MIC Meeting
November 13, 2015
10 am-2pm
Island Institute, 4th Floor
Topic: Economic Development

Attendees:

**MIC Members**
Roger Berle - Cliff Island
Donna Wiegle – Swan’s Island
Cindy Gannon – Diamond Cove
Timmi Sellers- Peaks Island
Mary Ann Mitchell – Peaks Islands
Rudi Graff- Isle au Haut
Kendra Chubbuck- Isle au Haut
Andy Dorr - Vinalhaven
Kathy Warren - Vinalhaven
Mark Greene – Long Island
Beverly Roxby - Frenchboro

**Virtual**
Tom Powell – Cranberries
Zain Padamsee – Frenchboro Fellow
Lisa Shields – North Haven

**Beaver Island**
Pam Grassmick
Matt Preisser, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes
Bill McDounough
Patrick McGinnity
Kitty McNamara
Ernie Martin
Jon Allan, Michigan Office of the Great Lakes

**Legislatures**
Dave Mirament, State Senator Knox County
Joan Welsh, Maine House of Representatives
Bethany Beausang from Chellie Pingree’s Office

**Island Institute**
Karen Burns
Rob Snyder
Yvonne Thomas
Briana Warner
Meghan Cooper, Isle Au Haut Fellow
Tom Groening
Michelle Tussing
Heather Deese
Nick Battista
Shey Conover
Caroline Moore
Brooks Winner
Suzanne MacDonald
Stephaenie MacLagan
Rebecca Clark Uchenna
Lisa Mossel Vietze
Ben Algeo, Monhegan and Matinicus Fellow
Alana Flanagan, Vinalhaven Fellow

Newell Auger, Auger and Associates in Augusta

**MIC Business, by Roger Berle**
All received and read minutes from August meeting. Kathy Warren made a motion to accept minutes, seconded by Donna Wiegle and approved unanimously. Karen made announcement that past minutes (since 2012) are all posted on the Island Institute website.
http://www.islandinstitute.org/program/community-development/mic

**Treasurer’s Report, by Roger Berle**
Assessments received by all except North Haven and Diamond Cove—short $200 from North Haven and $100 from Diamond Island Association. We don’t have a printed treasury report yet but we’re close to even. Motion to accept report as it is. Motion passed.

**Island Institute Updates**

*Energy: presented by Suzanne MacDonald*
State policy-wise, there have been two important discussions around energy efficiency and solar policy. The Island Institute has been submitting comments to the state to ensure island needs are met, and have received some good feedback. Vote is next week, and approval process through PUC will be happening. Island Institute staff has also been attending meetings and adding to conversations around changing net metering for solar power, bringing islanders’ voices to the table. It should be finalized early in next year. Reach out to Suzanne with questions.

Also actively involved in weatherization work, wrapped up Cliff Island week today – Roger Berle said it went fantastic – and have also been on Long and Vinalhaven this fall. Weatherization on
Islesboro is set for the first week of December, and others are on tap for 2016. Please reach out with weatherization requests. Diesel Island Energy Fellow Ben Algeo has been working on a LED lighting bulk buy program, please be in touch if you’re interested in that.

Kathy and Donna asked Suzanne to tell us about the TED Talk. Suzanne presented at TEDxDirigo talk about if Maine thought about itself as an island in addressing energy problems and gave three lessons from Maine islands. It will be online after Thanksgiving.

Community Development: presented by Karen Burns
Currently hosting visitors from Beaver Island in Michigan, which we’ll hear more about. Community Development has a new staff member – Julia Maher is now on the development team as grant writer. Caroline Moore is new Community Development associate working on scholarship and internships. We’re starting to look into fellows placements for next year, so be in touch with needs if you hear them in your community. Thirdly, we’ll be releasing information next week about a leadership program for non profits. It’s a 3-day training conference specifically for non profit leadership organized by the Community and Economic Development teams at the Island Institute and will cover things like budgets, fundraising, payroll, board development, community engagement, etc. Please spread the word through your communities. Date? January 8-10, Friday Saturday, Sunday. It will be held in the MidCoast region, location yet to be confirmed.

Marine Resources: presented by Nick Battista
Exciting new program with Economic Development and Marine Resources is the creation of an aquaculture cohort that will help island and remote fishermen get into kelp and shellfish aquaculture. The cohort has been picked and finalized; they’ll make announcements about them and their projects next week. They had a great applicant pool; thanks for sharing that information in your communities.

Ocean Acidification- Susie has been monitory/piloting to see if growing seaweed/kelp can change pH in an area locally. Chellie Pingree is championing OA policy at the federal level. At the state level, coordinating a group to look at the OA commission’s suggestions to move forward at state level.

