

Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority

Policy on Donations and Contributions

The Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRRA) is a municipal corporation formed by the Maine Legislature for the purpose facilitating the rapid redevelopment of the properties within the geographic boundaries of Brunswick Naval Air Station, and as such, it generally does not contribute financially to registered not-for-profit charitable organizations. This policy provides guidance for circumstances in which MRRRA is asked for donations on behalf of another organization. Stewardship of assets and “public resources” and the prudent expenditure of MRRRA funds require guidelines with respect to the appropriate use of such funds. “Public resources” includes anything paid for with public money, including equipment, supplies, staff time and MRRRA facilities.

MRRRA does not provide gifts or donations to for-profit businesses and organizations, or to foreign organizations. Maine law, 5 MRSA §13083-G et seq. restricts the power and authority of MRRRA to use resources beyond the purpose of facilitating the rapid redevelopment of the properties within the geographic boundaries of Naval Air Station Brunswick. Only under limited circumstances, does the MRRRA provide donations to registered not-for-profit charitable organizations which would support the mission of MRRRA.

Any contribution or donation must serve a valid public purpose, but they must also demonstrate that the expenditure falls within the specifically enumerated powers of MRRRA under 5 MRSA §13083-G. No contribution or donation of public resources can be made for personal or political purposes. Furthermore, consistent with 5 MRSA §12022, Financial Policies and Procedures, the Board of Trustees must approve the appropriation for contributions and be provided periodic reports on contributions made by MRRRA.

In 2011, MRRRA founded an independent 501(c)(3) not for profit organization called the Midcoast Charitable Foundation of Maine (MCFM). MRRRA donates proceeds from venue fees paid by road race organizers and other charitable events at Brunswick Landing to the Foundation. The Foundation then periodically advertises and makes money available through grants to local not for profit organizations.

MRRRA’s Executive Director or Executive Board may authorize specific donations under the following limitations:

1. When the charity provides a service that directly complements or enhance a service that the MRRRA provides or enhances the accomplishment of the mission of MRRRA to redevelop the former Naval Air Station Brunswick facility; and
2. When there is a specific identifiable and measurable benefit to MRRRA; or
3. When the charity provides a service that MRRRA is authorized to perform under its statutory enabling legislation but chose not to.

Of course, just because something is allowed under legal standards does not mean that it is the best use of public resources. This is where the “front page test” is a good guide. The key question for any use of public money is whether it is the best use.

Missteps, criticism and embarrassment can be minimized when everyone participating MRRA’s process of allocating resources and making spending decisions is sensitive to the reality that every public dollar is the community’s money. Orientations of new Board members and new employees provide one opportunity to sensitize Board members and staff to this issue and acquaint them with relevant MRRA policies on what is and is not allowed. Emphasizing the special stewardship, the agency has over public resources as part of internal communications and the overall agency culture is another helpful strategy.

This Policy was adopted by the Board on April 25, 2018, and as further amended on April 29, 2020.