

**REGIONAL EFFICIENCY GRANT WORKGROUP
MEETING MINUTES
SOUTH BERWICK TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE
Thursday, January 10, 2008
3:00 PM**

ATTENDEES

Eliot: Jack Murphy, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen.
Nelson & Doyle: Craig Nelson, Consultant.
North Berwick: Dwayne Morin, Town Manager.
SMRPC: Chuck Morgan, Economic Development Specialist.
So. Berwick: Jeffrey Grossman, Town Manager, Roberta Orsini, Executive Assistant and Jim Fisk, Town Planner.
Wells: Mike Huston, Town Planner.
York Chamber: Cathy Goodwin, Ex-officio.

GUESTS

South Berwick: Jean Demetracopoulos, Town Councilor.
Planning Decisions, Inc.: Chuck Lawton.

NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Berwick: Keith Trefethen, Town Manager.
Eliot: Dan Blanchette, Administrative Assistant.
Kittery: Jonathan Carter, Town Manager and Glenn Shweary, Town Council Chairman.
SMRPC: Paul Schumacher, President.
So. Berwick: Dennis Fontaine and Sue Roberge, Town Council Chairman.
Wells: Jane Duncan, Town Manager.
York: Rob Yandow, Town Manager.

Susie Scott (Administrative Assistant) was taking minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. **Regional Efficiency Grant Workgroup 10/25/07:** Motion by Mr. Huston, second by Mr. Morin to accept minutes as written, passed unanimously.
2. **Regional Efficiency Grant Workgroup 12/12/07:** No need to approve.

REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

1. Report from Chuck Lawton regarding a possible workforce study:

Mr. Grossman stated that if the legislation were to pass, he believes the Committee should apply for another round of the regional efficiency grant as well as grants for continued studies and research. Requested studies include a Feasibility/Workforce Study.

Mr. Grossman introduced Chuck Lawton. Mr. Lawton introduced himself as having sat on a panel for the workforce training group and discussed the following items:

- Unemployment rate vs. underemployed people. It is important for a new employer not poach employees from existing businesses. If people are commuting to jobs outside of York County (MA&NH), this could provide alternatives for the working population.
- Survey sampling of population with Department of Labor with an EDA grant.
- Work with Department of Labor and get direct information about qualifications of currently employed individuals. If the Department of Labor allows, the Committee could attain employment data of individual people that can be accessed by aggregate. Contact: John Doer, Workforce Labor at Dept. of Labor re: inventory of labor force in York County.
- Current workforce data is 4 years old.
- Reference the Cianbro/Lonza example.
- Need to research age, educational and skill level and related skills (specialized) as well as people's interest in moving to other jobs. 46% of the civilian labor force would be willing to transfer to other jobs, which creates a potential labor pool.
- This type of study is needed to attract large employers to a business park because it is the first and most important question that is asked. It's crucial to identify the skills needed for each industry.
- Ideal to reach out to York, Rockingham and Strafford Counties. A case study of the 2 states with detailed employer/employee information is essential.
- Example of metal manufacturing: There are currently good jobs available for skilled metal workers. Combining an industrial facility with a preexisting state training program, a company would be more likely to invest in employees with basic skills that are not necessarily fully skilled. Testimonials of companies would assist.
- Important selling point for large companies is the possibility of a complete package incorporating both utilities and employees.

Mr. Lawton recommended the following steps for the Steering Committee:

- First Step: Gather regularly published material by industry from the Department of Labor. Second Step: Contact the Dept. of Labor for more detailed investigation of population employment levels and those employed outside of Maine. Third step: Complete both steps 1&2 with New Hampshire.
- Recommends the Committee apply for state grants with a regional or SEDS approach. If grant monies are allocated at a multi-municipal level, it is more coherent.
- Recommends the Committee contact either Matt Jacobson or Peter DelGreco from Maine & Company. These individuals are very aware of businesses interested in investing. Possible speakers for future REG meeting.
- Mr. Lawton will discuss with the Department of Labor related costs and tasks. He will contact the Steering Committee once he receives the information.

Chuck Nelson noted the deadline for a second round of REG grants as noted below.

February 15, 2008 – Second round of REG grants due. (\$500,000). Grants could be used for feasibility studies once a specific project is identified.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Review Public Officials Meeting: Discussed under New Business.

