MIC Meeting
Cross Building, Augusta
Feb. 26 10:00-2:00

Attendance:
Roger Berle, Cliff Island
Laura Phillips, Mercy Hospital
John DeWitt, Isle Au Haut,
Kendra Chubbuck, Isle Au Haut
Meghan Cooper, Isle Au Haut
Beverly Roxby, Frenchboro
Eva Murray, Matinicous
Beverly Johnson, Chebeague,
Mark Greene, Long Island
Bri Warner, Island Institute
Heather Deese, Island Institute
Michelle Brown, Peaks Island
Darren Ripley, Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery
Mary Anne Mitchell, Peaks Island
Erin Love, Long Island
Kelsey Byrd, Vinalhaven
Yvonne Thomas, Island Institute
Kathy Warren, Vinalhaven
Donna Wieg, Swan’s Island
Chris Rector, Senator King’s Office
Christopher Carr, NAMI Maine
Nick Battista, Island Institute
Tom Groening, Working Waterfront Newspaper
Jenna Mainerd, Executive Director of NAMI Maine
Julia Maher, Island Institute
Joyelle Jones, Island Institute
Cheryl Crowley, Cliff Island
Janice Cooper, Rep. for Chebeague and Long Island
Walter Kumiega, Rep for Swan’s, Frenchboro, The Cranberries, North Haven,
Vinalhaven, Isle Au Haut
Chuck Kruger, Matinicous
Peggy Acres, Cliff Island

Introductions

Housekeeping-

Contact List- We are updating the MIC contact list. Roger sent around a list for people to update.
Treasurer’s Report- Isle Au Haut is paid up. Frenchboro has a credit. Roger will send out 2015 Invoices and 2014 Annual Report in the next few weeks. Treasurers’ report was unanimously approved. Donna Wiegle motioned; Eva Murray seconded.

Membership- Please remember to get yourself reappointed/reelected and update the membership list.

Minutes from previous meetings: Minutes were accepted unanimously. Mark Greene moved; Kathy Warren seconded.

Island Institute update:

Bond/Legislative Update- Heather Deese:
Eldercare Housing Bond- Funding for new facilities; also for weatherization for at home Elder housing.
http://www.mainehousingcoalition.org/pdfs/BondSummary.pdf
http://www.mainehousingcoalition.org/pdfs/BondBill.pdf

Weatherization Bond- This would give more money to successful programs being run by Efficiency Maine. In the past, this has provided the funding for our weatherization week work. Island Institute is very supportive of it and is working on the language with other groups around the state. Karen will be in touch about events that are coming up to champion that work (Hall of Flags, etc...) Karen will attach a copy of the Weatherization bond 1 pager to the minutes.

Island Eldercare Facility Legislation: Bill to increase Maine Care reimbursement for Island Facilities by 15% for cost of living. It would benefit the three current island facilities.
http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/getPDF.asp?paper=HP0057&item=1&snum=127

Economic Development- Bri introduces herself; invited conversation about Economic Development. Island Institute will be a business resource for individual businesses more so than in the past, please send business owners her way.


The Institute and Partners are working on Aquaculture fact sheets with partners that will be released in the next few days. If anyone in the community is thinking about Aquaculture, please be in touch and Island Institute Staff will come out to talk. Also working on Ocean Planning and getting community involvement with new projects (such as offshore wind, etc.). The institute is still tracking issues on Marine Habitat closures, moving slowly and appears to be going on the right direction.
Beverly Roxby - Heading up a committee in Belfast to have a series of ‘Earth Days’ events starting in April. Invited folks from the island to come and stay and listen.

Community Development: Island Fellows site and host applications are due March 27. Intern sites are posted (18 sites). Please spread the word to college students and rising high school seniors to try to fill those sites.

Nick Battista: We have Law Students from Roger Williams University coming to the Island Institute for a week in March. Please be in touch if you have projects for them to do.

Education - Yvonne Thomas- USDA Distance Learning technology equipment is being delivered, and they are working to set up training on islands.

Jenna from NAMI Maine (National Alliance of Mental Illness)
Support, Education and Advocacy Program
 Runs support groups, also provides training to help other runs group. Offers a variety of training and education programs.
Christopher, on staff, is very interested in connecting islands to the resources.
A Mental Health First Aid Class, recently offered on Vinalhaven, is an 8-hour training program. Program comes from National Council on Behavioral Health
It is designed to help people to recognize signs of mental illness and take steps. It is a research-based model.
NAMI Maine is interested in helping individuals connect to resources; get trained.
Training can be as few as 8 people at a time.
Smaller islands- can we hold a joint training for the islands to get the 8-person minimum. Combine on other islands?
Christopher and Jenna brought cards and information to make connections.
Training is ideal for town office, first responders and other community members.
Mary Anne asked about follow through and guidelines for support groups. Jenna says that they train the facilitator. There is a person on staff who helps with follow through because every situation is different for support. Information is being provided on the table. Please be in touch if you would like to bring this to your community.

