

Loring Development Authority of Maine
Board Meeting Minutes
LDA January 2025
Thursday January 16th, 2025 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 9:32 a.m.

LDA board members participating in an online conference are: Lee Umphrey, Jeffrey Pangburn, Carolyn Dorsey, Tim Crowley, Denise Garland, Jim Gardner, Joseph Sleeper, and Lynn Bromley.

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

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

Others participating in an online conference: Alan Mulherin, Barb Hayslett (Rep. Golden), Jordyn Madore (Sen. King), Kameron Waff (JobCorps), MRWA, Mark Appleton (British Cycle), Roger Felix, Ryan Gahagan (DFAS), Thomas Manning (G4M), Tim McCabe (Bunker Inn), Trisha House (Sen. Collins), Chris Cossette (MRWA), and Kiersten Herbert (MRWA), Gail Isabel, Rachel Perreault, Brittni (JAKS), Chuck Kelley, Steve Levesque, Tomas Manning (G4M).

2.) Identification of board members and others

Board member attendance was taken.

3.) Lee brings up issues about attendance and Timothy offers to help draft up some kind of procedure or policy about attendance.

4.) Public Comment:

Lee says that they are going to begin the meeting with public comment. Kameron Waff brings up massive problems with communication having to do with the board meeting minutes being posted to the website and the notification of when the monthly board meeting is. Jonathan brings up the fact that the board meeting is the third Thursday of every month at 9:30am and has been that way for a while. Lee suggested organizing a community meeting to address these concerns directly with Waff and the other board members.

5.) Congressional Update:

Trisha House reported on congress's discussions regarding the FY 25 budget. Trisha highlighted Senator Collins's focus on healthcare issues, as well as mentioning the

recently signed Social Security Fairness Act, which will repeal provisions affecting state employees. Barb Hasylett from representative Golden also expressed great enthusiasm for the new Social Security Fairness Act and brought up Golden's new role on the Natural Resources Committee. Jordyn Madore brought up the ongoing work being done by Senator King with the Veteran Affairs Committee. Tim McCabe tries to bring up the water rate complaint, but Lee asks him to hold off as it is on the agenda for today and asks Jonathan to continue with the president's report.

6.) Presidents Report:

Jonathan opens with a quote from Henry Ford. Jonathan talks about the groundwork having begun for the Taste of Maine potato chip plant. Jonathan goes on to talk about the presentation that will be made to the Idea Committee in the legislature on February 4th.

7.) Approval of the December minutes. Jim Gardner brings up an incorrect date being listed in the minutes and suggests fixing it before they are uploaded. Jim motions for the minutes to be approved with the amendment. Jeff Seconded. Unanimous approval.

8.) Water Rates:

Jonathan talks about the issue with the water rates and serious problems with the billing and rate structures that were discovered that would have led the LDA to non-fiscal sustainability. It was found that the LDA was subsidizing the water for the campus between 80 to 97%. Jonathan brings up looking for grants to pay for resizing a lot of the meters on campus and other ways that the LDA is looking into to help lessen the impact of the new rates on the customers. Chris Cossette brings up that the PUC had already approved the rates and that the MRWA and LDA will be proceeding with the investigation into the process of the rates. Chris brings up some of his fears about the investigation and the fact that the current rates represent a 50% subsidy which is already outside of the PUC regulations of no more than a 30% subsidy. Chris also talks about the auditing of the system and how resizing of meters may not solve all problems as the size of the meter also determines the minimum consumption allowance, and resizing may cause some users to go over the minimum consumption and actually have to pay higher bills than what they have now. Chris goes on to discuss upgrades to the they system that are sorely needed as well as the continuation of the sewer infrastructure project that is underway. Tim McCabe brings up his displeasure with how the rate increase came about all the way back in April and yet many of the tenants were uninformed. Trisha House brings up the CDS for the water infrastructure. Jonathan confirms that it has been approved and is to help fix the issue of an extreme amount of infiltration of groundwater into the system. Work is hopefully going out for bid in February. Chris Cossette brings up that a lot of the people keep trying to compare the rates for Loring to those of other communities around the region, and it's not a fair assessment. A lot of the communities in the region have a much larger customer base to share or spread around the costs. Kameron Waff says that a big issue is that MRWA and the LDA knew back in October that the rates were going to be an issue and that meter sizing may provide some relief, but now they're hearing that the meters may not be available 'till summertime. And He wants to know why is this taking so long.

Jonathan brings up the fact that the LDA is as limited to vendors as everybody else, and there's not much that can be done 'till the meters arrive on campus.

9.) Audit Update:

Jonathan talks about the audit for this year being done by RHR Smith instead of Chester Karney. Jonathan was asked about the change, expressing that Karney reached out and said that they no longer had the staff to be able to handle the audit. Jonathan talks about the current progress with the audit and the fact that it is taking the new auditing company longer because they are unfamiliar with what we have and are taking a close look at a lot of sub accounts and helping us with improvements to our day-to-day operation process that will allow us to be more efficient going forward.

10.) JAKS Update:

Jonathan talks about the ongoing work with the Manser Drive project. 6 months in and both building numbers 26 and 36 have new tenants. There has been a reduction in work orders being put forth by the tenants as issues have been resolved. There is also a remodel in process with buildings 26D and 36B which re previously unutilized, and they will hopefully be online by the end of January.

11.) FAA Update:

Steve Levesque talks about the meetings with the FAA. The FAA rejected their initial request for NIPIUS based on 2 criteria. One having to do with both Caribou and Presque Isle airports being within 30 miles. However, case being made that Loring will have a much different niche than either. Steve talks about the FAA being a little bureaucratic, and they are still working through that process. Lee asks if there is anything that the board can do with the governor's office through the DECD and DOT to make sure that the plan is a top priority for the bureaucrats.

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. Jim motioned, Jeff seconded. Vote – unanimous

12.) Public Vote For The following Initiative

Airforce New Hampshire Air Guard	Jim Motion	Denise Second
unanimous		
Bunker Inn Lease	Lynn Motion	Jeff Second unanimous
Marks Towing	Jim Motion	Tim Second unanimous
Service Contract Green4Maine	Jim Motion	Tim unanimous

13.) Adjourn

There being no further business before the board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Lee Umphrey