

**Northern Maine Development Commission
Executive Board Meeting Minutes of
January 14, 2016**

PLACE: Northern Maine Development Commission

DATE: January 14, 2016 12:00 noon

Attendance: Chair Christy Sirois, Butch Asselin, Austin Bless, Keith Brown, Mary Anne Buck, Dave Cyr, David Dionne, Ralph Dwyer, Norm Fournier, Sandra Fournier, Jon Frederick, Denis Gagne, Jim Gagnon, Don Guimond, Max Lynds, Jim Nadeau, Martin Puckett, Wendell Spooner, Jim Tweedie, Paul Underwood and Fred Ventresco.

Others Present: Phil Bosse-Senator Collins' Office, John Harold-Town of Fort Fairfield, Bob Clark, Judy Dinsmore, Alain Ouellette, Jay Kamm, Jon Gulliver, Julie Corey, Mary Dahlgren and Chris Bouchard-Aroostook Republican.

1. Call to Order and Introductory Remarks:

Chair Sirois brought the meeting to order at 12:00 and asked those who wished to receive travel reimbursement to pass their vouchers in to Ms. Dinsmore.

2. Approval of Executive Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2015:

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Tweedie, seconded by Mr. Underwood to approve the Executive Board of Directors meeting minutes of November 12, 2015 as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

3. Acceptance of the Agencywide Revenue and Expenditure Statement for the Period Ending December 31, 2015:

Mary Dahlgren presented the financial report to the Board and gave an explanation for each revenue and expense line.

The benchmark for the period ending December 31, 2015 was 50%.

Total revenues are \$1,934,306 representing 44.25% or 5.75 percentage points below the benchmark.

Total expenses for the period were \$1,874,022 or 44.72% of the budgeted expenses or 5.28 percentage points below the benchmark.

This gives an Agency Balance of \$60,284.

Accounts receivable is at \$386,635, but there is an additional \$86,530 which has not been billed yet.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Tweedie, seconded by Ms. Buck to approve the Agencywide Revenue and Expenditure Statement for the period ending December 31, 2015 as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

Mr. Frederick inquired as to the average cash on hand. Ms. Dahlgren stated cash on hand was minimal as we pay down the line of credit whenever there is excess cash available.

Mr. Bless thanked NMDC staff for keeping expenses down.

4. Report of the Loan Review Committee:

Ms. Corey presented this to the Board.

Loans Closed:

Sullivan's Flooring-Construction
 James Whitmore-Logging industry
 Eric Rodd-Mapleton Garage
 Cindy Bouchard-Working capital and equipment
 Kim Lauritsen-Moondance Studio working capital, equipment

Loan Requests:

G-Force Laser Tag-Equipment, working capital - approved
 Autotronics LLC-Restructure, build large paint booth- approved
 Joey LaPierre - Moratorium for taxes and restructuring real estate taxes - approved
 Westar Logistics-Expand and add power to several rooms – approved

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Nadeau, seconded by Mr. Tweedie to accept the Loan Review Committee's report as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

a. Request in Excess of Loan Review Committee's Authority

Ms. Corey reported Caldwell's Auto Sales and Service located in Limestone is restructuring with Katahdin Trust Company. By doing this it will pay their loan down with us and will allow them an additional line of credit.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Cyr, seconded by Mr. Tweedie to approve the Loan Review Committee's recommendation with respect to Caldwell's Auto, LLC loan request.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

b. Business Finance Division Director Position

Mr. Clark announced he met with the finance staff as a group as well as individually. NMDC advertised for the position and received 13 applications – 11 were external and 2 internal. There were 6 out of state from Washington state to Dubai; 7 in-state of which 5 were from the County. He explained he looked at the structure of the Business Finance staff and felt there is a great deal of talent. The division has had the same structure for 26 years and it is time to reassess how the division operates. We will have better integration with other NMDC programs, inclusion with other program investments and new opportunities such as CDFI and Community Advantage Loans.

Mr. Clark explained Mike Kasputas of Monticello was asked to meet with him and the Business Finance staff to assist in counseling and loan development.

5. Ratification of Service Contracts:

There were no contracts to be ratified.

6. Employee Expense Allowance Policy (Formerly Vehicle Allowance):

Mr. Clark explained this was one of the findings with the WIA program. The revised policy will be added to NMDC's Personnel Policy and will become part of the compensation package.

