

Loring Development Authority of Maine
Board Meeting Minutes
LDA December 2024
Thursday December 19th, 2024 9:30 AM
119 Weinman Rd
Loring Commerce Centre, Limestone, Maine

1.) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Lee Umphrey at 9:31 a.m.

LDA board members participating in an online conference are: Timothy Crowley, Jim Gardner, Lee Umphrey, Carolyn Dorsey, Denise Garland, Grace O'Neal, Joe Sleeper and Jeff Pangburn.

LDA board members absent: Lynn Bromley, Suzie Paradis, Kris Doody, Kristine Logan and.

LDA staff participating by online conference: Micheal Beaulieu and Jonathan Judkins.

Others participating in an online conference: Alan Mulherin, Barb Hayslett (Rep. Golden), Chris McCabe (Bunker Inn), Dave Galgay, Jordan Madore (Sen. King), Kameron Waff (JobCorps), Katelin Oulette, Lori Plante, MRWA, Mark Appleton (British Cycle), Melissa Lizotte (BDN), Roger Felix, Ryan (DFAS), Thomas Manning (G4M), Tim McCabe (Bunker Inn), Trisha House (Sen. Collins), Steve Gagnon (MRWA), Scott Hinkle (G4M), Chris Cossette (MRWA), and Kiersten Herbert (MRWA).

2.) Identification of board members and others

Board member attendance was taken.

3.) Approval of Notes: Jim moved for the approval of the minutes and Jeff seconded the unanimous vote

4.) President's Report: Jonathan talked about it being the 1 year anniversary of him stepping into the role of interim President and CEO. He began the final President's Report of 2024 with a T.S. Eliot quote. Jonathan went on to extend his heartfelt thanks to everyone for all their support and interest. Lee proposed getting an executive committee together to have a formal evaluation of Jonathan's performance. Other board members express agreement and make various statements about the good job that Jonathan has done over the year.

5.) FAA update: Jonathan updates about the LDA application and how there's no way to tell for sure how long the review period around it will take. But that the LDA is staying

positive about the process with a focus on aerospace industry and the things we have to complement other airports.

6.) Other Development updates: Jonathan talks about a community-based education collaborative with local schools and universities with a focus on job creation and STEM that will be taking place in 2025. Jonathan talks about an upcoming meeting to discuss the sewer grant and the movement to the next phase with a lot of work to begin in the spring. Jonathan also discusses the work Steve Levesque has been doing with the OLDC grant. Working to get additional funding to support the hire of a business outreach specialist.

6.) Maine Rural Water and Water Rates update:

Jonathan talks about the response to the PUC and community members over the rate change. Chris and Kirsten of MRW say that they will wait for the executive session before sharing any details and updates about the 10 person complaint. Kirsten does say that it was made clear by the PUC staff that any response to the complaint would be after the new year. Tim McCabe from the Bunker Inn asks if the rates would be effective October or January. Kirsten responded that the rates were effective October 1, and customers would see the rate increase on their next bill for Q4 received in January.

7.) Grant Updates: Jonathan brings up the development position again and requests that any partners on the call that have candidates they'd like to refer to please forward resumes to the LDA. Jonathan then goes over how the hiring process usually runs. Tim Crowley says he would like to see the job description and qualifications before the LDA puts anything out to hire anybody. Jonathan also quickly mentions the roads grant and the sewer grant work that should be starting in the spring.

8.) Financial Review: Jonathan talks about the annual audit. The LDA had to find new auditors and went with Ron Smith's team from Old Orchard. Jonathan talks about the new audit teams visit to the office and says he's uncertain when it will be ready for board review and approval, but that he will update again in the January meeting.

9.) Housing Update:

Jonathan talks about the Manser Drive project coming up on it's six-month mark. Jonathan says since the last update they have onboarded 3 new apartments are almost at 100% occupancy. Jonathan talks about some of the specific rehab work that has been done including the servicing and maintenance of all the furnaces being completed.

10.) Business Committee: Jonathan and Jim Gardner give a quick update on the continued work to rectify the reconciliation statement items. He says the collaboration of work has been very positive and thanks Scott, Tim and the members of the committee members.

10.) Public comment:

Roger Felix asks if the PUC validates the complaint and escalates to an inquiry does that freeze the rates until the investigation is done. Kirstin responded that they could

suspend the rates, however the rates are in effect currently and per the statute remain in place unless the PUC makes the determination to suspend. Lee asks if there is a possibility that the rates could be higher than they are currently set. Kirsten confirms that is correct as the LDA is currently subsidizing the rates at 50%, but according to chapter 690 of the PUC rules there should be no subsidy higher than 30% which would force the rates higher than they currently are. The Congressional representatives give comment on the upcoming budget vote for the state. Mark Appleton comments that the LDA having the highest water rates in the US is going to negatively impact attracting industry to Loring. Chris and Tim McCabe make some public comments about the Bunker Inn and the new lease they are seeking. Kameron Waff asks some questions of Green 4 Maine and they request taking it offline. Kameron then asks the LDA about meeting minutes, complaining that they are summarizations instead of word-to-word transcriptions. Jim Gardner clarifies that minutes of a meeting are supposed to be a summarization of what happened at the meeting, if Kameron was looking for word-for-word transcription than that would have to come from recorded meetings. Kameron brings up Tree maintenance after the wind storm. Jonathan clarifies that trees on lines should be reported to Versant.

11.) Executive Session: Confidential discussions concerning personnel, economic development and real estate matters pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A. Section 405 Subparagraphs 6.A. and 6.C. Carolyn moved that we enter executive session for confidential discussions concerning personnel, economic development, and real estate matters pursuant to Title 1 M.R.S.A. Section 405 Subparagraphs 6.A. and 6.C. Tim seconded. Vote – unanimous

13.) Adjourn

There being no further business before the board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Humphrey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L".