

GPCOG Steering Committee Minutes
February 25, 2009
10:30 a.m. at GPCOG

In attendance: Paul McKenney, President, Cape Elizabeth; Gordon Billington, Standish; Mike Reynolds, Raymond

Staff: Neal Allen, Maddy Adams, Ann Mazerolle

- (1) **Welcome:** Paul McKenney welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 10:40 a.m. Because there is a vacancy on the Steering Committee, it was determined that there was a quorum.
- (2) **Approval of December 16th, 2008 Minutes.** *Gordy Billington moved approval of the December 16th minutes and Mike Reynolds seconded the motion. All were in favor.*
- (3) **GPCOG Budget for FY 2009-10: Discussion.**

There was a discussion about reducing the GPCOG member dues by 5-10% for the upcoming fiscal year; it would be a one-year reduction. Ann explained that in order for this to work GPCOG would have to cut back on some things such as capital purchases and conferences. We will not, however, reduce services. More of Neal's time would go to indirect and we do have some Endowment Fund money that has been approved but not drawn down that we could use if necessary. We are not sure if matching funds will be going up or not, but we don't think we would miss out on matching funds. Gordy said that a dues reduction would send a good message to the municipalities. The Committee agreed that a 10% decrease in member dues should be put in place for a one-year period beginning July 1, 2009 and will make that recommendation to the Executive Committee. Ann will compile a list of areas where cuts can be made.

Salary adjustments. Gordy said that Standish is reducing everyone's hours by 5%, freezing salaries, and eliminating all memberships in professional organizations and attendance at conferences. Half of the street lights in Standish are being turned off and they are not applying salt on secondary roads. In Raymond, Mike said they are cutting a couple of positions and reducing hours in a couple of areas. At the same time they are including a 3% increase in salary adjustments. Ann will survey member towns to get an idea of what GPCOG members are considering regarding salary adjustments.

- (4) **Regional Planning Concept: Discussion.** This idea came about as a result of the discussions with the Executive Committee over the last few months. It was agreed that the economic development piece should be tied to the regional planning concept. The plan would be guided by the seven sustainability principles and it would also focus on quality of place. It would probably be a two-year process to develop the plan. The plan would still need to meet the state's growth management goals and would need to be consistent. This idea of a regional planning concept has been shared with Sue Inches at SPO and she will be meeting with her staff to review it further. They are interested and enthusiastic about our proposal; it has a fair chance of moving forward. Gordy thought this fit well with what the SPO sees as the deficiency in complementary comprehensive plans. They would see this as implementing their policy and would probably prefer to work with COG as opposed to numerous municipalities. Neal explained that part of our Economic Development Planner's time could be put toward this initiative. The professional planners in the towns would work as a team.

Additionally, the state is looking at pushing economic development down to the regional level. With insight from Paul and Gordy, Neal shared a draft concept of a regional economic development council. An economic development corporation or authority is under study through the Metro Regional Coalition. The draft budget is \$300,000-\$600,000. As currently envisioned, the MRC

proposal would serve the communities of the MRC. Under the draft flow chart, the corporation would cover the entire COG region. A few changes were made to the flow chart and it was suggested that funding also be added. The chart will be shared with the Metro Economic Development Subcommittee at their meeting tomorrow. This conversation will continue with the Executive Committee.

- (5) **Global Communities Task Force: Briefing.** Neal explained that the Center for Global Engagement was the key recommendation of the Global Communities Task Force. The Task Force was initiated by Ed Suslovic when he was Portland's Mayor. Their report has been presented to the Portland City Council and the Council endorsed it; the plan will be presented to our Executive Committee in the near future. As recommended by the Task Force, the City Council endorsed the proposal to establish the Center for Global Engagement and that it be housed at COG. There would be a strong community-based Steering Committee. Neal reviewed why COG would be a good fit for this and how this also ties in with the above. Gordy thought that the way this was developed sounded very exciting.
- (6) **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.