Employees authorized for an Employee Expense Allowance may draw down the allowance on a monthly basis at the rate of 1/12 of the annual allowance. Excess expenses would be carried over to next month and will stop at the end of the year. This will include mileage, meals, business trip lodging. At the end of the calendar year if expenses are less than the annual allowance, the difference will be determined as income to the employee and will be included on the employee's W-2 form.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Gagne, seconded by Mr. Tweedie to approve the employee expense allowance policy as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

7. Authorization to Submit an EPA Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Program Application in the Amount of \$120,000:

Mr. Kamm presented this to the Board indicating the deadline is February 12, 2016. The purpose is to support community-based organizations to collaborate and partner with other stakeholders to develop and implement solutions that address environment and/or public health issues(s) at the local level.

There is \$120,000 available within each of the 10 EPA regions. The project must relate to at least one of the federal environmental statutes:

- Clean Air Act, Section 103(b) (3)
- Clean Water Act, Section 104(b) (3)
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20 (a)
- Maritime Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, Section 203
- Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442(b) (3)
- Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001(a)
- Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10(a)

The environmental issue in Aroostook County is Radon. Aroostook County has air radon concentrations well above EPA's designated action level. The County actually has an average of 5.8 pCi/L (pico curies per liter). According to Maine CDC, radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer.

Tasks:

- Establish focus groups for dialogue on radon
- Develop strategies that identifies the actions needed to provide a healthy and safe community
- GIS mapping of properties with radon levels of 2 or more pCi/L. This information will be used to build a database for seeking funding resources
- Conduct workshops for real estate agencies, banking, insurance and other institutions involved in selling/buying homes

Potential Partners:

ACAP Housing

Healthy Aroostook and Power of Prevention

Cary Medical Center

Aroostook Band of Micmacs/Houlton Band of Maliseets

DHHS/Maine CDC Public Health Liaison

The announcement will be in August with a project start date of October 1, 2016.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Fournier to authorize the submission of the EPA proposal as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to execute all necessary documents pertaining thereto.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

8. Authorization to Submit a Farm Services Administration Proposal in the Approximate Amount of \$95,000:

Mr. Ouellette reported this was designed for USDA to select an organization to help promote and market their programs. This is a cooperative agreement which will make available \$2,500,000 nationwide. Eligible applicants must be a 501(c)(3) organization. There are 125 expected awards. Nine of the 20 programs are being accessed for FSA.

Outreach Initiative Goals:

- Identify beneficiaries in both counties (Aroostook and Washington)
- Will be building off of the success with NMDC's Logger and Off-Road Trucker Training
- Train our farmers and ranchers to be better business people and be successful
- Estimated cost is \$95,000 for 12 months.

Activities:

- Business and Finance Training Sessions (3 in Aroostook and 2 in Washington)
- Media campaign to make farming community aware
- Attend and promote farmers' markets and agricultural fairs

Our results will be tracked and will develop a digital modular archive library for farm community.

NMDC Team:

Alain Ouellette
Jon Gulliver
Bob Dorsey
Julie Corey
Dave Spooner
Dana Delano
Ken LeTourneau
Josh Nadeau

Project Support:

Senators Collins and King
Maine Potato Board
Aroostook Cooperative Extension
LaJoie Growers, Van Buren
Maine Agri-Women
Aroostook Farm Bureau
MOFGA
Aroostook Band of Maliseet Nation

Mr. Ouellette stated originally there were 4 funding cycles which has been reduced to 2. Round 2 will be delayed from January 22 to July 11, 2016. This will include new and existing farmers.

Mr. Guimond stated FSA is requiring SAMs registration and Dunns. We should focus on these for the producers.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Tweedie, seconded by Mr. Cyr to authorize the submission of the FSA proposal as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to execute all necessary documents pertaining thereto.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed

9. Update on USDOL/MDOI Monitoring Report Progress:

Mr. Clark reported the target date for transition to TCWIB is January 31, 2016. Weekly conference calls have been established in order to know who, what and when things need to be done.

Activity to Date:

- Settlement with USDOL to pay \$6,200 for disallowed costs (vehicle allowance)
- MDOL currently owes NMDC \$120,000 plus January, 2016 expenditures
- NMDC will be audited next year for all programs from July 1, 2015 to January 31, 2016
- Requested MDOL issue a letter stating NMDC is no longer on high risk
- Requested funding to cover costs of subsequent audit costs to NMDC
- NMDC will not pay the \$6,200 to USDOL until full payment has been received from MDOL
- We expect all findings to be cleared by next week

10. Community Guided Planning and Zoning Rule Making:

Mr. Kamm reported in December, 2015 that NMDC provided the LUPC with suggestions on proposed amendments to Chapter 10 Land Use Districts and Standards regarding a proposed new sub-district developed for certain areas in Aroostook County in partnership with NMDC through the Commission's Community Guided Planning and Zoning program.

