

The Mid-Shore Regional Council (MSRC) held a scheduled Executive Board meeting on April 29, 2024, at the MSRC office. Executive Board members in attendance at the office were Chairman Walter Chase, Senator Johnny Mautz, Chuck Callahan, Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Bill Christopher, Frank Bartz and James Redman arrived at the end of the meeting. MSRC staff present was Scott Warner and Terry Deighan.

Chairman Chase called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

### Executive Session

#### *Employee Matters*

Chairman Chase called for a closed session so Mr. Warner and Ms. Deighan were asked to leave the meeting so the Executive Board could discuss the MSRC staff's performance and the Executive Director's Annual Performance Evaluation. The staff was asked to return at 3:28 p.m.

### Action Items

#### *Approval of November 21, 2023, Minutes*

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

#### *Approval of MSRC FY23 independent financial statements*

- *Statement of Receipts and Disbursements*

Mr. Warner presented the independent financial statements prepared by accountant Darian Sump of Sump & Associates. He stated it is similar to past statements.

Mr. Warner then highlighted an additional report entitled Statement of Receipts and Disbursements. He reminded the board that this is the report Mr. Sump suggested when the MSRC received the Rural Maryland Economic Development Funds. It shows receipts and disbursements on a cash basis for FY23.

Ms. Haddaway-Riccio made a motion to accept both documents. Mr. Callahan seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a motion and a second, any further discussion. All in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

#### *Financial Report*

In Treasurer Kurt Fuchs' absence, Mr. Warner presented the financial reports. He stated there are three reports making up the total MSRC financial report.

The first report was the MSRC Treasurer's Report (operating report). Mr. Warner stated all expenditures and income are on track and he would entertain any questions.

The second report was the 2024 Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPIF) report. Mr. Warner stated that all funds have been distributed as listed. Mr. Warner asked if there were any questions.

The third report was the Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund Report. Mr. Warner stated that the only change since the last presentation has been under the consultant category. Mr. Warner also noted that the remaining \$60,000 for Dorchester County will be requested soon by them and he will explain in detail later in this meeting under Updates.

Senator Mautz made a motion to approve all three reports as presented. Mr. Callahan seconded the motion. Chairman Chase stated we have a motion and a second, any further discussion. All in favor signify by saying aye; those opposed have the same rights. Ayes have it. Motion carried unanimously.

## Discussion

### *FY25 Scope of Work*

Mr. Warner presented the FY25 Scope of Work stating, with the exception of changing the dates, there are no changes, it is the same as FY24. He asked the Board to review it and determine if there should be changes made to the scope of work. This document will be voted on at the next Executive Board meeting to be held in May and then presented to the full council in June for consideration.

### *FY25 Budget*

Mr. Warner stated there are no major changes to the FY25 operating budget. There are increases to health and dental under fringe benefits due to rate changes. He explained the increases for each category. Mr. Christopher asked a clarifying question regarding income; Mr. Warner answered. The budget will be voted on at the next Executive Board meeting to be held in May and then presented to the full council in June for consideration.

### *Including Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Funds*

Mr. Warner stated that in FY25 the MSRC will once again be receiving \$600,000 in RMPIF funding. He pointed out there are two documents in the meeting packets regarding the MSRC's RMPIF proposed projects. Mr. Warner has had many discussions with various partners and MSRC members regarding possible projects and then vetted this information with Chairman Chase. Mr. Warner explained proposed projects:

- ESRGC
  - Delmarva Index and tool maintenance
  - GIS Circuit Rider
  - Delmarva Index website upgrades (in partnership with TCCLES)
  - Agricultural Census Dashboard (in partnership with TCCLES)

- Capacity Building Coordinator (continue working with Dr. Sarah Guy to provide the MSRC added capacity to develop, expand, improve, monitor, and evaluate its various activities and programs, increasing organizational impact and assisting in communicating the impact of MSRC activities to organizational stakeholders)
- Eastern Shore Entrepreneurship Center
- Shore Gourmet
- Annie's Project
- Summer Career Enrichment Program
- Regional Marketing
- Inclusive Ventures (partner with each county (Caroline, Dorchester, and Talbot) economic development office to execute; Talbot County executed this program this year through Rural Maryland Economic Development Funds it received through the MSRC)

The Board discussed the various projects. Mr. Warner asked the Board to review the information and communicate with him concerning additional questions and/or additional projects. The RMPIF budget will be voted on at the next Executive Board meeting to be held in May and then presented to the full council in June for consideration.

## Updates

### *MSRC membership*

#### Caroline County Municipal Representative

Mr. Warner stated that the Caroline County municipal elected official currently is Anthony Casey (Ridgely Commissioner). Mr. Casey told Mr. Warner that he would like to step down, as his schedule will not allow him to continue to participate. Abigail McNinch (Town of Denton Mayor) was suggested as a possible replacement and on April 26, 2024, Mr. Warner met with her to orient her with the MSRC and its scope of work. After the meeting she expressed her desire to be a member.

There was a brief discussion where Mr. Bartz asked if other candidates such as Kim Abner (Town of Federalsburg Mayor) were considered. Mr. Warner responded that he was thinking of Ms. Abner as well and could reach out to her to see if she may be interested. Mr. Bartz stated he is fine with whomever municipal representative from Caroline County is willing to serve on the MSRC. Mr. Warner reminded the Board that municipal positions on the MSRC are appointed by their respective municipal corporations and the process usually goes through the Caroline County Association of Municipalities.

#### Representative from Maryland Seafood Industries

This position is designated by the association. Mr. Christopher has spoken to Aubrey Vincent (President, Lindy's Seafood, Inc.) regarding the position and she has an interest in serving. Mr. Warner has to call her to set up a meeting to orient her with the MSRC and its scope of work.

## Rural Maryland Economic Development Fund

Dorchester County's Woods Road project was completed under budget. The county asked to utilize the remaining funds to assist in building the Rails to Trails project from connecting Washington Street to Woods Road in Cambridge. Additionally, the county asked if it could use their \$60,000 administration allocation for the project's budget rather than administration. Mr. Warner stated that a grant modification pertaining to the Woods Road project has been approved by Maryland Department of Commerce. It was executed on April 25, 2024. The Rails to Trails project will provide a way for employees to get to companies located on Woods Road safely.

## UM Shore Regional Health (UMSRH)

Mr. Warner asked if there were any updates or discussion the board would like to have regarding the new proposed medical facility in Easton. After a discussion, the board determined they would like to schedule a meeting with University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) to discuss the UMSRH project. Senator Mautz stated he would reach out to UMMS.

## Upcoming Meetings

The Executive Board determined that their next meeting will be held on May 21, 2024, at 3:00pm at the MSRC office.

The next MSRC full council meeting will be on Thursday, June 13, at 5:00pm in Caroline 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.

- ESRGC application for USDA Rural Business Development Grant (2-27-24)
- BAAM application for congressionally directed spending (3-8-24 Senators Cardin and Van Hollen)
- Easton Utilities new water treatment plant and new well on its water utility system (3-15-24 Senators Cardin and Van Hollen and Congressman Harris)
- ESEC application for EDA grant (3-20-24)

## Member comments/requests

None

## Adjourn

On a motion by Mr. Bartz, seconded by Senator Mautz, the meeting was adjourned at 4:29 p.m. by unanimous consent.