**MCOG Board of Director’s Meeting**

**February 22, 2024 at 11:00 am**

**165 Main Street, Damariscotta**

**Zoom link provided for those who needed to participate remotely.**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Directors Present:** Marc Meyers, Jeffrey Jordan, Andrew Dorr, Charlie Grover, Julie Hashem, Sally Costello

1. Marc Meyers called the **Meeting to Order** at 11:05 am.
2. **Approval of Minutes.** Charlie Grover made separate motions to approve minutes of August 24, 2023 and January 25, 2024 meetings. Both motions were seconded by Sally Costello and approved by votes of 6-0 and 5-0, respectively. Andrew Dorr abstained from approval of Jan 25 meeting, as he did not attend.
3. **Financial Report**
	1. Mathew Eddy reported additional deposits of $10,000-$15,000 since the report was sent out. Incoming revenue flow is back on track.
4. **Director’s Report**
	1. Housing opportunities subregional planning is ongoing. The Five Rivers group is meeting, focusing on specific areas for community collaboration including short- term rentals.
	2. St. George Working Waterfront Vulnerability Study is complete. This pilot project can be replicated in other places and adjusted to compensate for challenges in local data availability.
	3. Regional council funding will be before the Legislature’s Appropriations Committee on March 1 for LDs 602 and 1934, which will increase funding to RPCs and begin to set up a state planning office. MCOG is testifying in support of both bills.
	4. MCOG is pursuing a Knox County bike/pedestrian project with MDOT.
	5. MCOG is assisting with waterfront development projects in Rockland and Thomaston.
5. Committee Updates
	1. **MCEDC-Steering Committee**. Julie Hashem and Sally Costello reported that Advisory Committee members have been engaged at meetings and have been focusing on the sustainability of our communities. They had insightful discussions regarding the excellent story map data findings related to housing construction, which will build toward an analysis of strengths and weaknesses, and action planning. Economic sustainability emerged as a key agenda item for the next meeting. Staff is doing a great job supplying data and facilitating discussion. The next meeting is scheduled for February 28 in Thomaston.
	2. **MCOG Loan Committee.** Brian Dancause reported that a $200,000 loan was approved for acquisition of real estate and other business assets of home heating systems supplier with locations in Auburn and Topsham. Upon disbursement of this loan, MCOG will have $650,000 in outstanding loans and $311,000 of unrestricted loan funds in the bank. Brian further noted the need to draw down State Small Business Credit Initiative funds and pursue other loan funding opportunities in order to do more lending. The Loan Committee’s March 1 meeting will focus on strategy and organizational issues. Staff will provide a workforce issues presentation to engage the committee in other MCOG mission-related topics.
6. **Technical Assistance Program.** Max Johnstone reported the following:
	1. Staff are proposing amendments for GIS-related work and are cleaning up minor issues to clarify what services we offer.
	2. LD 2003 and housing is the primary focus of technical assistance. Staff have been responding to many municipal requests for information.
	3. Workshops are in the works regarding federal earmark funding, with Lincoln County Regional Planning Commission and Hancock County Planning Commission. Staff is open to suggestions for topics/guest speakers. PFAS issue was suggested as a future topic.
	4. Department of Justice grant covered initial requests and administrative costs. The project will close in the next week, and staff will explore other areas for earmarks.
	5. MCOG helped organize a meeting at which a lawyer discussed specific issues for zoning board of appeals members. The recording will be posted on MCOG website.
7. **Working Waterfront.** The St. George Working Waterfront Vulnerability Report was presented by Meg Rasmussen and Dan DeBord.
8. Marc Meyers **Adjourned** the meeting at 12:30 pm.