

MINUTES OF THE MARYLAND EFFICIENT GRANT APPLICATION COUNCIL

Thursday, January 7, 2021
Virtual Meeting via Google Meets

The Maryland Efficient Grant Application (MEGA) Council met for the first time on January 7, 2021 at 9:30am, through a virtual video conference. The following participants were in attendance:

Jennifer Colton, Chair	Cassie Shirk	Robert Malone
Jamie Tomaszewski	Tom French	Nancy Easterling
Nancy Kopp	Ben Grumbles	Katie Dilley
Joanna Kille	Christy Shockley	Abigail Snyder
David Brinkley	Jen Gallicchio	Lauren Buckmaster
Lisa Anderson	Mary Beth Tung	Diane Lewche
Caryn Getsinger	Justice Schisler	Megan Schulz
Kristen Fleming	Jennifer Colton	Sen. Cheryl Kagan
Robyne Chaconas	Erik Lyon	Henry Bogdan
Steve Benden	Gail Owings	

Chair Colton called the meeting to order and thanked the participants for joining the first MEGA Council meeting. She provided an overview of the history of the legislation and an explanation of the importance of the work that the MEGA Council would be doing to help grant recipients around the state, as well as the state grant-making agencies.

The participants introduced themselves and provided a brief overview of their background.

Chair Colton guided the participants through the text of SB630/HB1539, the legislation responsible for the formation of the MEGA Council. Time was allocated to discuss deadlines and expectations, as well as cover the scope of the MEGA Council's authority.

Chair Colton discussed the objectives of the MEGA Council more broadly, with the importance of achieving the deadlines set forth in the legislation.

Henry Bogdan provided a background of the legislation and its transformation during the 2020 legislative session.

Chair Colton then raised the issue of meeting frequency, and suggested a quarterly meeting. Robert Malone said that he was willing to meet more frequently with the hopes of achieving the MEGA Council's mission prior to the 2024 end date. There was support for a higher frequency of meetings from some members of the non-profit community on the call. Chair Colton said that we were also empowered to create workgroups that could carry forward the objectives of the MEGA Council in certain aspects of work. Tom French volunteered to participate in these workgroups, with additional support voiced by the non-profit MEGA Council members. State Treasurer Nancy Kopp offered to connect Chair Colton with Cornelia Chebinou, Washington Director of NASACT, to provide additional support.

Erik Lyon provided an overview on the Federal OMB memo (M-21-03) circulated by Director Russell Vought on November 12, 2020. Mr. Lyon walked through the five main directives of the memo, which includes the mandating of federal grant information to be posted on USASpending.Gov; the increase in Grant Standard Data Elements adopted by federal grant-making agencies; the Assistance Listings changes; the standardization of language within grant awards at the federal level; and the overall tightening of standards related to the DATA Act Data Quality Plan. There were no questions from the council members.

Chair Colton finished up the meeting by opening the floor to discussion and questions. Senator Cheryl Kagan thanked the MEGA Council participants for their work and participation and pledged to be helpful whenever needed. There were additional questions about the MEGA Council's scope, as well as discussion surrounding the federal vs non-federal grant dollars and how those could be broken up into workgroups. Additional support was given to the idea of meeting more frequently (than quarterly) by some members of the MEGA Council. Chair Colton said that we would come up with a combination of workgroups and full MEGA Council meetings that advanced the Council's mission in a timely manner.

-----Adjournment-----