This winter, will be hosting fisheries tourism workshops with guest speakers. If interested, talk with Nick to be included in that schedule. If you know of anyone interested in the direct marketing of seafood there will be a conference in Virginia in February. We may have some travel support and part of the conference is an exchange trip to North Carolina. This will be a great experience if interested in direct marketing or processing.

Kathy: Direct marketing seafood – do you have an email list of folks already doing this on island?
Nick: No, please send it along
Education: presented by Shey Conover

The Fall is conference heavy at the Island Institute, we also held the Island Teachers’ Conference at the end of October. This brought together 100 island and coastal educators for professional development, networking, and addressing coastal issues. A few things coming out of that—including a pilot aquaculture program in schools and in conjunction with the Hurricane Island Foundation, Casco Bay Estuary, and Herring Gut Learning Center. Be in touch if your school is interested.

We’re wrapping up a grant on distance learning – this year, trainings will focus on the use of technological equipment. Thinking about networking island and coastal school leaders to address emerging challenges, one example being a health insurance change for July 2017. We are trying to coordinate with business offices and superintendents at schools to understand impacts for schools, what we can do with year’s notice to get a waiver so this won’t prevent attracting high quality leaders and teachers to island schools.

Economic Development: presented by Shey Conover

Broadband conference is next week, and will have reports from the Tilson Broadband Report. Will be hearing more from Bri about Economic Development work later in the meeting.

Kathy said Yvonne hit it out of the park with the Island Teachers Conference and everyone came back absolutely jazzed and excited; Kuddos to her for an excellent opportunity.

Legislative Updates
Joan Welsh, Maine House of Representatives

Not in session right now, in process of compiling bills to be heard next year. It’s not like the first year when anyone can put in a bill, the legislative council decides what gets in for next year and has been very restrictive this year, which she thinks this is good. She is guessing they’ll hear 50 or so bills this coming year. She’s on the environment and natural resources committee and they’ve been meeting on solid waste policy, as the state can’t keep increasing landfills. Having been on Hurricane Island, she understands this is an important issue for islands. Statewide policy is focusing on increasing participation in reducing, reusing, recycling, and last of all disposing in landfills. They’re looking at the state by region because capacities are very different regionally. (For example, Portland can compost whereas the northern part of the state is taking stuff to Canada.) They haven’t specifically addressed island capacity, but that’s worth thinking about and this is a good reminder to think about that. The state’s also looking into changes in fees per municipalities and funding for towns to help them create better infrastructure (especially for composting – very interested in increasing larger scale composting).

Senator Dave Mirament, Knox county.

Lives in Camden, representative for North Haven, Vinalhaven, Matinicus, other islands off of Owls Head but they don’t have organized representation so he hasn’t been out there much.
Approved 33 bills in first round, carry over a few from last session, looking at a total of approximately 100 bills.

[Newell Auger comments there were 16 pages of appeals.]

There’s a dysfunctional climate right now in Augusta. Commissioners can’t testify, and what they say has to be approved by the governor’s staff before they say it. He says to wait it out, maybe we’ll have a government that works better in 3 years. Have been working with the commissioner on marine fisheries to set up lobster meetings regarding changes in resources and latent license tags, but didn’t happen. He pushed commissioner to have another round of hearings - going to bring meaningful change to the licensing problem instead of temporary fixes. He was going to prepare the bill, but the commissioner was told he couldn’t put a bill in because other commissioners are not allowed to. It’s a mess; don’t give up.

Rep Gideon is big on solar, she expanded with her bill on solar farming, which is wonderful for those with a cable to their island. Not limited to thirty. Lots of fight from lobbyists, Central Maine Power, Emera, lobbyists, and public utility companies that tag team. The most amazing thing to watch in lobbying. Solar farms is a great way if you do net metering and have a cable.

[Suzanne MacDonald adds: 8 islands are connected to CMP or Emera, and for them you’re right on. 5 islands have co ops and cables (Vinalhaven, North Haven, Swan’s, Isle au Haut, Frenchboro) but because of small number of memberships, net metering isn’t viable for co-op. If people go off grid, (100 members) the potential is greater to shift the burden onto other members. The energy team is looking at large scale projects owned by co-ops so the benefits are shared across all members. Wanted to draw that distinction. There is potential for net metering issue to have a big impact on those islands. We’ve been sitting through these meetings and submitting comments to help those co-op islands.]

Excellent – anything that reduces emission generation and electricity we need to do. State rejected rebates for solar (solar city), and this is the last year of the federal tax credit. I’m afraid of what that is going to do. It was rejected, I didn’t appeal it because there was no support, but will bring it up again next year.

[Nick Battista passes out copies of bill language regarding the Maine State Ferry Service]

Looked at report from safety management system – said nothing and everything has been done since 2008. Got a note this week saying this is the only bill before transportation for this coming session – we have DOT’s attention.

