

Cumberland County Public Works Directors' Association Meeting
October 12, 2011
9:00 a.m.

Present: Mike Shaw (Scarborough), Tom Eldridge (Westbrook), Doug Fortier (Windham), Roger Mosley (Standish)

Staff/guests: Eben Marsh (GPCOG), Retta Choate (GPCOG), Kyle Hall (MaineDOT), Tim Cusick (MaineDOT), Elizabeth Trice (Cumberland County), Lori Roth (CCEMA), Alex Abbott (USF&W), Matt Craig (Casco Bay Estuary Partnership)

1. Welcome – Mike Shaw, Chairman

Mike Shaw opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

2. Acceptance of Minutes from September 14, 2011

Tom Eldridge made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 14, 2011 Public Works Directors' meeting. Doug Fortier seconded and all were in favor.

3. Presentation on MaineDOT Issues of Interest

Kyle Hall and Tim Cusick of MaineDOT were present to provide information on winter issues and municipal agreements.

Winter Issues: Tim Cusick reported that MaineDOT just finished the summer projects and has started preparing for winter operation. This includes hooking up equipment on plow trucks and installing plow wings. The winter season lasts 20 weeks from November to March. Manpower is the biggest problem. It is a struggle to retain employees because the pay is low. The staff is currently adequate but staffing is tight during prolonged storms.

Mike Shaw asked for the preferred way to contact crews in winter. Tim said to call the crew supervisor in that area and after hours to call Augusta and they will contact the area supervisor. Tim will provide Mike with a contact list. He said it is not easy to keep up with the snowstorms in the bigger municipalities.

Mike asked about salt brine. Some municipalities have tried it. It is available to all municipalities. The only salt area is at the Gray bypass. The public expects good road conditions even though we do not have enough manpower or funding to keep up with the storms. We helped create that expectation when the economy was better and funding more plentiful. The public and policy makers need to be re-educated about environmental impacts on roads and drivers need to slow down. It is important to stay on budget which has stayed the same for a couple of years.

MaineDOT buys salt from Eastern Salt in MA and the company is very cooperative. Eben asked what salt brine is used for. Tim said it activates the salt quicker. It cost 18-19 cents per gallon. The product IceB'Gone liquid road anti-icing works well when roads are melting and refreezing.

Municipal Agreements: Kyle Hall informed the group that MaineDOT now has a Municipal Partnership Intuitive (MPI) which can rapidly react to municipal requests. If a municipality wants work done on state roads in their area they can share in the funding with MaineDOT to complete the work. It is a simple process with few requirements. The municipality provides a project plan sheet and the project must be certified by a professional engineer. The cost is shared equally between the municipality and MaineDOT. The municipality then receives a check for half the cost of the project. This is the only way many roads will be repaired on a timely basis. It is a huge benefit to MaineDOT and the municipalities because it is more cost effective as there are no federal guidelines associated with the program.

The funding for the program is \$7 million every two years. Projects with safety improvements are considered first. Kyle distributed a guide outlining the details of the program. Any interested municipalities with a project fitting these guidelines may contact Kyle.

4. Update from the Road-Stream Crossing Work Group

The Road-Stream Crossing Work Group (Elizabeth Trice-Cumberland County, Lori Roth- CCEMA, Alex Abbott-USF&W and Matt Craig-Casco Bay Estuary Partnership) presented the results of their survey of municipalities regarding road-stream crossing issues.

Elizabeth Trice met with Public Works Directors twice over the past few months to understand road-stream crossing issues and improve the way they are built in terms of cost effectiveness and habitat considerations. She received 19 responses from the survey and following are some of the results:

- Because most towns do not have a town engineer, Public Works Directors are the ones who decide when a culvert or bridge needs to be replaced.
- There are no regional flood repair costs on the 2-D road tracker forms. It is not indicated whether costs are truly being tracked.
- Minimizing flood risk is a top priority.

- When asked which services are helpful, 76% responded to help identify funds for improving projects, 71% said identify cost effective technical solutions, and 59% wanted data on priority streams and habitats.
- Big landowners are foregoing culverts in favor of building small bridges which are less expensive and have larger flows.

Elizabeth asked where the focus of further study should be. She suggested that anyone needing help email one of the members of the work group. They may also be able to help with grants research and grant writing. There is funding for work on habitats that meet the right requirements. Elizabeth encouraged Public Works Directors to talk to her or other members of the work group when they are planning a project and before they do any engineering.

Survey notes and recommendations:

- Collect history of damages and use 2-D road tracker.
- Potential engineering alternatives.
- Impacts of future development.
- Cost vs. benefits to fish/habitat.

All Public Works Directors will receive copies of maps with priorities before winter. We will see what comes of sharing the maps and data. Mike suggested everyone review the maps and look at their projects then email any member of the work group.

Elizabeth and Mike plan to attend a conference in Savannah October 27-28 to learn about erosion issues and the mechanics of funding.

- 5. Next Meeting** – November 9th, 2011
- 6. Adjourn** – The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.