NEW BUSINESS

The Steering Committee discussed the following items:

1. Discuss invoicing from Doyle & Nelson: Monies needed to cover current expenses plus future additional monies. Will have to show next public hearing as lobbying. Mr. Grossman noted that Mr. Nelson has donated his time from the December meetings. The members discussed possibly requesting monies from participating communities. Members were concerned that selectmen may not want to contribute monies. Mr. Grossman discussed contacting Kennebunk Savings Bank regarding applying for grants for \$5,000-\$7,500 that could be used to cover expenses for Doyle & Nelson. Mr. Morin noted he could contact the KSB president.
2. Mr. Grossman discussed the York Selectman's vote to join the Workgroup. After December 12, 2007 public officials meeting, York Selectmen requested a presentation from Mr. Grossman and Mr. Nelson to be presented to their Board of Selectmen. The York Board voted to join group and be named on legislation. Mr. Yandow will pick 2 representatives to attend Steering Committee.
3. Discuss Amendment to Legislation LD 2003. Mr. Nelson discussed amendments to LD 2003 with regard to the use of a state valuation or blended formula. With the new inclusion of York, there are some questions relating to the use of the valuation method. The Committee discussed including a methodology for proportioning representation on the Authority Board as well as related costs in the Planning Phase. Committee discussed eliminating the methodology and costs from the Legislative Bill. An alternative was discussed in keeping valuation as a factor with counting 50% with population. Committee members further discussed the allocation of votes and costs at 5% increments. FirstPark has a Board of 33 individuals. Committee discussed leaving the Bill as it reads with valuation however; York is concerned due to the amount they will contribute.
4. Mr. Nelson requested input from all Committee members for a consensus on how the Bill should read. The Bill presently has a threshold with a minimum of 3 participating communities. Committee agreed to leave the minimum at 3 towns.
5. Discuss BRED Hearing (scheduled 1-17-08, see attached). Mr. Nelson noted that the hearing is scheduled for 1:00 pm and should be on time. It is a straight forward process: Peter Bowman will speak as a sponsor along with other co-sponsors. The BRED Committee will ask for proponents to speak, then opposition and then those in favor/or opposition. The BRED Committee can ask questions to those who speak. Next step for the BRED Committee will to have a work session that day depending on how long the Public Hearing goes. If work session does not occur that day, a workshop could occur the following day. If legislation passes, there still is no commitment from towns. Voters will have final say. Mr. Nelson stressed the importance in encouraging communities to work together in providing regional services. Steering Committee members should ask someone from each of the communities to speak in favor and participate in the process. Any comments should be submitted to the Clerk prior to hearing with 20 copies. Steering Committee members are welcome to meet at Doyle and Nelson at 11:30 am for lunch and

discussion prior to the Public Hearing. Public Hearing attendees will include Senators and representative, Bonnie Gould, plus 4 or 5 sponsors. Mr. Nelson will give a brief presentation and synopsis of the legislation prior to community speakers. This bill will be presented as an Emergency Bill which will go to senate first because prime sponsor is a senator, goes to house, back to senator for enactment and then to the governor. The timeframe is from that date to end of year for communities to vote to participate in initial phase. Bill could become law by mid-February. Authority becomes effective after 3 towns vote per a town warrant. Date to be set at June 30, 2009.

6. Discuss Commissioner Richardson's support. Mr. Fisk discussed Mr. Richardson's support of the Bill. Mr. Nelson will contact assistant to confirm Mr. Richardson's attendance at next week's Public Hearing. Mr. Morgan will attend. Mr. Morin may be able to attend. Mr. Grossman will contact Kittery and York.

BRED Committee is located at the north end with a common entrance from HHS/BRED Committees, room #208.

OTHER

Dates & Times for Upcoming Meeting:

1/17/08 – 1:00 PM	Public Hearing: Business Research and Economic Development (BRED Committee) Location: Room 208 Cross Office Building, State House, Augusta
2/21/07 – 3:00 PM	Regional Efficiency Grant Workgroup Location: Town Manager's Office, South Berwick

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm.

ATTESTED: _____

**Susie Scott,
Assistant to the Director of Planning & Economic Development**