[Kathy comments that employees have been trying to bring it to their attention since 2008]

DOT says they’ll go through every issue that is raised, document those they work on, communicate better with the islands. They claim to have been doing more trainings, but ferry crew says these are not happening.
[Lisa Shields joins conversation via Zoon]

Training to a certain level is required to be logged, so there’s evidence if it’s not being done.

[Donna – who is the named person responsible to this that we can go to?]

Nobody’s taking responsibility yet. Advisory board is not to eliminate voices from islands but to include those in maritime industries not currently being raised. All details need to be written down.

[Kathy - asks about issue of temporary workers – explains they’re the biggest security risk and there is not the opportunity to train them]

Trying to get pay up for temporary workers to keep them around. Hiring temporary workers is currently the only way they can afford to get extra help currently to keep schedules running.

[Kathy – different scale between temporaries and AB’s; it would be nice to have engineers in system.]


Hazardous material – propane, gas trucks on ferries with passengers – with fuel truck carry 75 instead of 200 – question of how many lives matter? Some people running ferries that say they should absolutely not mingle propane and passengers. We need to talk about this issue more. Raises point that the “spare boats” aren’t spare – they’re supposed to be in maintenance but he doubts that’s happening. Asks why we can’t afford new ferries and apologizes on behalf of the state.

For now, I will not make any headway on that until something changes and designate a need for another boat.

[Suzanne – brings up issue of cost of having a separate boat for propane]
[Andy – towns can get a municipal rate]

[Donna – on Swan’s, boat holds 47 passengers when we have fuel, but that’s not a big deal because we’re actually getting fuel delivered on a regular basis. They do a good job posting when the propane run is, I’m sure some are inconvenience but it is a good thing that we’re getting propane.]

The lock box idea is imperative; the state said no.

[Donna - Runs clinic on Swan’s – there’s a 6 pack size cooler with blood samples in plastic tubes, no danger of spill/danger, for 10 years the bag was simply handed to deck hand, given to courier on another side. Once management found out, can of worms opened and they refuse to transport it – someone from island has to carry it over and back.]
Someone got upset they were doing something not in their job description, that’s where we are. With negotiation, they’ll now give the person a round trip free, can call and get reservation but you’ll have to pay for a vehicle on the reservation.

[Donna - Can only do that once a week, but hard for islands that need to do that more than once a week]

[Lisa – On North Haven we transport almost every day. Short shelf life of samples is an issue and it’s not financially feasible to try and do this on that kind of basis. DOT says the lock box is not within crew responsibilities – the crew don’t have to touch the lock box/go near it. Clinic personal drop sample in lock box, fetched by someone on the other side, crew has nothing to do with it.]

It removes all responsibilities from crew – they don’t need to do anything differently and there’s no responsibility/liability to crew. We’ll get somewhere on this.

[Lisa - we appreciate your willingness to try and move this forward because what we’re hearing does not make sense. Board of Selectmen on North Haven have asked to meet with DOT commissioner and got a flat no]

[Nick – ferry advisory board discussed this last week, will be on early January agenda]

[Newell– echos the senator about dysfunction in Augusta. I wouldn’t go into this session with any expectations of anything going through. I think lock box is a winnable issue. It has arguments on both liberal and conservative side, so it could be a winnable issue depending on what else is in the bill and fiscal notes. Even if the governor vetoes it, the relationship between republican senate president and governor is toxic, which may help us as we try and get this through the senate, if Senator Thibodeau is behind it and can get his caucus behind it.]

Lisa and others are reason we got it to legislative council and got Thibodeau’s vote on it. He’s been doing the right thing a lot this session. I am aware of some of the problems that this creates, I’m just trying to help you – and understand that transportation is a big part of your life and should be as minimal an inconvenience as possible

[Kathy – Maine state institutional answer to everything “you chose to live on an island, make it work, you know it’s inconvenient” ]

Roger Berle: Chris Rector had speaking engagement, sends regards. Mic Devin and Chuck Kruger send regards, didn’t send any updates.

*Bethany Beausang, from the office of Chellie Pingree*
Not doing much better at the House of Representatives. Chellie is working on a working waterfront bill at the federal level to create a working waterfront task force by end of year. Ocean Acidification bill is pending, and she’s starting to try and get bipartisan support for it –
they now have 9 Republicans on board. A newer piece of legislation is on food waste – over 40% of food in this country is wasted, and they’re looking at solutions at multiple levels including environmental, economic, business, and consumer. They will introduce that bill by the end of the year.

Karen Burns, Island Institute, Introduces guests.
We’re in the process of an information exchange trip with Beaver Island in Lake Michigan. Have Jon Allan and Matt Preisser from the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes here as well as five guests from Beaver Island. There are four parts to the project. Heather and Karen visited in September and the community identified areas they want to learn about: education, broadband, EMS, etc. Then the group came out this week, spent day on Islesboro and 2 days on Vinalhaven. The next step is to bring a group from Maine to Beaver Island to see what they’re doing (including gorgeous transfer station) and then finally a path forward.

