

# GPCOG Executive Committee

## MINUTES April 25, 2023

In Attendance:

Name	Affiliation
Carmen Lone	Bridgton
Krista Chappell	Gray
Jarrold Maxfield	Windham
John Hawley	Naples
Jerre Bryant	Westbrook
Nat Tupper	Yarmouth
Sue Witonis	Cumberland County
Matt Sturgis	Cape Elizabeth
Kate Lewis	South Portland
Mark Dion	Portland

### Welcome

Jarrold opened the meeting.

### Executive Session

Nat moved the Executive Committee enter into executive session under Title 1 MRS Section 405(6)(A) for the purpose of conducting the executive director's performance evaluation and discussing the executive director's contract. Sue seconded. All were in favor. The group entered Executive Session at and reconvened in public session around 12:30 p.m. Nat moved entering the public session, Sue seconded. All were in favor.

### Public Comment

There were no public comments.

### Acceptance of 3/21/23 Minutes

Sue moved approval of the 3/21/23 meeting minutes. Nat seconded. A roll call was conducted. Carmen and Krista abstained, with the remaining members all in favor.

### **Spotlight: Short Term Rental Member Service**

Paul Johnson, Economic Development Director, walked through a demonstration of new software that will enable municipalities to see short-term rentals on the market, license them, charge fees, and enforce non-compliance. Paul noted that GPCOG could centralize this service for all GPCOG's members, that we are piloting this for free with any interested member for a year, and after a year, GPCOG would offer the service for a fraction of the cost of commercial products.

Several Executive Committee members expressed interest in piloting the new product, including Yarmouth, Gray, and Bridgton. Kate said that GPCOG staff should connect with South Portland staff to share with them that this new member service is available. Nat noted that Code Enforcement Officers are booked solid; Carmen agreed and Krista offered that it's always important to notify CEOs. Jarrod asked whether there is any liability to GPCOG for offering the product, and Paul said that GPCOG is consulting with its attorneys on that question. Kate reminded the group that many short-term rentals are corporately owned and are negatively impacting the available housing stock for Mainers. Kristina reinforced this point and said there is an opportunity for more communities in the region to regulate short-term rentals.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Kristina said that Krista is submitting an op-ed to the Portland Press Herald on the importance of local journalism to local government. Look for it in Sunday's paper. GPCOG just received notice from the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development that it will serve as the Domestic Trade Recovery Administrator and will distribute \$6M to qualifying businesses over the next year. She reminded everyone of the May 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit and requested communities bring a 1 minute success to share with the plenary session. She thanked Yarmouth for the latest contribution to the Safe in Maine Fund. The Council just voted to allocate \$20,000, joining Westbrook, Cape, and Scarborough investments.

### **FY24 Budget**

Kristina introduced the goals the draft budget seeks to accomplish, noting the budget is \$5.2M, reduces staff by 1 FTE (senior level), and continues the Resilience Fellows program for municipal members and the region at the level of 10 FTEs. Josh Kochis, Finance Director, walked through the document in detail.

Jerre asked what the impact of South Portland withdrawing from GPCOG will be. Kristina said that it will reduce GPCOG member dues by \$55,000, and will reduce the member services GPCOG can offer, in general, and will also reduce the local match available to attract federal funding to the region.

Matt celebrated that the budget shows an increasing diversification of sources of revenue over the years. Krista echoed this and noted that she is impressed that the budget increased so little given inflationary pressures. She asked about the status of Gray joining PACTS, and Kristina said that it's not possible since the geography is set via federal methodology.

Nat moved to recommend to the General Assembly that the draft FY24 budget be adopted. Krista seconded. The group agreed that the Executive Committee doesn't need to review the budget again at the May meeting, and expressed its hope that the General Assembly will receive the budget for review earlier in May. The roll was called and all were in favor.

Matt moved to postpone that last two items on the agenda to the May meeting due to lack of time left in the meeting. Sue seconded. All agreed. Matt moved adjournment. Sue seconded. All were in favor and the meeting ended at 1:30 p.m.