

November 13, 2014

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Special Meeting held
November 13, 2014
in the Commissioners' Conference Room
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
Barry Curtis, Sheriff Elect, Cherryfield
Matt Foster, D.A. Elect / Ellsworth
Jen Peters, SCEC
Dean Preston, U.T.
Lewis Pinkham, Milbridge
Mike Hinerman, EMA
Josh Rolfe, RCC
Lora Whelan, Quoddy Tides
Jill Holmes, Treasurer
Kelsey Porter, Jonesboro
Judith Alexander, Treasurer's Office
Judy East, WCCOG**

Commissioner Christopher Gardner was not present.

The meeting was called to order at 3:38 p.m.

Washington County Council of Governments Executive Director Judy East presented a proposal for a request for TIF funds to assist with the GROWashington-Aroostock project. GROWashington-Aroostock is an on-line regional plan for sustainable development. The HUD grant that funded GROWashington-Aroostock was exhausted in May. Judy explained that the TIF funds requested would be used to leverage the ability to bring additional funds to the county. Judy briefly described the following areas that would be impacted.

November 13, 2014

- Brownfields & Economic Renewal - WCCOG recently obtained a 3rd \$400,000 grant to continue this program for another 3 years.
- Climate Change/Comprehensive Climate Assessment - Issue areas are more frequent and stronger storm events taking place causing flooding, erosion and property damage. Report and storm surge maps for coastal Washington County using LIDAR and GIS mapping assist in emergency planning and public outreach. Much of this work includes seven years of student work done at the UMM GIS Center. This has provided free or low-cost mapping services.
- Transportation/Economic Development - The areas of transportation and economic growth are directly related to one another. GROWashington-Aroostock addresses the challenge of housing and travel in the low populated rural areas which impact employment opportunities. The transportation infrastructure also impacts the economic development. Investments into travel routes such as Bold Coast Scenic Byway Corridor and the East-West Corridor are priorities. Rail-to-Port connectivity also assists in the challenge of economic growth. Addressing these transportation areas would help stop the population loss.
- Growth Management Law Change - This would assist communities in comprehensive land use plans by providing on-line planner maps and parcel mapping.
- Healthy Communities - A Food Summit was hosted this past March in East Machias with approximately 170 people in attendance. The summit, using local food mapping and buying clubs are some of ways that have been used to work towards the goals of increasing the availability of local foods; improving access to recreational opportunities; and reducing incidence of preventable chronic disease.
- Sustainable Housing - There is an urgent call for action for this issue but there is no money available. Washington County has the oldest population in the State. Regional planning for sustainable housing will address the issues such as affordable heating and weatherization.
- Water Infrastructure Assessment - A Water System Assessment to analyze major water supplied in Washington and Hancock counties would be helpful information in the goals of creating a management plan for decentralized wastewater systems.

November 13, 2014

A summary of the proposed Community Guided Planning and Zoning initiative is attached. The goal is to develop a "Process Document" to use as a guide for regional planning. The plan would be submitted to LUPC for review and approval.

The request for TIF funds is a total of \$220,000.00 with a break-down for use as follows:

- Planning & Zoning \$ 80,000.00
- Hydrological Assessment \$ 40,000.00
- Leverage funds for LiDAR mapping \$100,000.00

Judy East stated that this would be a two-year project. Commissioner Cassidy inquired as to whether Judy anticipated more grant money. Judy responded that there is a possibility. Commissioner Crowley recommended tabling the decision until the next regular meeting so that all three commissioners would be present. Unorganized Supervisor Dean Preston agreed with that. He stated that the U.T. budget will be available by the December meeting. By consensus, the proposal was tabled for the December Meeting.

Adjournment 3:58 p.m.

Attest: _____
Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.