

GPCOG Steering Committee Minutes

May 27, 2009

12:00 p.m. at GPCOG

In attendance: Genie Beaulieu, Freeport; Gordy Billington, Standish; Tony Plante, Windham; Mike Reynolds, Raymond

Staff: Neal Allen, Maddy Adams, Eben Marsh, Ann Thompson

- (1) **Welcome.** Gordy Billington welcomed everyone at 12:15.
- (2) **Approval of March 18, 2009 minutes.** *Mike Reynolds moved approval of the March 18th minutes. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.*
- (3) **Operations Budget for 2009-2010.** Neal reviewed the highlights of the budget which included:
 - Expenditures and offsetting revenues of \$2,678,338 representing a decrease of \$139,228 or 4.94% under the FY 2009 Budget; with Direct Program Pass-through funds excluded, the budget is down 6.39%.
 - Direct Program Pass Through expenses of \$743,666.
 - Member dues revenue of \$217,958 or 8% of the total budget. Decreased dues revenue is the result of the Executive Committee recommendation at their February 25, 2009 meeting for a one-time reduction of 10% for FY 2010. (This is the 20th consecutive year that there has been no increase in the member dues rate.)
 - Total of 18 staff positions, including two part-time and three PACTS staff. In addition, three interns are budgeted for special projects.
 - Personnel expense including salaries, leave and fringe benefits represents 50.1% of the total budget.
 - Salaries are frozen for FY 2010.
 - Fringe benefit decrease of 7.44% is due primarily to change in the composition of staff.
 - EPA Brownfields funding for the first time in GPCOG history.

Neal reported that Eben Marsh will be taking over Carol's position in July; he is currently working part time. He mentioned that salaries are frozen for FY 2010. The challenge will be to try to combine our range of revenue sources to carry forward with our sustainability initiative, regional plan, economic development and the proposed Center for Global Engagement. Our budget does not include money for a staff position for the Global Engagement initiative; that group will have to work to find funding for that.

Ann reviewed the budget. Land use planning has gone up from 9% to 21% because of the brownfields grant (page 2). The Brownfields study is an 18-month study, which is pro-rated in the budget. A committee will be formed for this study; Caroline Paras will be the lead person. There is an opportunity to receive money for a number of years from this program. SMRPC has an RLF for brownfields; we may want to investigate same.

On page 4, the Expense Summary for direct and indirect personnel percentages are the same as last year. The dues allocation was reduced by 5% for FY 2009-2010. The Cooperative Purchasing department actually had a surplus because of high salt usage.

Gordy asked who benefits from RLF funds. Ann suggested that the Committee be given a presentation about the RLF program. The RLF Committee reviews the loans and Vin DiCara, GPCOG's Loan Officer, does the write-ups of the proposals.

We've hired a new cleaning service for the next year at half the cost of our existing service. The auto insurance cost has gone down because we insure only one older GoMaine van which is used for transporting materials for meetings, etc. We are no longer the lead agency for the Safe Kids program.

Tony made a motion that the Steering Committee recommend to the Executive Committee the approval of the budget. Genie seconded the motion and all were in favor. Mike applauded the effort of COG to reduce the dues.

(4) Other Business.

Five nominations for Regional ReCOGNition Awards have been received.

Neal provided some information about Mobilize Maine – a new program that FairPoint has initiated in an effort to strengthen Maine's economy. Mobilize Maine will identify and develop strategies to address Maine's unique assets, which may be skills, businesses, activities or special places that have market-leverage in the global economy, but may not have been previously recognized. It is a private/public/nonprofit partnership facilitated by FairPoint's Connect Northern New England Community and Economic Development Initiative (CNNE). It is a three year, \$7 million program. They would work through the economic development districts and are seeking to collaborate with the North Star Alliance. Every district would have to form a leadership team. Neal wasn't sure what the end product would be. The effort is being driven by a consultant hired by FairPoint. There are still a lot of unanswered questions. DECD was initially skeptical, but is now supportive. Fairpoint is committing \$750,000 and they are looking for money from EDA. Neal said he needed more details before taking any action.

(5) Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.