Panel: Substance Abuse
Darren Ripley, Maine Alliance for Addiction Recovery
Laura Phillips, Mercy Hospital

Donna Wiegle gave some background on Substance Abuse on Swan’s Island and how substance abuse has gone from being something that we ‘don’t mention’ to a community identified issue through education and programming.
Donna recommends the film “A Hungry Heart”, which was offered as a community film and discussion.
Darren Ripley- Based out of Augusta; works all over Maine. Brought pamphlet about programs that are offered. Works with enhanced recovery supports within communities; works with towns, agencies, prison system (particularly upon release from prison). Lack of ‘recovery capital’: job, family, insurance leads to further addiction. Peer and community support is what aids recovery. They also offer a telephone recovery support program, all staffed by volunteers, makes calls to people in recovery at a time that they have designated. 84% people in program have stayed clean. Also provides a recovery coach program, after a 30-hour training, coaches meet with those in recovery 1 hour per week. These programs are holding people who don’t have insurance.

There was some discussion about the difficulty of coming back to a small town, stigma in recovery. Discussion as to why telephone support might work better for those people.

Laura Phillips- Program manager of the McCauley Residence at Mercy Hospital. Treats mostly women with substance abuse. Expanded program a few years ago from 6 apartments to 15, women pay their own rent and they are not billed for services. Allows a woman to stay with children (gets away from making parents choose between parenthood and recovery). Evaluates based on commitment to recovery. Heavily aligned with 12 step program; offers ‘boosters’, education, nutrition, yoga, evidence based interventions, self care, DBT (mindfulness). Outside supports include sponsors, primary care physicians, etc… Does not provide overnight or weekend staffing. Woman can stay for up to two years. Through program, women rewrite their story. In the two years, 80% of woman have remained in recovery, 70% of women go to school, active alumni group. Random drug and alcohol test; 3 months clean and sober- you can reapply. It is a high demand program. They get 10 referrals a week and only have 15 apartments for two years. Screen one person a week (based on staff) and screenings are out into May. Runs in a phase system…holistic approach to recovery.

There was a discussion about spreading word about resources. Donna Wiegle created a Wordle with a support number; posted it all around the island. She will share it with the group.

Bev Roxby made a suggestion about Island-to-Island TLC type of support group between islands (AA, NA, Alanon, Alanon Teen, etc.). It could provide a sense of support to islanders. It could be done via Skype, Zoom, or Videoconferencing.

Really important to keep meetings going, which is more difficult in the face of small numbers.

Eva brought up the differences between in small community numbers, and those in the larger islands. There are different issues with stigma depending on size.
Laura Phillips- Connecting with the community is the key, both within and outside, letting go of the stigma. Accountability is also key, which is where Alanon plays a part. Offer opportunities for those who want help; no one is ‘too sick’.

Question: How does that work in the absence of law enforcement? Maybe it is about community meetings around the topic- what is our line? How do we have support groups and peer groups for each other?

Christopher, NAMI Maine- That’s where Mental Health first aid plays a part. The more people who are trained, the better the community knowledge is and the more successful interventions and recovery are. NAMI Maine uses grant money and state money to fund the training- so it’s free for island. Christopher is committed to making it work.

Kathy talked about the change in tides in this becoming a community conversation on Vinalhaven as well.

Eva- There needs to be acknowledgement and respect to young people in the communities, especially if there needs to be young community involvement. Most of those who are returning to the island to live are dealing with the stigma of families of substance abusers and need the confidence to become leaders.

Kathy- Maybe there needs to be a selectman apprentice program?

John DeWitt- Problem goes beyond drug and alcohol and into apathy.

Mark Greene- We live in very resilient communities and there is a lot of leadership potential. Anything we can do to encourage people is a good thing. Not to take away from the ISLE program, but there is still a need for engaging young people in community activism beyond entrepreneurship.

Darren- As we move forward, the education of the community and the recovery movement is the next step. The anonymity goes far, too far at times, and we need to have people acknowledge they are in recovery. Honest dialogue is education in the whole community. Recovery coach and telephone support are important to make sure to hold people until they can get what they need (including logistical challenges).

