

**MICHIGAN RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND BOARD MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES**

March 17, 2023

Traverse Connect

202 East Grandview Parkway, Traverse City, Michigan 49684

Board Members Present:

Justin Horvath, RD Fund Board Member

Erin Kricher, RD Fund Board Member

Kathleen Angerer, RD Fund Board Member and MDARD Acting Director

Other Attendees:

Jamie Zmitko Somers, MDARD

Heather Throne, MDARD

Sasha Eliason, MDARD

Sherri Goodreau, MDARD – Virtual

Eric Fredrick, LEO - Virtual

Absent:

Victoria Leonhardt, RD Fund Board Member

The meeting was called to order by Jamie Zmitko Somers at 10:24 a.m.

Somers welcomed members of the Board and guests. Introductions were made. Director Angerer thanked the board and staff for diligent work.

Minutes of the July 26, 2022, Rural Development Board Meeting

Justin Horvath moved to approve the July 26, 2022, meeting minutes with no changes. Second by Erin Kricher. Motion carried unanimously.

Recap of 2017-2022 Grants & Review 2023 Grant Approvals

Heather Throne presented the projects awarded from 2017-2022 with statistics of open, closed and terminated projects. Mention of a communications representative to be hired to provide success stories and best representation of this grant program. Mention of the Power Bi-Map to show success on program as well. Throne, also, mentioned the new grants management system to be launched in

2023. Jamie Somers stated that Eagle Mine has added another year and is to stay open until 2027 for funding and opportunity to be present.

Broadband Overview

Eric Fredrick presented an overview on broadband systems. LEO is working to identify underserved areas by the BEAP program. This will create high speed internet access across the nation. The ROBIN program was also mentioned, the end goal for this program is to enable Michigan to be in an enviable position. Rural areas are underserved and hope to have 95% fiber internet availability. Mention of availability barriers and how the State can help to overcome these obstacles while being creative and efficient.

Board Policies & Procedures, Conflict of Interest

Heather Thone presented the board policy packet to the board along with a milage reimbursement form to be created to assist with travel costs. A motion was made by Justin Horvath to help board members with travel reimbursement for board meetings. Angerer seconded, Jamie Somers approved the motion.

Establish 2023 Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the Board will move to August 16 at 1 p.m. near Marquette. The MDARD team will begin coordination of the meeting details.

Public Comment

No Public Comment

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 11:34 a.m.