

**Attachment A**

**GPCOG Executive Committee  
MINUTES**

**March 10, 2020**

**In Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Matt Sturgis	Cape Elizabeth
Sandy Carder	Gray
Nat Tupper	Yarmouth
Jarrold Maxfield	Windham
Justin Poirier	Chebeague Island
Jerre Bryant	Westbrook
Belinda Ray	Portland
Kate Lewis	South Portland
Sue Witonis	Cumberland County
Kristina Egan, Andrew Butcher, Chris Hall, Tony Plante, Tom Bell and Sara Mills-Knapp	GPCOG Staff

**Welcome**

Nat Tupper, President, opened the meeting, which was held via Zoom.

**Public Comment**

No public comment was provided.

**Acceptance of 2/10/21 Minutes**

Matt Sturgis moved approval of the 2/10/21 meeting minutes. Sandy Carder seconded. The roll was called. All present members were in favor.

## Executive Director's Report

Chris Hall updated the group on GPCOG's latest advocacy, including the agency's work with state government and the federal congressional delegation to support aid for Maine municipalities. A \$1.9 trillion relief bill is expected to be approved federally, offering more aid for Maine.

Tom Bell showcased a recently produced video to promote the statewide Maine Outdoor Dine effort. Westbrook kick-started the Winter Dine effort to encourage customers to patronize restaurants. GPCOG helped regionalize it, and now it has become a statewide effort.

Kristina noted that Freeport voters passed a bond to add pedestrian and bike lanes to highway 295 to connect the schools to the playing fields. GPCOG produced the public education materials about the proposed project. GPCOG is also launching its Transit Together public information campaign on Transit Driver Appreciation Day.

Andrew Butcher, Clara McCool and Eric Hall (two Resilience Corps Fellows) have been supporting broadband development in the region. Andrew gave an update on a training effort called Maine Broadband Bootcamp where communities plan in partnership with Cumberland County and Oxford County Community Concepts Finances Corporation. The regional broadband work is focused in the Lakes region and is facilitating a multitown approach with engagement, data collection and readiness.

Nat asked about the capacity to pool resources to do a southern Maine program for broadband development. Andrew answered that this is a good option and opportunity, but work needs to be done to develop it. Kristina added that the priority for fiscal year 2022 is to maximize federal funding and opportunities in a coordinated way, of which broadband is likely a key focus. Jarrod noted that Windham was approached to support the Sebago region and asked to spend significant town funds to advance broadband (but not to actually connect the end user, just to lay the fiber so that business or provider could use it as a backbone for final connection) and that wasn't feasible. It is a lot to ask towns to carry the burden of regional needs. Belinda requested clarity around the role of municipalities in the broadband discussion, Andrew offered that goals need to be clarified in this community driven process and that GPCOG is playing a facilitative, as well as technical assistance, role. Sandy added that Gray is close to the three-ring binder, but still does not receive adequate broadband.

## Spotlight: Sustainability

Sara Mills-Knapp introduced GPCOG's sustainability portfolio. GPCOG's goals are for near term/quick wins (like community solar or EV development) and to catalyze and support longer term climate action planning. GPCOG also has a focus on connecting sustainability professionals in the region. The sustainability team is participating in the State's Climate Action Plan, and GPCOG is a member of the Transportation Working Group. Portland and South Portland have successfully piloted a multi-town effort with the One Climate Future plan, and GPCOG seeks to build upon this work regionally.

Maine Clean Communities will help advance the state’s electrification efforts through municipal assistance, heavy duty demo vehicles and a transit electrification plan. The sustainability staff will also support towns through two tiers of climate action planning including a vulnerability assessment and emission report option as well as a full planning phase that includes workshops and setting high-impact priorities. GPCOG publishes a monthly sustainability bulletin. GPCOG also lends out it’s EV for test driving to our members and organizational stakeholders. The GPCOG EV is a new 2020 all electric Kia Niro. Please reach out to borrow it up for a week.

## **Authorization for Direct Recipient Application to the Federal Transit Administration**

GPCOG will apply for direct recipient status from the FTA. Matt moved to authorize GPCOG to become a direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration funding. Sandy seconded. The roll was called, and all were in favor.

## **FY22 Priorities**

Kristina provided a brief slide deck to show the original FY21 priorities, the new priorities due to the pandemic, and proposed FY22 priorities. This slide deck can be found [here](#).

The Executive Committee discussed the proposed FY22 priorities:

1. Maximize regional impact of federal resources (transportation, housing, broadband, sustainability)
  - Rescue Act
  - Infrastructure Bill
2. Transit Together to encourage and support transit agency coordination to improve customer service
3. Expand housing choices in priority places by working with members
4. Be resource and partner on issues of importance to members and state (climate-friendly transportation, broadband, racial equity)

Belinda offered that these goals make sense. They advance the 2021 goals while leaving room to focus on the federal funding heading our way. She thinks it is important for GPCOG to advance the region, maximize the federal dollars and work together to make sure funds are spent wisely.

Matt echoed Belinda’s statements and stated that it is important to maintain a nimble organization so GPCOG can react to unknown needs. Sandy noted that the 2022 priorities need to build inclusivity and collaboration across communities, especially in rural towns. Nat wanted everyone to feel included, valued and heard now, with the intention to always working on these issues. Expanding housing choices will continue to be a priority, but housing growth is a difficult issue in rural areas. There was general agreement to include in the FY22 priorities an explicit focus on supporting rural communities with member services. Staff will revise the priorities accordingly, and bring back final priorities for action with the FY22 budget.

## **Next Strategic Plan**

Staff suggested doing a two-year update on the strategic plan (rather than a five year new plan) given the uncertainty of the times. Members expressed agreement. No roll was called for this matter, and staff will integrate this direction on updating the strategic plan into the FY22 workplan and budget.

## **Executive Session: Executive Director's Annual Performance Evaluation and Goals**

Pursuant to [1 MRS §405\(6\)\(A\)](#), Matt moved that the Executive Committee enter executive session to conduct the annual performance review of GPCOG's Executive Director. Sandy seconded. The Committee invited Kristina to join the session.

Matt moved exiting the executive session. Sandy seconded. All were in favor. Matt moved adopting the draft performance goals as drafted by the Executive Committee. Sandy seconded. These goals were included in the agenda packet as Attachment E. The roll was called, and all were in favor.

## **Adjourn**

Matt moved adjourning the meeting. Sandy seconded. All agreed and the meeting ended at 1:50 p.m.