

**MINUTES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

SOUTHERN MAINE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

**9:00 AM
August 27, 2009**

In attendance were: SMRPC Executive Director Paul Schumacher, Chairman Peter Morelli, Vice Chairman Robert Heard, Treasurer Richard Bicknell, Secretary Joyce Wood, Nancy Perkins, Mike Huston, Roxanne Eflin, Jan Williams, Judy Bernstein, Ken Burford and Chuck Morgan

Absent: Jim Gulnac, Dave Bowles, and Greg Tansley

Guest: Rip Patten from Credere Associates, Inc.

Paul Schumacher announced that Sandra Mowrey has accepted the Planner's position in Gorham and has left the Board. Gerry Mylroie, Interim Planner for Kittery will be her replacement.

1. Minutes of the May 21st Meeting

Motion was made to accept minutes of May 21st with correction on page 4 to Rob Heard not Mike Heard. *Minutes were unanimously approved with change.*

Minutes of June 10th Annual Meeting

Motion was made to accept minutes of June 10th with corrections of: Peter Morelli and Roxanne Eflin being present, removal of John Wood as he is no longer a member and change the period after Judy Bernstein to a comma. *Minutes were unanimously approved with changes.*

2. Treasurer's Report:

Paul Schumacher explained that because of the Brownfield loans, it places us in a higher level of auditing and the audit will be thicker than usual. We should get audit in a few months. Paul told the members that all our towns have already paid their dues in full amounts.

Rumor is that the State was lowering their allotted amounts, but Paul told committee that **CDTA**, DOT and EDA have actually all increased their funds. SPO is under the gun and he has not heard anything yet, but as their monies are a much smaller portion of our budget, our budget isn't impacted as much as in past years. Mike Huston made the motion to accept Treasurer's Report and seconded by Rob Heard. *Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.*

3. **Brownfields Update:**

Peter Morelli announced that the Brownfields were doing well. Paul told the committee that sometime last winter; we applied for a regular Brownfields grant and were awarded an additional 1million. Breakdown of 60/40 percent (Loan/Grant), with 10% for administration and legal costs. SMRPC also applied for a Supplemental EPA funding, which basically is unspent regional dollars, and received \$700,000. This breaks down to \$400,000 – hazardous waste sites and \$300,000 – petroleum contaminated sites. We also applied for additional Stimulus funding, but none was awarded, which is ok, because it would have required more paperwork and matching of funds.

The River Dam Mill Project in Biddeford has decided to get all their funding through Maine State Housing Authority and Tax Credits. Funding has been secured and project is moving forward.

Potential projects are:

- City of Saco - Saco Island
- City of Saco – Saco Steel. City owns property now. Good time to apply.
- Town of Sanford – Sanford Mill. Additional funding needed
- South Berwick – Catholic Church into a Library
- Parsonsfield - Robinson Mill. 1st & 2nd Phase already done.

Potential petroleum projects:

- Kittery Frisbee Market site
- York Water District
- Buxton

EPA has changed their rules for clean-up. At the time of application, you need to own the property.

Question was asked about how South Berwick’s Church/Library become eligible and Paul explained that the building has asbestos and lead-paint.

It was asked if breakdown was always 60/40% and Paul said, “Yes, but we could give the total amount in loans and the breakdown would not apply.”

The question was asked if Hazardous Waste/Petroleum was something new and was answered, “Yes, new to us, but not new to EPA.”

Paul stated that with the new funds available, we wanted to work with smaller towns along with Rip Patten. He stated that there was a project in Cornish and Nancy Perkins agreed to she would call him about it.

Chuck Morgan informed the committee that there are new rules/regulations for applications. Applications are due by October 17th. EPA has a regular \$200,000

Assessment Grant and a Coalition Assessment Grant for 1 million dollars. We should apply for the Coalition Grant with Biddeford and Saco as our two partners.

Rip Patten stated that towns need to apply for their clean-up grants as soon as possible or they will have to wait until next year. If they apply now, the funds will come in later this year. Again, applications are due by October 17th. Fee Simple or Title of property is needed prior to applying. It was agreed that SMRPC should pursue this.

Peter Morelli addressed to the committee that we should discuss applications now, so that by next meeting, we would have answers, so we do not miss the October 17th deadline.

Rob Heard wanted to thank Paul and Chuck for coming to his town and presenting information about our grants/loans.

