



# Maine Community Development Association

**Thursday, March 11, 2021  
10:00 a.m.**

## **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and Introductions by Tracey Desjardins, President MCDA 2019-2021**

The Zoom meeting began at 10:00 a.m. The following were in attendance:

Tracey Desjardins, President	City of Gardner
Scott Laflamme, Vice President	Town of Yarmouth
Mathew Eddy, Treasurer	City of Biddeford
Joella R. Theriault, Secretary	Northern Maine Development Commission
Nancy Ketch, Director	Town of Houlton
Jen Peters, Director	Sunrise County Economic Council
Darryl Sterling, Director	Economic Development Consultant
Jeff Sneddon, Member	Kennebec Valley Council of Government
John Shea, Member	Piscataquis County Economic Development Council
Tony Levesque, Member	Town of Fort Fairfield
Tanya Emery, Member	City of Bangor
Anne Ball, Member	Maine Downtown Center
Cary Tyson, Member	Portland Downtown
Deborah Johnson, Program Director	Office of Community Development
Joan Walton, Member	Androscoggin Valley Council of Government
Rodney Lynch, Member	Town of Thomaston
Jeff Hewett, Member	Town of Skowhegan
Marc Meyers, Member	City of Bath
Andrea Smith, Guest Speaker	Northern Border Regional Commission

**2. Approval of December 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes:** Moved by D. Sterling and seconded by J. Hewett to approve the meeting minutes as presented; motion passed.

**3. Treasurer’s Report and Financials – November:** M. Eddy presented the Financial report. The question brought forward at the last meeting regarding a line item expenditure was clarified. It appears the Secretary’s invoice was recorded twice, possibly because a late invoice submission was recorded in the current year budget. M. Eddy reported that a high miscellaneous billing from the previous year will also be investigated and reported at the next meeting. Moved by J. Hewett and seconded by T. Levesque to approve the Financial Report as presented; motion passed.

#### 4. Office of Community Development – Deborah Johnson:

- a. Presentation by Andrea Smith of the Northern Border Regional Commission –
- i. Charlotte Mace is the State Program Manager for the State of Maine and is your Point of Contact.
  - ii. NBRC is encouraging the submission of Letters of Intent. While in 2020 they encourage the submission; in 2021 it will be required.
  - iii. The Administration Manual has been updated and available on-line.
  - iv. 2021 Grantees will use the same system for reimbursements requests and quarterly reporting where they fill in forms and email it to NBRC; but next year all this will be done on-line.
  - v. New this year is a waiver request stating the inability to secure a match because of COVID.
  - vi. Scoring criteria for NBRC and the State of Maine has changed. In the past, points were awarded for Opportunity Zones but found to be too high so the points were reduced. Also to watch for are the points awarded by NBRC based on priority; points awarded on regional and/or state strategic plans. For example, the State of Maine now awards points for energy.
  - vii. 2021 SEID Program has a \$30 million allocation for all four states; Maine's amount is \$4.6 million but could have additional funds because some projects were not fully implemented last year.
- b. Two public hearings are scheduled – one is a joint hearing with MaineHousing on the 2021 Annual Action Plan. The public hearing will be held on March 18 at 9:00 a.m. This is required so that the annual action plan can be submitted to HUD. HUD then has 45 days to review and accept the plan. The second public hearing is
- c. CARES Act funds – D. Johnson will be reporting on the CARES Act distribution. The CARES Act Microenterprise Program provided up to \$5,000 grants to small businesses. This program has been remarkable in assisting Maine small businesses. Currently there are remaining funds to be distributed, which is why the 2021 CDBG Microenterprise Grant Program will not accept applications until June. CARES Act funds will be expended first. This program is being administered via Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) throughout the state. Because of the incredible success of the program, D. Johnson suggested that OCD may reach out to non-entitlement states and promote the program as a state-wide program. Also, non-profits can now request a waiver for the CARES Act program so that they do not have to go through a unit of local government.
- d. CDBG projects – The Microenterprise and Economic Development programs provide funding for working capital and/or purchase of equipment only. Reasons for this is the extreme cost of materials for construction projects as well as the difficulty in getting contractors.
- e. National Digital Literacy Program – Based on Jen Peters' report on the program at the last meeting, D. Johnson contacted Susan Corbett, Director of the National Digital Equity Center and entered into

#### Draft 2021 Annual Action Plan

Thursday, March 18, 2021

MaineHousing and DECD will hold a public hearing to gather comments on the draft Action Plan on March 18, 2021 at 9 am.

Please use this link

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YTYWS9>

Q to register to join us on March 18th.

Login information will be shared with

registrants prior to the meeting. The

deadline for written comment is 5pm on

April 4, 2021.

an agreement for a \$200,000 allocation to fund scholarships for broadband, internet connectivity, and other digital literacy activities. S. Corbett was receiving many calls from parents requesting tablets for their children and worked with the Department of Education towards a digital literacy program to purchase tablets. The Center's Affordable Equipment Program provides no cost/low cost devices to Maine residents 18 years and older who are of low-income households. Interested persons should contact their local school districts for tablets/computers for school-aged children. She is also working with the Department of Labor to help workers improve their ability to access digital technology, particularly accessing services during this time of pandemic. J. Peters reported that through the website <https://digitalequitycenter.org/>, you can request free tutoring, request affordable (or free) equipment, and sign up for free virtual classes. Anyone in Maine can access services.

- f. MEMA/FEMA – The Office of Community Development will also work with MEMA to provide the match needed to access personal protective equipment and other needed products provided by FEMA.
5. **Secretary's and Newsletter Report – Joella R. Theriault** - The October to December newsletter is on the MCDA website and was also emailed to all members. The next newsletter is the January to March period and anyone wanting to submit articles should do so by April 15. J. Theriault mentioned that all job openings/funding opportunities are submitted to members via email as soon as they are received rather than wait for the quarterly newsletter announcements because of the timeliness. Also all announcements are submitted for posting on the MCDA website.
6. **Membership Report – Tony Levesque** – T. Levesque reported that there are currently 35 paid members; 3 are new members (Ellsworth, Lisbon, and Downeast Partnership). Members are encouraged to reach out to non-renewing members.
7. **Professional Development Committee Report – Scott LaFlamme** – S. Laflamme reported that he continued to work on a survey to be circulated among members regarding possible topics of interest for a workshop. He will have more to report at the next meeting. T. Desjardins thanked Matt Eddy and Tony Levesque for their responses to a survey she sent out last week.
8. **Next Meeting Date: April 8, 2021**
9. **Adjourn** – Moved by T. Levesque and seconded by D. Sterling to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Submitted by,

*Joella R. Theriault*

**Joella R. Theriault**  
**MCDA Secretary**