

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 September 27th, 2007 3:00-7:30PM
Location: Bluebird Restaurant, Machias
Present: Stuart Shotwell, Bruce Moeller, Roger Holst, Dick Fickett, David Turner, Rick Tanney, Rebecca Beal, Clara Smith, Jim Porter, Harold Clossey, John Leighton, Mary Alice Look, Betsy Fitzgerald, Lucy, Witt, Walter Getchell, Lewis Pinkham, Linda Pagels-Wentworth, Janet Toth, Phil Rose, Dale Miller, Eleody Libby, Erica Famous, Donnie Smith, Kathleen Shannon, Senator Kevin Raye, James Beyer (Maine DEP), Jeremy Gabrielson, Judy East

1. Roger called the Regional Efficiencies discussion part of the meeting to order and introductions were made. Judy announced the card and gift available for everyone's signature to be sent with thanks to Linda Stevens, outgoing WCCOG President. Dates were announced of the Grow Smart Summit (October 19) at which Judy will be a speaker on the Place Based Tourism panel, the Changing Borders Conference (November 13-14) in St. Andrews NB (Nov 13) and Calais (Nov 14), and the next WCCOG Executive Committee meeting November 28 from 5-7PM at the Downeast Heritage Museum in Calais.

A sign-up sheet was also circulated for anyone interested in participating on a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee. Jeremy will staff this effort; a regional advisory committee is required by our contract with Maine DOT and the primary issues it will deal with are the upgrade/relocation of the Downeast Regional Airport, the new international bridge, corridor planning and tourism infrastructure.

2. Presentations were then provided from the Regional Efficiencies portion of the agenda:

Perry-Pembroke-Charlotte Cooperative Municipal Administration Initiative Funded by a Maine Municipal Bond Bank Credit Quality Improvement Grant (PowerPoint notes attached as PDF)	Judy East
Town of Milbridge – Recycling efforts (spreadsheet handouts attached)	Lewis Pinkham
Expanded k-12 facilities USE for Community and Economic Development Response to school consolidation requirements (draft presentation to be presented to Superintendents on October 9 th)	Janet Toth
Corrections Facilities – State and County collaboration (video presentation)	Sheriff Donnie Smith
County and town of Marshfield joint Fire Hall, Haz Mat Response; Regional Communications Center re-location – Judy working with Marshfield and County on joint CDBG Public Facilities grant application; seeking bids now	Judy East; Walter Getchell
Broadband Expansion ConnectME Authority applications – 4 from Axiom to complete coverage in all of Washington County; still pending in front of Connect ME Authority	Susan Corbett

3. Discussion followed on thoughts generated by the presentation and additional opportunities for collaboration:
 - Many towns will be interested in hearing about how Perry, Pembroke and Charlotte work through their cooperative efforts as a model and the experience in general

- Lewis Pinkham of Milbridge shared the success of their cost effective fabric sand/salt shed that needs no power or electricity due to the amount of light that penetrates the white roof and that it has withstood 87MPH winds to date.
- Milbridge is also proposing to share a pressure steamer for cleaning culverts with other towns; Perry-Pembroke have done this already; issue is one of planning so that the need to use it in multiple towns does not overlap;
- Road graders can also be shared in this way; need an inter-local agreement to distribute liability; an easy form to create but if over-looked can cause trouble; contact WCCOG office if you need assistance with an inter-local agreement
- Keep grants from the Fund for the Efficient Delivery of Local and Regional Services in mind as you consider ideas. The web site (<http://www.maine.gov/dafs/fund.htm>) is still only current to 2006 grants.
Judy contacted Jody Harris of SPO after the meeting and the tentative schedule of 2007 grants is:
 Issue requests for proposals - early November 2007
 Proposals due - mid-February
 Awards made - March 2008
- Discussion about how to get residents to change habits (whether to go to curb-side pick up or to increase recycling): establish a culture from the bottom up through committees, schools, the grass roots; convincing people that they will save money helps but you may only provide better service at the same cost
- Alexander will be sharing a records archive facility with neighboring Cooper; they have also provided Tax Collection and Treasurer services to Cooper in the past; may look to an MMBB grant to pursue a similar cooperative effort as Perry, Pembroke and Charlotte are doing now
- A CDBG Public Facilities grant in Pembroke may help with a community building with the local match provided by all three towns to provide the town offices
- In their outreach efforts, Perry Pembroke and Charlotte are making it clear that the combined administrative efforts may not be less expensive but they will provide significantly better service.
- Many towns share staff already – CEOs, LPIs, animal control, clam wardens, harbor masters
- Sharing of assessing services: share purchase of TRIO software, hire the same assessing agent
- WCCOG is assisting the County right now (funds available until Dec 31 '07) to complete Emergency Operations Plans; can provide towns with models to ensure the municipality is compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and so be eligible for federal grants; contact Jeremy jgabrielson@wccog.net or 255-0983 if you would like assistance with this.

