



Maine Community Development Association

**Friday, August 6, 2021
11:00 a.m.**

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

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

Tracey Desjardins, President	City of Gardiner
Scott Laflamme, Vice President	Town of Yarmouth
Mathew Eddy, Treasurer	City of Biddeford
Jen Peters, Director	Sunrise County Economic Council
Darryl Sterling, Director	Economic Development Consultant
Tony Levesque, Member	Town of Fort Fairfield
Rodney Lynch, Member	Town of Thomaston
Vittoria Stevens	Town of Bradford
Stephen Dyer, Immediate Past President	Ransom Consulting, Inc.
Galen Weibley, Member	City of Presque Isle
Deborah Johnson, Member	Office of Community Development, Director
Terry Ann Holden	Office of Community Development, PM
Tammy Knight	Office of Community Development, PM
Brianne Hasty	Office of Community Development, PM
Doug Ray	Office of Community Development, PM
Jennifer Curtis, Member	Town of Bowdoinham
Scott Tilton, Member	Town of Chelsea
Vicki Rusbult	Eastern Maine Development Corporation
Anna Stockman	Eastern Maine Development Corporation
Shannon Chisholm	Town of Yarmouth
Patricia Hart, Mayor	City of Gardiner

- 2. Approval of June 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes:** Moved by D. Sterling and seconded by T. Levesque to approve the meeting minutes as presented; motion passed.
- 3. Treasurer's Report and Financials – June 2021:** Moved by S. Laflamme and seconded by T. Levesque to approve the Financial Report as presented; motion passed.
- 4. Membership Report –** Chairman T. Levesque reported that membership was down this year. There are 37 current members. Mr. Levesque reported the names of past members that MCDA hopes to renew in 2022.

5. **Newsletter Report** – J. Theriault reported that there was a request to update the ARPA page on the newsletter. This has been updated and posted on the website.
6. **Welcome by Mayor Patricia Hart** – Ms. Hart welcomed MCDA to the City of Gardiner and expressed her appreciation for the work of Economic Development Directors. She said “They are the front lines of the pandemic” and “they are called upon for many tasks beyond just economic development”.
7. **Office of Community Development – Deborah Johnson:** The 2022 CDBG Program is anticipated to receive flat funding at \$12,000,000± and noted the following:
 - a. The Special Projects budget will be increased as will the housing assistance budget.
 - b. Housing assistance funds will be matched with ARPA funding for activities that target affordability and safety.
 - c. The Rural Housing Preservation Program will continue
 - d. The Microenterprise Program will be the same as is currently. She also noted that businesses cannot have “ever” received a CDBG grant.
 - e. Technical Assistance providers will be increased for training on such activities as environmental review, labor standards, etc.

OCD has not yet received funding for the 2021 CDBG program.

8. **Other:**

- a. Jen Peters presented a display of the Machias Valley Center for Entrepreneurship, a program of Sunrise County Economic Council. The Center provides business training and workforce development. The program started in 2020 with many partnerships formed to provide workshops and programs to develop skills for Washington County businesses to create jobs throughout communities in the County. The training program partners with colleges to offer credits to students. The program is free and the programs can be accessed through the Center. <https://machiasvalleycenter.org>.
- b. Joella Theriault presented a display of the Town of Madawaska’s on-going Downtown Revitalization Program. Using NBRC and CDBG funds, the town has completed demolition of substandard and deteriorated buildings on Main Street and constructed an amphitheater, pocket parks, and Main Street Lighting. The Town is currently administering a Façade Improvement Project that will improve and attract new business in the downtown. A photo of the replacement of the international bridge connecting the City of Edmundston, New Brunswick with Madawaska presented a picture of the current location of the bridge versus the proposed location which would displace the McDonald’s Restaurant. The Town’s 2021-2022 applications for NBRC and CDBG were originally designed to relocate McDonald’s to the Kmart shopping plaza, however, those plans did not materialize and instead the town will renovate the plaza by tearing down vacant deteriorated buildings to make room for the Fish River Rural Health Center to construct a new state-of-the-art facility. This is a major improvement in the community that will enhance the downtown and create jobs.
- c. This year’s MMA Convention theme is “Brave New World”. MCDA proposes to hold a workshop titled “Connecting Resources Post-Pandemic”. S. Laflamme will bring together a panel that will discuss leveraging funding resources. The workshop is scheduled for 10:45 to 12:00 noon on September 30.
- d. **ARPA Guidance Topics:** The guidance for disbursement of ARPA funds is very complex. There are no clear direction on how to spend the funds so applicants should be cautious about spending ARPA funds on activities before getting clarification on eligibility.

e. **Andrea Smith, Program Director, NBRC** – Andrea was not present for discussion on the NBRC Program.

9. **Adjourn** – Moved by T. Levesque and seconded by D. Sterling to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

**Joella R. Theriault
MCDA Secretary**

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