

MICHIGAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND BOARD MEETING

August 14, 2019

Northern Michigan University
Jamrich Hall, Room 1313
1401 Presque Isle Avenue
Marquette, MI

Board Members Present:

Laura Braun, RD Fund Board Member
Justin Horvath, RD Fund Board Member
Fred Taccolini, RD Fund Board Member
Margaret Minerick, RD Fund Board Member
Peter Anastor, attending on behalf of Chair Gary McDowell, MDARD

Other Attendees:

Heather Throne, MDARD
Sherri Goodreau, MDARD
Zach Halkola, PM Power Group
JR Richardson, PM Power Group
Robert LaFave, Village of L'Anse
Leann Davis, Village of L'Anse
Ryan Soucy, Central Upper Peninsula Planning & Development Regional Commission

The meeting was called to order by Peter Anastor at 9:12 a.m. He welcomed the Board to the meeting and gave an introduction. All present gave introductions.

MOTION: Fred Taccolini, moved to approve the March 15, 2019 meeting minutes as is. Seconded by Margaret Minerick. Motion carried.

Heather Throne gave an update on the 2017, 2018 and 2019 funded grant projects, noting 10 grants have been completed from the 2017 grant round, some payments have been issued for the 2018 round and first reports will be coming in on the 2019 round in September of 2019.

Heather Throne provided the board with a recap of the public comment received by MDARD on the guidelines. Only three written comments were received. She also reviewed the suggested grant guidelines and proposed grant round timetable.

The board reviewed the draft 2020 guidelines requirements, including the timeline, funding areas, eligible applicants, rural communities, maximum grant request, and match. The board had discussion on all aspects of the guidelines but had strong

discussion on funding areas to include housing projects and if the threshold for eligible counties should be increased.

An opportunity for public comment on the 2020 guidelines was offered but there was no public comment on the guidelines.

MOTION: Justin Horvath moved to accept the draft 2020 guidelines as present with the addition of language to encourage infrastructure related to rural housing projects in the existing funding areas. Seconded by Fred Taccolini.

Informational presentations were given by:

- PM Power Group, Zach Hakola
- L'Anse Solar Project, Robert LaFave
- U.P. Planning & Development Regional Commission, Ryan Soucy

It was discussed and decided the next meeting will be scheduled in January 2020 near Lansing and August 2020 near Marquette. The Board requested MDARD look at potential meeting dates and locations.

There was no public comment

MOTION: Laura Braun moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 a.m. Seconded by Justin Horvath.

Following the meeting, all in attendance were invited to join an educational tour in Powell Township at the Big Bay Pathway, which was a funded grant project, to see their progress on the pathway.