

GPCOG Executive Committee Meeting
May 11, 2011
12:00 at GPCOG

Members in attendance: Gordy Billington, President, Standish; Roger Bondeson, PROP; Dick Brobst, North Yarmouth; John Pressey, Gorham; Mike Reynolds, Raymond; Matt Sturgis, Gray; Ed Suslovic, Portland; Carl Winslow, Yarmouth; Jim Walsh, Cape Elizabeth; Dick Wood, RC&D; Barbara York, Casco

Staff and Guests: Neal Allen, Maddy Adams, Eben Marsh, Ann Thompson, Rebeccah-Schaffner-Tousignant

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** Gordy called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon. Introductions were made around the table.
2. **Minutes from February 16, 2011 meeting:** *Dick Wood moved approval of the February 16, 2011 minutes, with Mike Reynolds seconding the motion. All were in favor.*
3. **Program: Presentation by Larry Gross, Executive Director, Southern Maine Agency on Aging.** Neal provided some background on Larry. Larry presented a PowerPoint. Southern Maine Area on Aging is a partner with our HUD grant.

Larry reported that Maine will be second only to Florida with the number of people over 65 in their state (1 out of 5 people will be over 65.) He addressed housing, planning and zoning, transportation (leading cause of emergency visits for elderly are falls); health and supportive services; culture and lifelong learning; public safety; civic engagement and volunteer opportunities (Neighborhood Watch programs and Triad programs – brings senior groups and police together. An example of this is dropping off old medications.

Elder abuse is an issue. We are training letter carriers to watch for people not picking up their mail. SMAAA works with a network of over 600 agencies. They have an exercise and active living program tailored to older adults' preferences. They are working with the recreation programs to provide exercise programs for the elderly. Nutrition is a very important concern as we age. Naturally occurring retirement communities = NORC (North Deering is considered one).

Best practices - Building Healthy Communities – Scarborough received an award for creating a senior advisory group to the council. They also built some walking trails.

Brick sidewalks are dangerous to walk on for the elderly. Ed asked about service delivery challenges – what opportunities do you see for economic development such as debunking the myths of the older work force. Larry explained that there are a number of programs going on. Job sharing, part-time employment, providing

additional training for elderly (such as computer training). We need to help the older workforce stay current. It was asked what the politically correct term is for people over 65. Larry responded that they still have that debate – older adults – nobody wants to be a senior citizen, or called elderly.

Regarding the sidewalk issue (brick sidewalks, uneven and slippery in winter), a lot of the older adults don't go out in the winter because of that reason. Neal thought that was the kind of issue that our planning staffs should be sensitive to.

4. **GPCOG 2010 Audit Report.** Runyon Kersteen Ouellette – Greg Chabot. Greg reported that GPCOG has received an unqualified “clean” opinion, meaning the financial statements are fairly stated in all material respects. There were no material weaknesses noted in the reports.

He provided a handout and walked through the audit summary page by page. Revenues: The increase in federal and state grants was primarily due to an increase in GoMaine, MDOT planning contracts and Brownfields, offset by a decrease in PACTS. The decrease in miscellaneous was primarily due to a decrease in PACTS revenue.

Greg explained that they test the indirect cost plan, etc. He reviewed all the testing that is done. Certain federal programs are selected to test and they selected the transportation funding and there were no findings. Another successful audit.

Ed Suslovic moved approval of the 2010 Audit Report, with Dick seconding the motion. All were in favor.

5. **Proposed Operations Budget for FY 2012.** Neal provided some background and reviewed the highlights:
 - No increase in the member dues rate for the 22nd consecutive year.
 - Expenditures and offsetting revenues of \$3,115,295 representing an increase of \$139,303 or 4.68% over the FY 2011 budget with the increase due to new grants from HUD (Sustainable Communities) and EPA (Brownfields).
 - Increase in operating expenses of 6.39%
 - Member dues revenues of \$240,377 represent 7.72% of total revenues.
 - Over 59.65% of member dues or \$143,400 is estimated to leverage \$1,196,000.
 - Personnel expense including salaries, leave and benefits represents 52.07% of the total budget.
 - Total of 26 staff positions including 3 PACTS, 2 part-time, 2 interns, and 2 contractual.
 - Salary adjustment of 2% with reduction of two holidays and increased employee share of health insurance benefit.
 - Indirect Cost Rate reduced from 68.46% to 58.75%.
 - Health insurance increase of 15% effective January 1, 2012.

We kept the dues rate the same for this fiscal year because we wanted to give the towns a year notice about a change to their dues rate as the result of the 2010 Census.

Aside from administrative staff, everyone is billable. This year Ann and Neal will be more billable, thus bringing down the indirect cost rate. The indirect rate was reduced from 68.5% to 58.75%.

Neal reviewed the initiatives that we've been involved with over the past year.

- The direct business counseling and support services that we provide through DECD funding has been very successful.
- Gorham East/West – we were involved in Phase 1 of the Gorham East/West Study and we hope to be involved in the next phase.
- Regarding the GoMaine Program, MaineDOT is reducing funding of the program by 25%; this could have an impact on staffing.
- There is a strong possibility that the State Planning Office will be dissolved but there may be support in the legislature to continue with some planning.
- We will try to measure the value of our services to our members; we hope to do that with our annual report.

Neal reviewed the revenue detail line by line. We will be increasing the non-member dues fees on cooperative services bids.

Line 21 (Maine Clean Communities) shows 20,000 but we believe it will be \$50,000. That adjustment will be made on the version of the budget that goes to the General Assembly.

We are cautiously optimistic that we will receive funding to continue the Brownfields program.

Dick Wood moved approval of the FY 2012 budget. Jim Walsh seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Neal explained that we will be going to a per diem system for travel; most travel is covered through grants.

Neal asked if we are moving in the right direction to stay with our current policy of \$1/person for our dues? The additional dues would amount to about \$16,000 and that would certainly help us with assisting our members. The HUD grant gives us a lot of latitude in a number of areas with respect to planning. We still really don't know what MaineDOT is going to do with Gorham East/West program. We could address this at the Steering Committee retreat this summer because by then we should have more information about state funding.

John Pressey asked if GPCOG can receive donations. Neal said that we have received about \$5,000-6,000 to help defray the speaker expense for our Forum scheduled for June 3. Neal is available to meet with anyone to talk about what COG does.

Mobilize Maine – a statewide asset based economic development initiative. We have scheduled a meeting on May 19th for this effort. They met with our Steering Committee last fall and now they are coming back to see what the level of interest might be.

6. **Status Reports.** A handout was distributed, which Neal reviewed.
 - Annual meeting on June 9th at 11:30 at USM’s Glickman Library. Peter Mills will be the featured speaker.
 - Forum – June 3rd – Engaging Community for a Sustainable Future at USM.
 - HUD Grant – The “effective date” was established as of February 1, 2011.
 - Lakes Region Planning Initiative. Design Team is continuing with Phase 1 and the development of a Planning Process. A workshop of the participating communities is scheduled for May 20th.

Mike asked if Google Earth would shut down the orthoimagery piece. Neal said that it wouldn’t because the orthoimagery piece is much more specific. Neal spoke more about the orthoimagery project and the benefits of it.

Federal funding of the Resource, Conservation and Development District has been eliminated. The local RC&D policy council will continue with GPCOG providing staff support on a contractual basis. Over the years, the group has done some terrific work.

7. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.