

## Down East RC&D

July 24 2014

**Present:** Nate Pennell, Gary Edwards, Fred Cook, Kathy Upton, Betsy Fitzgerald, Barbara Tibbetts, Peter Steenstra, Judy East, Dale and Dorothea Crowley

**Minutes:** Motion Fred, second Gary to approve. Carried

Treasurer's report is running about a month behind while waiting on some accounts to clear but our bottom line is looking much better even though we've paid some big bills. We've started taking the 5 % administration fee out of some accounts. Motion Fred, second Kathy Upton to approve. Motion carried.

**President's report:** Nothing new to add. **Update:** Gary will attend the upcoming New England meeting in Portland Nov. 8.

**Project updates:** Cherryfield Academy: The grant, if it comes through, will be awarded in November. Not much can be done but some work on the windows until that is known. There is a mold and mildew problem that will greatly improve when the rug in the back room is removed but that has to wait until someone can get to it. Sullivan/Sorrento: There were a number of good programs run this summer. The grant didn't come through but work will get done with volunteers. The garage will be painted. Meanwhile there have been a lot of donations, including the pick of items in a house in Steuben.

Food Alliance: There's a lot going on. There has been another workshop. Maine now has the most farms in New England. There are a lot of specialty farms and season extenders such as hoop houses. Judy displayed the Local Foods map which was unveiled for the Local Foods summit and can easily be updated.

Destination Cherryfield: It's generating a lot of excitement. The musical acts are booked, several vendors are committed. There will be horse and wagon rides along the river. They are also working with Harrington, which has its Oktoberfest at the same time.

Happy Grant: Done for this year.

Sunrise County Arts in the Park: This is the Jonesport group that has started up the idea of having tours of parks with pieces of art in them. The council voted to accept this as a project last month and Gary and Larry Finegan have been in communication. Is it Finegan or Finney as his signature would suggest?

The Cherryfield library was chosen to receive 123 brand new books by Maine authors. This award features a wide range of genres.

Update on DART: Gary and Fred met with Ristine Barr. The current chair on DART's finances and what the plans are and think they've cleared up the main misunderstanding. Many board members thought RC&D wanted to piggyback on them. There will have to be changes and there's a lot of talk about what they will be but uncertainty seems to be the one constant theme. Ristine seemed to agree that our area is the most successful and moving out is not a good idea. Why not put the visitor's center in Ellsworth and continue with the office here? There will be more discussions concerning the finances when they meet with WCCOG which has won the bid for the secretarial job. RC&D can continue to do the finances. The only change is a transition to Quickbooks.

Judy East presented the GroWashingtonAroostook Regional Plan for Development. Three years in the planning, it is an interactive website for town and city planners. It was presented to HUD May 6 over a webinar.

It features combined and separated reports for Washington and Aroostook counties covering virtually anything a town planner might need in order to plan for eventualities, including interactive maps and videos plus some observations involving ongoing planning such as the transloading facility for the Port of Eastport complete with alternate routes.

Public parcels, water systems, workforce development and training, communications, brownfields, transportation and housing which has urgent need to be addressed but alas the funding is seriously lacking. Aging houses and an aging population with only 5 % of those on the waiting list whose needs can be filled, yet the waiting list is only a small portion of the reality. Climate change and infrastructure resilience need also to be addressed.

This report puts the full power of GIS available to small towns and planners who cannot afford it. Non-traditional and customized, customizable tools are also at their disposal in this report.