4. After a break for dinner Roger called the meeting back to order and noted that the Minutes from the June 21st, 2007 meeting were distributed after the last meeting. Roger asked if there were any corrections and it was moved, seconded, and unanimously

APPROVED: to accept the minutes as written.

5. Ballots for the approval of the FY08 Work Plan and Budget as well as election of officers were counted and all were approved. The WCCOG has the following new officers effective October 1, 2008:

President: Rickard Fickett, Cherryfield
 Vice President: Bruce Molleur, East Machias
 Treasurer: David Turner, Perry

Many thanks to out-going President Linda Stevens, Vice-President Roger Holst and Treasurer Alan Dwelley.

6. **James Beyer of Maine DEP then provided a presentation on the changes in the Natural Resource Protection Act** rules governing significant wildlife habitats that were revised in the last legislative session.

Senator Raye sent the following questions to IF&W in an e-mail the next day based on several questions raised by audience members:

Good morning Commissioner,

Last night, I attended the annual general meeting of the Washington County Council of Governments (WCCOG). Jim Beyer gave a presentation on the significant habitat rules. Jim gave an excellent and thorough presentation, but the data presented raised a number of questions from municipal officials in the audience (and me).

- (1) Why are there no figures newer than 1997 on the chart showing the numbers of shorebirds counted in Lubec, Eastport and Perry? The exclusion of more recent data raises doubts in people's minds.
- (2) Can you explain the methodology used in counting birds, and who carries out the count? For instance, the count of just 4 birds at Half Moon Cove in 1997 – down from thousands in previous years – struck several of us as very odd.
- (3) We are told that shorebirds return year-after-year to the same location. So how can development pressures be considered as a contributing factor in the decline in shorebirds, when there has been very little development in any of the Washington County areas on the chart where a decline in shorebirds has been reported?
- (4) Are there numbers available for the more highly developed shorebird areas of Maine, such as Old Orchard Beach?
- (5) What accounts for the increase in birds in Lubec?

I would appreciate your help in clearing up these questions. I will share your response with Judy East, of the WCCOG, so she can distribute it to her members.

Thanks,
Kevin

Senator Kevin L. Raye
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Perry, Maine 04667
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SenatorRaye@wvssisp.com

I sent these questions to Jim Beyer and he responded to me with the following information:

Here is an answer to some of the questions from last night. I am assuming that the Commissioner will send Sen. Raye a response directly.

James R. Beyer
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Land and Water Quality
Division of Land Resources Regulation
Eastern Maine Regional Office
(207) 941-4593
jim.r.beyer@maine.gov

From: Tudor, Lindsay
Sent: Friday, September 28, 2007 10:49 AM
To: Beyer, Jim R
Subject: FW: Shorebird Numbers

Hi Jim,
Brad forwarded your questions to me.

You ask or your audience asks the tough ones.

IFW is conducting annual counts at sites in Harrington and Addison as part of PRISM, an international effort coordinated by Manomet to determine North American shorebird numbers and trends. In Maine we have 15 sites (coast wide) surveyed for PRISM, of those as I mentioned we do 2, volunteers are currently covering 7 sites leaving six sites that still need volunteers to cover (one of which is the lubec flats, perhaps you can promote this at your presentations). In addition to the annual counts we are updating our shorebird database by coastal region, this season we are doing sites in Casco Bay, St George River and eastern Penobscot Bay. We also survey areas incidentally during other work such that I do have more current data for certain areas in Hancock and Washington County.

Why bother to protect our habitats...

Yes shorebirds do face challenges and mortalities on the winter ground, breeding ground and other staging areas. Shorebird Conservation is an international effort and it is happening, even Latin America is stepping up to the plate and starting to protect areas. It is important for Maine to do our part and given their strong site fidelity for specific staging areas in Maine, we are responsible for the success of those populations. We will not get birds from upper Bay of Fundy to fill in our coastline if we lose our Maine populations. So if we want shorebirds in Maine we need to protect their habitats. Case in point the decline in the attached slide in Half moon cove and Carrying Place cove may have occurred because the feeding birds in that area were using a roost at Johnson cove, this roost was no longer available to the birds because it became a parking lot for attendants working the Salmon pen in Johnson cove numbers declined and have not recovered. Without adequate roosting habitat it is difficult for shorebirds to gain the fat needed to have a successful migration.

Conservation of migrating species is a complex issue, we have waterfowl seasons and bag limits to allow a portion of the population to survive their stint in Maine even though many will be harvested south of Maine, but by conserving some, enough will survive to return to Maine. Conserving Shorebird habitats is similar.

Let me know if I can explain further. I don't have Judy's email information if you would like please forward this to her. I am happy to talk to her directly, whatever I can do to ease your work load please give a holler.

Lindsay

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15PM

Next meeting:

WCCOG Executive Committee meeting November 28 from 5-7PM at the Downeast Heritage Museum in Calais.

Respectfully submitted
Judy East