Jon Allan: Great Lakes community has a strong regional identity. There are 25 year-round residential, un-bridged islands within that community that have never drawn together as a broad regional group of shared interests and communities. Excited for this opportunity to understand your model that the Island Institute has facilitated, to see whether that’s something Beaver and other islands are interested in. We’re here to facilitate that process if islands (8 states, 2 provinces, 2 languages) see the long-term benefit in that. Thank you for such a warm welcome, it’s been a pleasure to be here.

Pam Grassmick – Beaver Island is in Northern Lake Michigan, one of the five great lakes. (It shows on her hand where they are located). Island is 36,000 square miles, has 500 year-round residents, flux to 2500 in the summer. The main economic driver is tourism. Amazed by the similarities – felt right at home on Vinalhaven. Priceless opportunity – we built our trip around seeing this MIC meeting and how you all collectively come together at this meeting. We look forward to making contact with all of you in the future. Once the center of freshwater fisheries and then we had a collapse, we lost a lot of people at one time. Strong community, beautiful school, research, private/public boat company, health center; we have what a community needs and it’s costly. Andy asks about government format – 2 townships, with 5 board elected officials in each.

[Mark Greene – questions 36,000 square MILES?]
Corrected, 36,000 ACRES

[Roger – what’s you biggest concern on Beaver Island?]

Pam – had an open house as a community to learn about this process because nobody likes someone else coming in telling what to do. We recognized the need for community buy-in on this idea, so we gathered ideas as a community of what our needs are – strengthen high quality distance learning, healthcare EMS with aging population, telecommunications, - all of these pieces are part of that puzzle.
[Rudi – how far are you from the mainland?]
32 nautical miles to port, 2 ½ hour ferry, 2 airline services (8-seaters) with private and township airport. Recently upgraded township airport to be able to take in larger planes.

Bill McDonough – New vessel christened here in Maine; 140 foot three deck passenger car ferry, allowed to haul 294 passengers and tons of freight with regular vehicles and 2 tractor trailers. Adult in peak season is $60 round trip, vehicle roughly $100 each way and up. Because of tourism, lots of rental properties to accommodate summer folks. Open reservation system in January, by 20\textsuperscript{th} there are some vessels completely booked (4-5 trips/day) especially for weekends in July.

Pam – The island is very natural resource based, does not have the feeling like we’re over run with people.

Bill – In winter, the ferry shuts down the third week in December because of 2-3 feet of ice, won’t be free until April. Have to fly all of perishables over (milk weights 8.5 lbs/gallon), costs 20 cents a pound to fly.

[Kathy - are there farms on island?]
Limited farming, yes cows, chickens. Lyme disease first confirmed May of last year.

[Rudi – how do people make a living?]
Bill – school has quite a staff, health care, power company have people planted there. Really try and take advantage of summer influx.

[Rudy – What you don’t have is the lobster industry, that’s what a lot of our small islands rely on. I thought there was a commercial fishing industry?]

[Jon - it collapsed. All commercial fishing done by tribes. By the 1980s, state granted back exclusive rights for commercial fishing in certain areas of the lakes. Great Lakes – recreational fishing is $7 billion industry, (introduced pacific salmon, which really bolstered the recreational fisheries).]

[Beverly- How’s the health of the lake?]

Jon: 20\% of world’s freshwater exists in these 5 lakes. The health is way better than it was in the sixties, but one of the real pressures is biological pressure. There are 188 invasive species, especially zebra mussels, which make up 60\% of the biomass. They are small (inedible) mussels that filter feed and changed fundamental biology of lakes tremendously. Chemically, they’re doing way better but struggling biologically because the food webs are coming apart.

[Roger – has anything you’ve seen here in Maine surprised you?]

Jon – I’ve been coming since age 14, impressed by ability of all of you to work together – we don’t have this in the Great Lakes. I’d like to see how that might work if there’s interest

[Bev- What are the demographics of the islands? We have some islands here that can do a lot more than others.]
John: Beaver is quite remote, many other residential islands (including one tribal) are in the river systems and delta of the St. Claire River. These islands have shorter ferry rides but unique communities. Issues are almost identical, but play out in different ways.

[Kathy- How many unbridged year round islands exist and what’s the population range?]

Matt – There are 26 great lakes islands with populations of 50 or more, nine or ten have bridges. So give or take 15 unbridged islands, which is very similar to you. There are also islands with smaller year round populations. There are some islands with larger year round populations than Beaver islands, also an island with bridge but super rural so similar functions as own community (Manitoulin).

[Rudy– Does Beaver Island have organized economic development group?]

