



LCRPC Board Meeting Minutes - DRAFT
 Meeting Date: December 13, 2017
 Location: LCRPC Office

| ATTENDEE | POSITION/TITLE |
|-------------------|---|
| Stuart Smith | Chair (Edgecomb) |
| Chris Johnson | Vice-Chair (Somerville) |
| Dick McLean | Treasurer (Damariscotta) |
| Ham Meserve | Lincoln County (Southport) |
| Jaimie Logan | Lincoln County |
| Frank Hample | Somerville |
| Mal Carey | Newcastle |
| George Richardson | Westport Island |
| Tony Marple | Whitefield |
| Gordon Davis | Alna |
| Chris Hall | Bristol |
| April Thibodeau | Westport Island |
| | |
| Mary Ellen Barnes | Executive Director |
| Harold Spetla | Community Development Specialist |
| Abby Ingraham | Guest, New Exec Director, LC Cable Television |
| | |

Stuart called the meeting to order about 6:35.

MINUTES AND FINANCIALS

The minutes were approved, following a motion by Dick, second by Frank.

The November financial statements were reviewed. For ED, the expenses are pretty much on track for the year. There will be a few categories that won't be completely spent, though we are using this month to order a few office supplies for 2018. The County will close the books on 2017 by January 31, 2018 with all expenses invoiced by December 31.

Following a motion by Dick, seconded by Tony, the Board accepted the financial statements.

RECOMMENDATION TO REMAIN A COUNTY DEPARTMENT

Mary Ellen provided Board members with a summary of the pros/cons and considerations raised in 2 meetings (the November Exec Comm meeting and an earlier subcommittee meeting). Dick, George and others kicked off a review of our recent history, and the major challenges of becoming an independent entity. Chris Hall asked how the County Commissioners feel about the Planning Department. Ham said that the Commissioners are delighted



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with having planning and economic development as a department – they will look to us for ideas and proposals for needed funding. Frank emphasized our history, including our status as a non-profit incorporated in Maine.

Jaimie brought up 2 state organizations that are blended agencies; mostly independent but with public/state role in board membership and executive directors: Maine International Trade Center and Maine Technology Institute. MITC is a public-private partnership with mixed income sources. MTI is a publicly-funded non-profit corporation, with most of its board appointed by the Governor.

Board members agreed that the current arrangement seems the best of both worlds. The County is willing to fund planning and economic development, and the staff and board aren't further stretched with constant fundraising for operating, for bricks and mortar. We have offices and a large public venue for our meetings and workshops; our board is seen as a positive, representing most County towns. Everyone's goal is for the LCRPC to be effective in evaluating and responding to issues and opportunities in the County (Tony). Stuart agrees it's critical that we're regularly communicating with the towns about their needs and our work. Chris Johnson recognizes that if the staff spends the necessary time looking for funding, they'll have less time to do good work.

Frank mentioned again that we're not simply a department. Can we work with the Commissioners to document or secure recognition as a regional planning commission?

On a motion made by Tony and seconded by George, the Board unanimously agreed not to pursue 501(c)3 status (As a County Commissioner, Ham abstained).

The Board discussed Bob's expected retirement in 2019 and the need to look at job descriptions and salary options to plan for succession. We will work with Bob and the County on job descriptions in the first half of 2018, to anticipate 2019 funding.

After more discussion about LCRPC-County relationships, Mary Ellen suggested that she meet with County Administrator Carrie Kipfer, provide the articles of incorporation and by-laws and have an initial conversation on how to formalize or recognize the LCRPC's status and the relationship between the County and us. The Board agreed.

LCTC 7

The Board welcomed Abby Ingraham, the new Executive Director of the LCTV 7. Abby described new outreach and programming efforts. She's in touch with municipalities and other possible partners to increase awareness, use, and support. She will be refreshing programming and also encouraging volunteers to become videographers, editors, etc. at the station in Newcastle. Much of the station's funding comes from cable franchise fees between Spectrum (usually) and the towns; towns handle the fees differently (some don't get any fees), and they're not obligated to provide a portion to the station. Abby's doing more public education about this issue which affects public access community stations across the country. She wants to hear from us about ideas for more local broadcasting.



STAFF ACTIVITIES

Harold described his efforts working with Ransom Engineering to prepare EPA clean-up grant applications for key Wiscasset-owned parcels at Mason Station. On behalf of the town, 2 separate applications were submitted for a total of \$400,000 in EPA funds. A lot of steps in the application process, including a public hearing, selectmen's approval of a vision statement, etc. Mary Ellen and Ransom also submitted an application for hazardous waste assessment funds for the LCRPC. This is a very competitive year, with less funding nationwide going to clean-up and assessment; decisions will be announced in the spring.

We held a workshop with Maine Coastal Program for town officials and the public on Nov. 29. It was a good session with Kathleen Leyden of MCP (now part of DMR), and Ruta Dzenis of DACF talking about funding, past projects, etc. Some of the highlights included Boothbay Harbor's interest in a broad, waterfront/harbor management plan which seemed to be of interest to the DACF staff. Mal shared his suggestion about using MCP or other funds to acquire LiDAR of the bottom surface of the Damariscotta River – the intent would be to tie this mapping with onshore data to help model storm surges.