Donna- When someone needs help, we need to have help immediately available. For the legislators in the room, there are barriers. Donna gave an example of someone trying to get on suboxone program but had a two-week lag. Lots of logistical issues when you are dealing with island communities (chain of command- getting samples where they need to go). One person in the community makes a huge difference in the community as a whole, which makes providing immediate help more critical.
Beverly- Timing for detox programs makes it logistically difficult for these communities.

Kelsey Byrd, Vinalhaven Fellow- Accountability on an island is more difficult because the ‘normal’ use is more extreme. On Vinalhaven, they are trying to create accountability pockets: Parent groups, teen groups, school policy. They are bringing people in recovery out on Facebook, and in other ways.

**Legislative Updates**

Rep. Janice Cooper- Proposing a bill to pilot telemedicine for outer islands, using technology to send it to the mainland. She wants to learn more about the Swan’s model. A vet comes once a week, we should be able to have doctors! Health issues are very important. She is working on forming a coastal caucus; this will help build a group to work together on these issues.

Rep Walter Kuminga – One bill he is working on is increasing reimbursement rates for assisted living for islands. It may have a chance, but he is worried about the Senate vote. Also working on Island lobster license waiting list, working to move it along faster.

Rep. Mick Devin – Ocean Acidification – the final report available on line. The follow up work on OA is happening. They suggest a monitoring program and continuing commission for 3 years. It is a complicated program, working to and they are trying to include other states. Also working on 6 bills to address sea level rise, and community resiliency, hoping to get 1 or 2 through. There is a joint resolution to raise awareness of sea-level rise.

Rep Chuck Kruger – There is new data about 10-year storm surge and a 100-year storm surge is the difference is very small. As communities, we have to get into adaptation mode. We are at high risk of catastrophic events that people won’t be prepared for. What will happen will hit the islands first and will hit islands harder. Also working on ferry issues; it is slow going but making a little progress there.

Dave Miramont – I am working with Chuck on the Marine Resources committee, including OA, temperature rise. These are getting more and more attention. Planning to participate in progressive state exchange in DC- 3 day workshop in July on OA.

**Lunch**

**Island Community Check Ins**

Chebeague- The School board is looking for a new superintendent. They have 11 applicants and will be interviewing in the next few weeks. Town Administrative
Assistant has resigned and will be leaving in a few weeks. They love the new smart board installed by Island Institute at the school— they anticipate lots of uses by the community. 35 mb of broadband on island; just got investment of $30,000 to increase to 100 mb. Still using microwave as well as lines. They are installing a tower for communications for our fire/rescue, two special meetings got that going. Last night, meeting to determine if we are staying as a selectman form or move to a council form. It leaves a big question about role of town administrator. There has been lots of discussion and planning in the community for the future.

Cliff- School maintaining at 4; teacher had baby #3!; Portland is no longer providing any kind of fire training for Cliff, which just got that going. Main ferry wharf is the only one that is city owned and not state owned and it just got funding for major repairs. Sustainable Cliff Island just got first piece of property that includes a house, small store, fuel depot and wharf. Huge project! This project will support Working Waterfront, affordable housing and fuel! Raising $250,000 to do that work. Store is getting investment to be owned/operated. Peggy and Cheryl are going to the Sunbeam to really explore (get into nitty-gritty) of telemedicine for Cliff. Lots of great things happening on Cliff!

Frenchboro- Beverly has closed her house up, but still frequents the island. School is doing great—fantastic teacher and people are really happy with how it’s going. The combination school with chances for increased lobster licenses could really make it a ‘best kept secret’ and young families can be recruited. Luke, island fellow, who has been wonderful addition to the school is leaving to go back to grad school and they are working on creating a full time island fellow position application. A community survey has gone out to see what people are interested in. Fellow could work on alternative energy, comp plan, fire department and other ideas. Ferry ramp is giving problems, but no propane issue this year! Postmistress left the island, which makes it hard to fill jobs. Bev is planning to leave as rep at the end of her term. She would like to have a year round person from the island.

Cranberry Isles- (courtesy of Donna Wiegle) Tom Powell, Cranberry Isles Rep, is having a baby anytime. Kaitlyn Damon, former rep, is in fire school.

Isle Au Haut- Town will be appointing a health officer, who will be going through EMT training as well. Lighthouse committee is raising money to replace the bell and making repairs. Town meeting is next month. It will be one year in March for the two new families!

Long- Our superintendent is leaving as well. There is statewide venom toward superintendents, which is baffling. We have a new town administrative assistant, who is outstanding. We keep grappling with going to 5 Selectmen, instead of three. Casco Bay Lines parking garage is administrating changes; lots of ugly stories. They changed parking cards with less than a weeks notice. We survived ‘voter gate’! We can count, which wasn’t publicized as well in the press. Senator Breen and Rep. