Commerce determines that any of the projects are ineligible for funding the MSRC will not just substitute one of the alternative projects in the ineligible project's place. Mr. Warner will reach out to the County Administrator/Manager of the respective county that the rejected project was submitted by and ask the county which project(s) would the county like to submit in the rejected project's place. If it is one of the alternative projects reviewed today the MSRC will not have to reconvene this committee to review the project for compliance. Additionally, if Maryland Department of Commerce asks for more information on a submitted project, the MSRC will reach out to the county that submitted that project for the additional information.

### **Resolution: Accepting the counties applications to the MSRC for the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund**

Mr. Franklin asked the MSRC Executive Board and review/compliance committee members to review the resolution that was included in the meeting materials.

Mr. Warner informed everyone that the Resolution was crafted by Greg Padgham, Executive Director of the Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore. He then sent it to the MSRC legal counsel Curt Booth to review. Mr. Booth made a couple of changes and sent back a final version for the MSRC to use. Mr. Warner also stated that the attached list of projects referenced in the Resolution will be compiled using the counties' support letters with the language they included in each letter listing the projects.

Senator Eckardt made a motion to move forward with projects as presented and reviewed pending clarification as requested and to approve the Resolution as presented. Mr. Fuchs seconded the motion. Mr. Franklin stated we have a motion and a second. All those in favor? Any opposed? Motion carried unanimously.

The Resolution with the attached list of projects is included as an attachment to these minutes.

### Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Warner reminded everyone of the upcoming meetings.

- MSRC quarterly meeting on Thursday, September 8
- Mid-Shore CEDS meeting on Wednesday, October 12

### Member comments/requests

As it was Mr. Stamp's first visit to the MSRC office, he wanted to give his thanks for all the hard work the MSRC and its staff does for the mid-shore counties.

## Adjourn

Mr. Fuchs made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Christopher seconded the motion. The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:43 a.m.