Comment deadline: January 22, 2016

Rebuttal comment deadline: February 12, 2016

Contact: Ben Godsoe, Augusta

Mr. Underwood stated E Plantation has been removed from a certain level of development. They are a primary access route to this development and should be put back in. They were removed as they were not a major route.

11. Authorization to Apply for an EPA Brownfields Assessment Grant in the Amount of \$200,000:

Mr. Kamm stated NMDC is in the process of reapplying for additional funding. We are looking for monies to continue the community-wide brownfield assessment program in our service area.

NMDC will be completing 6 Phase I and II's during the duration of this project. Sites have to be contaminated with petroleum products to qualify.

4 Tasks:

- Program and Steering Committee Support
- Brownfield Selection and Evaluation
- Sites Assessments
- Community Outreach (speaking at various rotaries, etc)

Timeline: The grant was submitted in December, 2015

Notification should be received in March-April, 2016

Grant begins on October 1, 2016 and is a 3 year grant period (Our intention is 18-24 month timeline)

Partners:

EPA

ACAP

St. John Aroostook RC&D

Aroostook Partnership

MDEP

ACT

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Brown, seconded by Ms. Fournier to authorize the submission of the EPA Brownfields proposal as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to execute all necessary documents pertaining thereto.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

12. Authorization to Apply for a USDA Solid Waste Management Grant in the Amount of \$95,024:

Mr. Kamm stated NMDC has been successful in receiving this grant 18 times. The grant funds will be used to stimulate interest in how waste management decisions are made and promote a better understanding of the costs associated with those decisions. This task will identify, on the regional level, the costs of waste management programs and educate

the public and municipalities on the additional costs of programs that residents frequently request. The group meets on a quarterly basis to brainstorm.

Programs Offered:

- Educational programs on cost of solid waste management
- On-line backyard composting training (successful participant – will receive an earth machine)
- Animal Shelter Inventory (issue of euthanized animals)
- Waste Management Technical Assistance Program (unusable items at Catholic Charities and social services end up needing to be disposed of at their cost)

We are seeking \$95,000

Start date: October 1, 2016 (this is a one year grant)

Notification: March-April, 2016

Partners:

MDEP

Tri Community Landfill

Valley Recycling

Aroostook Valley Solid Waste Disposal District

Catholic Charities of Maine

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Tweedie, seconded by Mr. Gagne to authorize the submission of the USDA Solid Waste management proposal as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to execute all necessary documents pertaining thereto.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

13. Other Business:

A. Establish Time for March Meeting

Mr. Clark explained that the next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for March 10. Daylight Savings Time doesn't start until March 12, 2016. Normally we do not switch our meetings back to 3:00 p.m. until the time change. Since it will be getting lighter out by that time, and board members will be able to get home before dark, it is management's recommendation to move the March 10th meeting back to the 3:00 p.m. timeframe.

MOTION:

Motion made by Mr. Frederick, seconded by Mr. Underwood to return to the 3:00 p.m. start time for the Executive Board meetings beginning with the March 10th meeting and continuing until Daylight Savings Time ends on November 6, 2016.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

14. Executive Director's Report:

- In June, 2015, audits were conducted by PTAC DoD, MEP DoC NIST, SBA, EPA and MDOL. To date only EPA Brownfields and SBA have responded indicating there were no findings.
- Huffington Post: 11 Things to check out in Aroostook County
- NADO Innovation Awards: Workforce Center of Excellence and Forest Cluster
- Quickbooks Training Seminar at UMPI: 67 attendees. Another one will be scheduled later this year
- Collins Press Release: Extension and modification of EZ tax incentives – provision extends through 2016 and allows employees to meet the enterprise zone facility bond employment requirement if they are residents of the EZ, enterprise community or a qualified low-income community within an applicable nominating jurisdiction.
- Senator Collins was successful in getting language approved in the Omnibus bill to make permanent the increased weight limits on the interstate (100,000)
- Small Business Provisions authored by Senator Collins included in Final Tax-Relief Bill: Allows small businesses to immediately deduct the entire cost of newly acquired assets that are purchased or financed during the tax year; bonus depreciation is extended and allows businesses to recover part of the cost of these assets right away, helping to offset the cost of purchasing new equipment; a faster depreciation for restaurant improvements is made permanent and will enable restaurants that renovate their spaces to depreciate the cost of property improvements over 15 years rather than 39 years.
- John Short has been named UMFK's campus President
- NMDC's payables are up-to-date

15. Adjournment:

There being no further business to conduct, Chair Sirois declared the meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph Dwyer
Secretary

RD/jd