Kitty – No, there are lots of people doing great things, but no community vision with short and long term goals for what we want. Tourism is our bread and butter, but we haven’t developed how that could/should work. We have lots of non-profits, 2 township governments, Beaver Island Association; essentially there are lots of people doing great things but never a chance to sit around the same table like this and put the pieces together. We have comprehensive plan, but seen more as specific land use than economic. Average islander wouldn’t know what’s in those.

Pam – those resources are all online, we have an extensive website.
http://www.beaverisland.net/

Roger: Thanks, Beaver Island Folks.

Bill – it’s great to see this collaboration – really refreshing to see, especially collaboration regarding ferry issue.

Mark – Encouraged folks to look at Casco Bay transit model . It is a totally different model than Penobscot Bay. We control it – quasi municipal, we elect board members to it. Off-season senior rate is 3.50 round trip for 45 minute boat ride.
Kathy – They also don’t have islander rates.
Bill – How many passengers do you haul a year?
Mark - One million/year
Bill – We have 40,000/year.

Keynote Topic: Economic Development by Bri Warner

Our economic program started last December, and we’re learning from you all. Stephenie, our Economic Development Associate, comes with a resource economics background, did research
in grad school on clamming. 40% of our time is spent on individual business support. Please share this with businesses in your community, so we can be first step business support. We want to put you in touch with resources. We help to bridge the gap and work with mainland resources to help them understand the unique needs/goals of island small businesses, understanding that islanders are looking to stay above water and contribute to their communities, but not necessarily become millionaires. The Island and Coastal Innovation Fund helps with advising small island businesses on finances, including navigating loans for small businesses.

Our other work is in Community Economic Development, including planning and leading workshops for financial and digital business literacy. One example is “How to Start a Business” with the Chamber of Commerce on Vinalhaven and a digital literacy training on Islesboro as thy move on in their broadband project. We’ll be on Swan’s in March for a financial literacy training with the lobster co-op. These trainings are done in group settings. If you feel this would help your island, reach out. We understand that this will look differently on each island.

Our biggest project currently is on broadband – many of you have been incredibly helpful about our broadband feasibility study – I can’t thank you enough for your support. Just got final draft for report last Monday, 13 island wide report focusing on current speeds on island, current community goals, hosted community meetings. Reports were sent to working groups last Monday and we’ll be talking about this and working on solutions at broadband conference (closed) next week – 2-5 people per island. Will present information, look at best practices, and then brainstorm (mixed island groups) on direct action steps.

Lastly, we focus on diversifying incomes of islands. This is intended to make economies stronger, rather than rely on the ebb and flow with lobster industry. We are currently working on an aquaculture (shellfish and kelp) project with marine team. Helping a small cohort get into this industry. We’ll help interested parties obtain a lease, our goal is to get to the point that we’ll get 15 businesses come out of this in a few years. We had 28 applications, with some incredibly strong leaders in them, mainly people from the lobster industry who seem very serious about moving forward. We got a strong mix of communities. Application deadline is today, but if we get good applicants in the next few days, we wouldn’t turn them down. There are 65 kelp/shellfish aquaculture leases in Maine right now, if we can get 20 more in that would be huge. Our Focus is to use this as supplemental income for lobstermen.

Understanding what we mean by economic “development” – we’re not trying to encourage huge hotels but sustain way of life on island.

[Rudi – raised a question about ISLE program that was previously offered by the Island Institute. I went to the last graduation, I found it fascinating, different kinds of businesses. It would be very useful for those of us interested in ED if the II would go through the three years of that program and list the different kind of businesses that made a plan and which of those are active]
now. All different ideas, and on Isle au Haut we’re trying to come up with ideas and maybe there are ideas we haven’t thought of so we can share resources so as not to always reinvent.]

[Kathy – The things that came out of ISLE, sometimes they start and stop (restaurant example), others used the experience for nonprofits]

We’re launching a business resource guide on our website next week that will feature successful island businesses. We hope to do this every month, and blast it out to island businesses.

[Rudi: Isle au Haut had a micro loan program for years that’s been very successful in supporting local businesses.]

[Nick: Marine team is planning a trip with Education, to an aquaculture high school in Bridgeport Connecticut.]

[Donna: In less than a year, you and your staff have done a tremendous job getting out to the communities, and I’m really thrilled you got that many applications – congratulations and good work.]

[Rob: I’m really proud of Bri. This is an inspiring meeting, what we’re here for, and it seems to be working. We’re very fortunate as an organization to have partners like you – it’s all trust based and relationship based. Continue to help us do our jobs well]

[Kathy: There is a lot of awesome positive stuff going on (TED, ITC, Bree’s transitioned early ED stuff into real business support and diversified it. A lot of things we’ve talked about for a while are coming together, including our great fellows.)]

