

WASHINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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Helping Washington County
Communities Plan for Tomorrow

Judy East
Executive Director

MINUTES: Annual General Meeting

Date: Thursday October 15th, 2009 6-8PM

Location: Bluebird Restaurant, Machias

Present:

Judy East	WCCOG Executive Director	Betsy Fitzgerald	Town of Machias
Ernest James	Town of Charlotte	Sandi Duchesne	consultant
Debra Pollard	Town of Beddington	Richard Fickett	Town of Cherryfield
Dale Crowley	Town of Addison	David Turner	Town of Perry
Dorothea Crowley	Town of Addison	Rick Tanney	Trescott
Harold Clossey	Sunrise County Economic Council	Linda Pagels-Wentworth	Washington County
Jennifer Peters	Sunrise County Economic Council	Jeremy Gabrielson	WCCOG Sr. Planner
Bruce Molleur	Town of East Machias		

1. Dick called the meeting to order and asked Judy to provide details on several announcements. These included:
 - a. Successful award of 2 CDBG Business Development grants to the County. Technical Assistance for these grants is supported by the WCCOG contract with DECD to pay for staff time at Sunrise County Economic Council (SCEC). Jennifer Peters (SCEC) noted the 2 grants were for \$60,000 to Cost of Maine Organic Products Inc. and \$120,000 to Cobscook Bay Company. Approximately 6 jobs are anticipated from these grants.
 - b. A thank you from County Commissioner Christopher Gardner for our assistance with the Eastport Gateway Project application (attached)
 - c. Announcement of consultant selection for Brownfields work – GEI Consultants Inc.
 - d. Intent to apply, by December 15th, for USDA Rural Solid Waste grant funding. WE will be seeking support letters
 - e. Availability and deadline extension of Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants
2. Dick then asked for introductions from everyone and the first item was approval of the minutes from the September 3rd 2009 Executive Committee meeting. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously

APPROVED: to accept the minutes as written.

3. Dick passed the 2nd item (Proposed Work Plan and Budget) to Judy who clarified a few items including
 - a. Addition of the Washington County 2009 and Beyond Expo on Alternative Energy and Telecommunications to the list of highlights for FY2009.
 - b. Additional note to net income on Page 9 on the Annual Report indicated that another \$2500 received in FY09 will be spent in FY2010 as match to the County CDBG Planning grant; therefore net income should be reduced to \$11,344.29 a more accurate reflection of the funds needed to cover expense with no associated income stream.
 - c. Audit expenses are shown in the Expenditures Table (\$3000) and in the Direct Expenses Table (\$1800); Judy met with an accountant last week who advised that an audit is not legally required but a god idea to assure ourselves we are doing things properly. An audit is scheduled for October 26 and will cover 2 of the 4 years since we have operated separately from EMDC. If audits of all 4 years are necessary we have sufficient funds to cover them. A report on the audits will be provided at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Ballots for the FY09 Proposed Work Plan, Budget and Election of Officers were then tallied. **All proposals passed unanimously and the slate of Officers on the Executive Committee remains unchanged from last year:**

President: Rickard Fickett, Cherryfield

Vice President: Bruce Molleur, East Machias

Treasurer: David Turner, Perry

4. The next meeting of the Executive Committee was scheduled for Friday December 11th at 1PM for a holiday lunch. It will be in the Calais area – exact location to be determined.
5. After a break for dinner Dick called the meeting back to order and we heard a presentation on the opportunities, implications, and local support necessary for a national scenic byway designation along the Route 1 corridor in Washington County. As Fred Michaud of the Maine Department of Transportation was scheduled for surgery yesterday the presentation was given, very ably, by our consultant, Sandi Duchesne.

Comments afterward indicated the need for many meetings among Select Boards, Chambers, the Route 1 Corridor Committee and other business representatives to provide information on what a designation would mean and what it would not mean. Assumptions that it would lead to a loss of local control are anticipated.

Other ideas to save on some of the time required and to build trust included:

- Hosting a regional meeting or clusters of regional meetings
- Encouraging Fred Michaud to present at another venue
- Inviting someone from another region to describe their experience
- Assembling data on the economic benefit to a region once a designation is in place
- Some type of survey instrument to assess interest after initial informational meetings are held.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00PM

Next meeting:

WCCOG Executive Committee meeting:

Friday December 11th from 1-3M in the Calais area – location to be determined.

Respectfully submitted
Judy East

Thank you from Chris Gardiner follows:

Judy,

I want to take this opportunity to express my sincerest appreciation on behalf of the Eastport Port Authority for all the work your organization did in the Eastport Gateway Project application. Your assistance was a key component to collaborative approach put forth in that effort. Everyone from the the Governors Office, our Federal and State delegations, Maine Department of Transportation and Maine Port Authority straight through to local communities and agencies such as your own and the Sunrise County Economic Council were all dedicated to working with the HNTB group to get that application not only submitted on time, but more importantly submitted as one of the strongest applications put forth by the State of Maine under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

This potential industrial redevelopment of rail service to Washington County is vital to keeping a balance of economic opportunities in a region in which the industrial base has suffered and declined for so long. It is our hope that come February 2010 we will all be celebrating the announcement of the acceptance of the Eastport Gateway project and all it will offer the Port of Eastport, the County of Washington and all of eastern Maine. The Port was proud to be part of such a great group of collaborators in this process.

I wish I could be there this evening to let all of those in attendance know how helpful the WCCOG was in this process but in my absence please let them know on our behalf.

All the best,
Chris