

**GPCOG Steering Committee**  
**March 16, 2011**  
**12:00 noon at GPCOG**

**Members in attendance:** Cathy Breen, Falmouth; Mike Reynolds, Raymond; Matt Sturgis, Gray; Ed Suslovic, Portland

**Staff:** Neal Allen, Maddy Adams, Ann Thompson

1. **Welcome.** Cathy Breen opened the meeting at 12:07 and welcomed everyone.
2. **Minutes: Meeting of January 19, 2011.** *Matt Sturgis moved approval of the January 19, 2011 minutes, and Mike Reynolds seconded the motion. All were in favor.*
3. **GPCOG/Cumberland County MOU.** Neal reported that the Steering Committee met with the County Commissioners last October as a follow up to earlier overtures that seek to build on our mutual efforts to work collaboratively. Peter Crichton and Neal continued to have conversations to talk about how to formalize these discussions and that is where the idea of an MOU came about. The track changes items in the latest draft of the MOU are being proposed by Neal.

At the same time that we're trying to formalize the Memorandum of Understanding, two bills have been presented to the Legislature – An Act to Authorize Counties to Provide Regional Services, and An Act to Modernize the Functions of County Government (LD 344 and 345). Handouts of the two bills were distributed to the committee. It was mentioned that the County could probably do some of these functions without enabling legislation. Once enabling legislation is enacted, the intent could change. There was also concern that there would be a cost to set this up and all of the municipalities would have to share in the cost.

The idea of a non-duplication clause was suggested. We need to decide who does what. Under some federal programs, counties tend to be the recipient of funds. Administration of the programs tends to happen at the municipal level or through GPCOG. It was suggested that a section about cost be added to the MOU. Services should not be duplicated especially at a cost to the taxpayers. There was concern that taxpayers would end up footing the bill for County services. Committee members felt that the MOU is useless with this new legislation being proposed by the County. Ed said he would speak about this at the MMA meeting tomorrow and he believed there would be strong support to oppose the bills. Neal said that historically COG has not generally taken any position on legislation.

Neal asked the committee if the idea of an MOU or some formal document still made sense. Ed responded that if it is a functional MOU that clearly describes the roles and responsibilities of each organization, then it would be worth pursuing. Ed went on to say that the County does a good job of bringing in federal money and COG does a good job of administering the dollars with the various programs. Ed would be very comfortable bringing a draft MOU to his Council for their endorsement; so would Mike. Mike agreed that the MOU had to spell out specifics. Neal thought it was premature to bring the MOU to the

Executive Committee at this time. He will talk to Peter and perhaps we could reconvene with the Commissioners even without an MOU. However, we shouldn't spend a lot of time on the MOU in light of the LD's.

4. **FY 2012 Budget Discussion.** There will not be a dues increase this year. Ann has been polling the managers to see what they are proposing for COLA increases. We do anticipate an 11% increase in the cost of insurance and we may need to have staff contribute more to their health costs.
5. **Updates.**
  - The Annual Meeting has been scheduled for May 25<sup>th</sup> at noon (NOTE: the date has since been changed to June 9<sup>th</sup>). Ed will look into the use of Ocean Gateway.
  - Nomination forms for the ReCOGNition Awards have gone out.
  - Sustainability Forum will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Abromson Center at USM.
  - HUD Grant is moving forward. We have entered into an agreement with HUD. We are working on the work plan. The final consortium agreement is due June 1<sup>st</sup>. The consortium group is scheduled to meet on Friday. Gordy will serve as the co-chair of the consortium for our region.
  - State/Federal Funding. There are plans to eliminate the State Planning Office. We almost lost technical assistance for this last six months but some of it was restored. However, we don't know if there will be any technical assistance funding for the future. We have used most of that money in the smaller towns.
  - GoMaine funding was cut fairly significantly – 25% decrease from MaineDOT. We don't know if our funding from the Maine Turnpike Authority is in jeopardy.
  - Economic Development Issues. We met with Mobilize Maine. The EDD proposal has gone to the EDA; Governor LaPage has signed off on it. Neal will be in Washington next week at a NADO conference.
  - RLF – we will be submitting a proposal to FAME for additional money.
6. **Other Business.** Ed mentioned that there will be a public hearing on March 23 at 7:30 p.m. in Portland Council Chambers to provide the public with an opportunity to share their ideas on the attributes that they'd like to see in the next Portland City Manager. An essential requirement for Ed is that the person be a regional player.
7. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.