Roger: Made a call for island Economic Development success stories

Andy: We gained headway last year with downtown revitalization group and are looking to improve the roads and sidewalks in the next years. Trying to get funding, so pulling together a downtown master plan to help us move forward with programs. Lorraine Francis from Maine Development Association will come out and talk about Main Street program next week.

Kathy – I’d like to introduce Andy Dorr as economic success story, he started with comprehensive planning as a fellow for 2 years, stepped into town manager position when that need arose.

Rudi – Introduce Meghan Cooper; she is helping Isle Au Haut to implement their comprehensive plan. It’s one thing to write the plan and another to try and carry out all of the plans.

Bri – Points out the success of Great Diamond in relation to broadband. They haven’t gotten much press, but they created an innovative wireless solution that isn’t as fast but is cheaper
and has connected everyone on the island through a wireless solution. There are a lot of solutions that require creativity and this is one great example.

Lisa (Archipelago) – Highlighted the hard work being put into more programming designed for island and coastal artists. Last April, there was a day long conference with 45 artists talking about social media and marketing plans, and are excited to grow that next April, so keep your eye open for that. We want to offer more programming for island artists and makers.

**Island Check In’s:**

*Tom Powell, Cranberries:*
There’s been a lot of attention on the ferries lately in the BDN but nothing has been resolved. The ferries will keep running until it’s figured out and we’ve been promised we won’t be left high and dry this winter. Waiting on David Bunker to decide if he’ll sell the ferry service and for how much. The town has authorized selectmen to do negotiations, if necessary.

Construction on the school on Great Cranberry is wrapping up in the next week, so the board will have to decide where students will be sent next school year – to Ashley Bryan School or to the remodeled school on Great Cranberry. With this construction done, they’ll have 2 schools (one on Great Cranberry and one on Islesford), and an enrollment of 17 students, which for 120 year round residents is not bad. Commute length is 15 min between the two islands (1 mile between two harbors).

He is looking forward to Broadband Conference/Tilson Report because internet has been really bad on the Cranberries. They are sending a fairly large contingent. 4 island babies within the calendar year!

*Bev Roxby, Frenchboro:*
Island description: 1100 square acres, owned by Maine Coast Heritage Trust and 1/3 by the town, 50 year round residents, 3 kids in the school, more active summer community. The Industry is primarily lobstering.

They’ve had more interaction with the Island Institute, which was been good. Weatherization was really successful. People looking into business opportunities, especially fishermen through Economic Development. Some struggles with the post office, which Zain will talk about. School is going well. There are 3 kids. The teacher is awesome and bringing the community together in effective ways such as monthly potlucks and a Thanksgiving potluck.

Zain – The Post office is trying to maintain its 6 days a week schedule, but there are some issues with the mail boat schedule and trying to find permanent solution. Energy teams is going to be on island the day of the potluck. He will be sending out the survey for the comprehensive survey the day after, will be available at the potluck.

[Donna from Swans – How are you dispersing the survey?]
Via mail, email, and in person
[Donna: Can you share a copy of comprehensive survey with us?]
Yes

*Donna Wiegle, Swan’s Island:*
Island Description: 6 miles off coast of Bass Harbor, 350 year round residents, K-8 school

A 3-member subcommittee of the municipal advisory council is working with the 3-man board of selectmen to create a paid position for an administrative assistant. 2 of the 3 selectmen have been in office for more than 40 years. Making some progress – have job description now. Moving in right direction albeit slowly. Negotiating with Emera for electricity, they have cooperative on line, hope to be direct customers by next year so rates will go down 50%. Maine DOT visited, slated for the next new ferry in the fleet in service in 2020 (no funding for earlier). 23 car ferry instead of 17 car. Ambulance is over 20 years old, EMTs on call without ambulance and this can’t happen. They need to fundraise 180,000 for a new rig – it probably will go to town meeting to get it funded.

Substance abuse problem – meeting with Hancock County Sherriff to address issue and write a letter to community stakeholders to get them all together and understand what resources are available on island to provide help. Bar Harbor hospital doesn’t have beds for residential treatment – one resident got turned away when he made the trek over there. Trying to figure out what they can offer in their community.

Donna shares Eva’s email: Shared a story from Eva Murray on Matinicus, regarding a phone call her husband (the phone man- TDS) got inquiring if there was electricity on Beaver Island. Looked through atlas extensively to see if there was ANYTHING labeled Beaver Island in the general vicinity. Then figured out that the woman on the phone wasn’t looking for an island in Maine, but in Michigan!

*Lisa Shields, North Haven:*
Island Description – 375 year round, tourist and service economy more so than sister island of Vinalhaven, K-12 school, ferry goes 3 times a day and takes 70 minutes. There are a lot of young, spirited individuals moving to the island so extraordinarily lucky in that sense.