It was decided that SMRPC should get credit about the work they do and how beautiful the projects are. They should get press coverage. Peter asked if Paul had a list of Brownfield projects available and he said, "Yes." Peter asked the committee if they thought that maybe on our next, and first electronic newsletter, that the committee write "News from the Board" with their names listed. Maybe it will get more people involved. Peter agreed to write a letter. All agreed that it would be a great idea. Paul explained that we have asked all towns to submit their e-mail addresses and only a few said they had no broad-band and needed to stay paper. If they want to pay postage, we will continue to send by paper.

4. Brownfields Grant for Sanford

Paul stated that the Town of Sanford has applied for a \$40,000 subgrant for the Sanford Mill project.

Rip talked about the Sanford Mill project meeting yesterday (8/26/09). It was opened by a speech from the EPA National Director. Project going well. Sanford has a large amount of funds needed all lined up. Soil remediation was done a couple of weeks ago. Town has applied for a loan for the rest. Chellie Pingree was on site yesterday also. Changes have been decided for the mill project; Northland Development plans to shift to all housing with 60% affordable housing. Plans are to have a center atrium with green space. Chuck said he saw the plans and they looked very interesting. Rip stated that the Town of Sanford owns the property now, but Szanton will acquire ownership when funds are received. Commercial space was not an option as we could not get a long-term lease, so they switched to housing. Banks would not lend without long-term leases. This housing project would have folks living and walking to down-town area. Chuck said that Joe Hanslip was also at the meeting and was very supportive at the Board level. It was decided that the space could be adapted to commercial space later, if needed to be. It was asked if there was a need for additional housing in Sanford and Peter Morelli

advised that HUD has provided the housing data and are looking at vacancy rates and rental rates being lowered. HUD is doing a market study.

A motion was made by Rob Heard and 2nd by Roxanne Eflin to approve the \$40,000 subgrant to the Town of Sanford, Sanford Mill Project, making it a total amount of \$200,000. *Motion was unanimously approved.*

5. York County Advocacy Project

Paul explained that an SMRPC and Maine Tomorrow (MLM) met with York County Officials including town managers and county administrator, and elected officials to identify York County wide issues and present to go pro-active with our legislatures. John Sylvester from the 12-town group will present to the legislatures. Meetings will be held each month.

A meeting was held yesterday. See handout of issues that will be presented. Budget amount is \$7,000. (\$3,000 from SMRPC's dues and \$4,000 billed towns for the rest).

Discussion took place as to what exactly was expected from the smaller towns. What are we asking for a financial commitment? Many smaller towns do not have a fund and cannot just write out checks for different groups. Doesn't MMA present issues to lobbyist? This group would make State Representatives hear issues from towns instead of from MMA. It was felt that MMA dodges many local issues, but with this group, may have more impact. It was decided that towns needed to participate in order to bring issues to the group so they could present to legislatures. Paul explained that the funds would be for hiring Maine Tomorrow not spending on lobbyist.

It was asked how SMRPC become involved in this. Paul told the committee that the Managers have been meeting (which Paul is part of) and the group later told him to handle the administrative and funding parts, and that we needed to get more involved in legislation. It was decided that towns should have been informed of this prior to being billed. It appeared that only the town managers knew of this project and did not share with other town officials. It was pointed out that the towns who are part of the 12 town group should have been aware of the project.

It was asked what action the committee should take, and it was decided that the committee supports this project, that towns should put pressure on legislature folks, and Paul should continue, but be careful with staff time and budget amounts. He should forward information and bring back to the committee each month. Paul suggested the committee attend the next meeting on 9/17/09.

6. New Projects for SMRPC

- Oxford County Regional Energy –Paul met with Rob Heard and Oxford County.

- Six town group involved in RLF Project. Similar to Brownfields and need help from SMRPC.
- CDBG Project Grant – Six towns back with information. Sharing of staff, equipment and facilities. SMRPC working on a menu of services/personnel that would be needed. We would work like an Employment Agency. SMRPC does the hiring and distributes workers to towns for a fee. Other towns like Wells, Kennebunk, Eliot, Berwick, South Berwick, and Kittery share employees. Scarborough and Saco have joint employees. Porter has been thinking of hiring a Town Manager, but cannot justify hiring for a full-timer. It would be great to share costs with another town. Some towns already share Code Enforcement Officers. It was suggested that this idea might also be used with equipment and facilities. Towns could share costs and use of equipment.
- . SMRPC has a very good working relationship with Bob Bohlmann from the York County EMA.
- Still working on Climate Change.
- SMRPC sent out an RFP for a new server system and an IT group to manage it.

7. Other:

Mark Green, Sanford Town Manager received Manager of the Year Award.

Next meeting – September 24th.