Harold also updated the Board about RSMS – Road Surface Management System software, and how might the LCRPC assist towns in evaluating road conditions. Some LC towns use the RSMS program, and Harold has met with Knox County EMA GIS staff to learn how they provide support to Knox County towns. Chris Hall mentioned that Bristol uses this program. Evaluating roads leads to cost estimates for repairs and maintenance, priority setting, and town funding.

Mary Ellen attended a meeting in Newcastle with the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority about the proposed return of summer rail between Brunswick and Rockland. The Authority is meeting with all four towns involved: Bath, Wiscasset, Newcastle, and Rockland to talk about their individual stops and what's needed in the way of lighting, walkways, parking, etc. The original goal was for a Board decision in January. This is a weekend only excursion, proposed to run from Memorial Day to Columbus Day. The Authority is running the track to identify problems and working to complete income and expense projections. Though this is a pilot effort with a limited schedule, Chris Hall would like to bring trainriders getting off in Newcastle down the Pemaquid peninsula. The former Waldoboro train depot (just off the north side of Rt 1, north of Moody's) is privately-owned now but should be kept in mind, if the summer service is successful and can be expanded.

TOWN ROUNDTABLE

Dick talked about the recent concerns and dissatisfaction with the Damariscotta Planning Board. Dick and other residents believe the PB (which seems to consider site plan review process as "suggestions" instead of requirements) is not doing its job and that decisions, such as on the 435 Main St development, could be easily appealed by opponents.

Mal reported that Newcastle will be putting up a salt shed at its Mills Road lot. The Comp Plan is in draft #3, with the goal of having both the plan and the code voted on at the 2018 Town Meeting.

Ham spoke about how one developer, Paul Coulombe, is impacting the peninsula in major ways, from expanding and upgrading the Country Club, sharing the expenses of the roundabout, and purchasing properties on the east



side of the Harbor for re-development. Ham and his wife Helen are helping to bring new life back into the Harbor Theater. It has been run as a business, and now is owned by a non-profit, made up of long-time supporters with key operational and fundraising experience. The goal is to shift the programming to better appeal to the public's interests and to reduce some expenses. The previous manager put in many years, but in the end, more flexibility and innovation were needed to keep the Theater operating successfully.

Tony reported that Whitefield has passed a moratorium on adult use marijuana uses, in effect until next June. The town is looking for a new Code Enforcement Official and has asked Carrie and the RPC to look into a shared CEO position, similar to the shared Animal Control Officer program in the County.

April serves on the Westport Conservation Commission and has learned of the frustration of having an out-of-date comp plan. There are a few grant opportunities that the Town wasn't eligible for, since the plan was adopted in 2002.

Gordon said that Alna keeps up a good debate about how to improve town office functions, either by repairing/renovating the current building, building an addition to the Fire Station, or going modular. Cost estimates for the first two (partly funded by an ASK grant) were very high. The other continuing issue in town is about the residential status of families (rental, short-term vs. owners) that impact Alna's student population. Alna and Westport are the only area towns with school choice, with parents having the opportunity to send their kids to out-of-district schools. The Selectmen feel some people are taking advantage of this. Chris added that the school has to enforce the laws about residency.

Chris reported that a few more miles of town roads were paved this year, and some of the gravel roads have been improved. Somerville has the RSMS program (put into use in 2011 or 2012), which helped the Selectmen with cost estimates and prioritizing road projects. He said that the Draft Comp Plan, narrowly defeated this past town meeting, will be up for a June vote. The town is wrestling with "unintended consequences" of improving water access and possibly affecting endangered species or farm land; there may need to be different zoning for these areas.

Jaimie shared the news that a County business, The First National Bank, will be honored this week with a 2017 Governor's Award for Business Excellence! The new Boothbay Roundabout, with new traffic patterns to the Gardens, the Post Office and Town Office, seems to be working. May take awhile for people to learn the rules...

Chris Hall talked about the Bristol Mills Dam – a Wright-Pierce report on options has recently been completed which looks at dam repair, partial removal, or complete removal of the dam. Lots of issues and expense. The Fire Department prefers having the dam to ensure the pond as a fire-fighting resource. Chris expects a good turnout for a future public meeting on this. Also, the town is wrestling with regulating electronic/digital signs, prompted by a new sign at Ellingwood Park installed last year.

There was further discussion about how the Bristol dam removal could affect Biscay and Pemaquid ponds, property owners, and fish passage.



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Ham mentioned that Southport is partnering with Georgetown and Arrowsic on a broadband project, and has recently selected Axiom as their consultant. He also reported that the JEDC is making progress finalizing the first phase of the wayfinding study by Gamble Design.

The meeting adjourned around 8:30 pm.

Minutes prepared by Mary Ellen Barnes.