School is hosting a sustainability summit with 5th-8th grade students from other islands. Students will be doing presentations and designing their own island next Wednesday in cooperation with Yvonne and the Education Department. Students encouraged to consider housing, economic resources, and community and have interviewed community members and will make a film using this information they’ve collected. Things are chugging along other than that.

*Kathy Warren and Andy Dorr, Vinalhaven:*
Island Description: 12 miles, 24 square miles, 1065 year round, 4000 seasonally
Finished up SHIP grant (Small Harbor Improvement grant) to re-pile town parking lot/wharf. Downtown revitalization is on-going. Transferred lighthouse deed to American lighthouse association, hopefully they can restore it.

Sea level rise – try to get this on the selectmen’s radar and Yvonne is working with a class on that – hoping to get students to present to selectmen to start planning on that. Kathy notes they already have a parking lot that floods. Emergency operations update – full time fire chief is emergency management director (can get state funds), updating plans and trying to do a mock emergency drill. Public works garage – trying to build a new one but this is contentious (current building has some historic value and determining if it will be there or elsewhere). The transfer station needs overhauling, new retaining wall, and exploring single stream recycling and maybe composting.

Kathy: Recently held a “Courage to teach” workshop at the school and between this and the Island Teachers Conference people are feeling energized. The school is also looking into new playground. As for substance abuse, there had been a substance abuse committee as part of the Wellness coalition, and that has turned itself into a substance awareness team.

Energy on Vinalhaven – wind turbines went up in 2010, issue was complaints and law suite on sound, noise, etc → that case is now ended and all legal issues are at a halt, cost at least a million.

**Kendra Chubbuck and Rudi Graf, Isle au Haut:**

Island Description: 5,000 acres, half is Acadia National Park never to be developed, French “island on high” year round population of 35-40, summer 250. 6 miles out of Stonington.

Town meeting in March postponed to middle of April – hasn’t happened because no audited books from 2013 or 2014. They had a volunteer come back to island to help go through books. Fire department is in disarray – had fire a year ago and water tank was empty and hoses didn’t fit, pumps didn’t work. A few months ago islanders/summer residents came together to clean out the fire house, now actively looking for a retired fireman, possibly from Stonington, to go through materials, tell us what’s operable, and provide some training. Had another small fire recently which brought attention to the issue.

[Kathy suggests to talk with Katelyn Damon on the Cranberries who did that through ISLE.]

School – The teacher of ten years will be retiring, there are two students there (and issues between the two). One member of the school board’s eligibility was questioned because they chose to homeschool their child.

20-25 residents show up to vote. Rudi asks group how to become a resident of your island? There are 8 factors from a Maine board- have to declare residency but how long do you have to live there?

[Andy: On Vinalhaven, you have to be a registered voter.]

How do you become a registered voter? Our town clerk was fired so that complicates things.

Positives – Telemedicine – they are looking to establish a permanent option, will get funding for first three years, searching for the correct location. For power, they have a project underway looking into creating a half solar farm (million dollar investment) and need 2 acres of land. They
have brought in consultants to help with that. Store is running well despite past problems, well received with summer crowd and is continuing with a free Tuesday evening dinner every other Tuesday as a time to get together and socialize. They dinner is held at the store (you can take it home) but idea is to get people to come together. Talking about exploring an assistant town manager/administrative assistant position since there is no town clerk. It’s a difficult place sometimes, but a beautiful island.

Excellent lobstering this year, bringing DIS fishermen into our area. Already seeing lobsters migrating to colder waters and that’s going to hurt Isle au Haut very much, so economic development is something we’ve been working on. Sea farming, sea vegetables – can raise seaweed sustainably between January and the end of April and that’s when lobstermen have pulled their traps so they have time to make extra money.

Kendra: 2013 audit completely done, 2014 audit is almost there- (they’ve been calling them frequently to get it done), looking like town meeting will happen by the end of the year. Have to have both audits done before they can have this town meeting. We’re going to have huge fines to the state. We’ve also had two deaths on the island this month, one long time islander. Town’s taken some pretty hard hits.

No EMS when park rangers aren’t around.

[Andy – Curious about National Park Service – what do they contribute to the island?]
Kendra – They help with fires, meet with community 1-2x/year. They are working on draft letter cooperatively regarding a fire wall.
Rudy – Also the National Park provides an indirect benefit of campers that walk around island. Make purchases at gift shop and also town store.

Cindy Gannon, Great Diamond
Island Description: part of city of Portland, historically had military on island, large gate on island that separates Diamond Cove from Diamond Island. Year round, there are approximately 20 residents.

Emergency services – had a catastrophic fire two years ago, found out during the fire that no siren, truck didn’t work, couldn’t connect hose, etc. Long Island reached out to help faster than the city of Portland could (even though we pay taxes to Portland). Good news is it’s taken two years and ten people working, but we now have a working siren over the hole island, pagers that work, and we fixed some of the equipment. School is not open, one student goes to Long Island.

Mary Ann Mitchell, Peaks
Island Description: 3 miles from Portland, service from 6:15-10:45 am to pm. 750 acres, 150 is conservation land. Backshore is all public space with two public beaches. There are 5 places to eat, candy/ice cream store, post office, library, community center, school goes to 5th grade and currently has under 40 students, at 6th grade go to Portland for and middle/high school.
Business on island is booming, contractors have tons of work and are coming from off island, have golf cart and bike rentals to transport people, restaurants doing well. Peaks Island Inn wants to close down for the winter, some controversy because island residents use it as a gathering space in the winter. There have been tons of weddings (6 venues), one of the major problems is the number of day trippers because of amenities and proximity to Portland – people are coming from all over the world. It is great in a way, but hard for year round residents as it impacts our quality of life. Year round people are getting bumped off boats when they’re trying to come home – you have to push yourself on the boat sometimes.

In the last election, they elected 3 new counselors and Portland has new city manager (which is great). Portland hasn’t been super responsive in the past but new city manager wants city to be accountable, build up morale, etc, so she thinks this is a positive change. They/city staff/police chief visited last week. They hired a cadet this summer to help with ferry line/traffic, hoping to repeat that next year and hope that the city will pick up funding. Peaks Island Council wants ordinances – beach near ferry boat has some old boats that have been there 10 years and we want them moved off for a safe beach. They will try and make it a working waterfront beach. Greyhound busses coming out in summer for tours and or weddings. It is unsafe with the number of walkers, bikers, and golf carts – need to go to the city to prevent those busses from being on island. Sewage treatment plant at capacity, and has many restrictions. Microbeads/microplastic is an area of discussion, and they will run workshops to make people aware of that. School and Island Institute have worked together on insulating the school, getting a new heating system. Library/community center is also looking at renovations. The town has raised some funds and is looking at Portland for approval.

Over the summer, the question is raised- how are we going to keep our sanity and quality of life with all these people? We don’t have a community because the tourists outnumber us by so many. People are talking about leaving because they can’t deal with the summer. She will be in touch with Natural Resource Council of Maine regarding microbeads and legislation.

[Jon Allan suggests conversation with Mackinaw Island (900,000-1 million visitors a year, but 400 year round islanders) – they’ve maintained the integrity of their year round community and they might have some ideas to share.]

Mark Greene– Long Island
Island Description: 800 acres, 200 in conservation, 200 year round islanders and seasonal ranges from 600-800. Day tripper influence because of white sand beaches. No car ferry (share ferry system with Casco Bay). Became an independent town 23 years ago (decreased taxes and now have more services). They have a K-5 school with 18-19 students. Students go to Portland for 6-12 education.
Visited many island towns when researching to become a town and asked what you’d do differently → learned to appoint everyone (not elected!).

They are excited for Broadband. Weatherization went well. They continue to have a housing boom. Summer stuff is similar to Peaks, just on a smaller scale. Absolutely over run in the summer – you try and manage it as best you can, but it’s tough on the community.

Ferry service is good – he attended a board meeting yesterday because they’re trying to fine-tune their winter schedule. They elect board members, board surveyed community about what changes they want to the ferry schedule and have brought this to the ferry advisory committee. Moving towards making the trial noon boat a permanent part of the schedule. Last night at a selectmen meeting, past issues regarding board of selectmen, road commissioner and fire chief, arose again. Still trying to accommodate badly polarized positions.

Fire and rescue is in a bit of disarray after chief got fired, but they’ve developed a new working relationship with the town of Falmouth for EMS training, fire and rescue transports to Portland. This partnership has been working well.

Roger Berle, Cliff Island
Island Description: 7 miles from Portland, 4.5 miles from next island, less than 50 year round.

Update on Sustainable Cliff Island, new non-profit. Working on a $300,000 project form private funding – 4 big projects within this. 1) Took property and will update fuel supply. 2) Gutting a former year round home to become an affordable house and holding it as the teacher’s house, 3) Little house that served as storage building is going to get some interior work to turn it into a health center to store medical supplies and a nurse/doctor can come (telemedicine). 4) Property had a pier that you can fuel up at – 75-80 foot pier not serviceable the last 10 years, so had to get fuel in 5 gallon cans. By next spring lobstering season, wharf will be rebuilt and serviceable for fisherman. It will also have small store.

Bri helped establish a new storekeeper on Cliff, will try and stay open at least some hours all year long, which hasn’t happened for decades. There are ongoing conservation efforts (will talk more about this next meeting). There are 4 kids in schools, 2 belong to teachers.

8 houses were weatherized this week, grateful to Efficiency Maine and the Island Institute.

Thanks to all for coming and to our guests.

Our next meeting will be in Augusta, we don’t have a location yet, details to come.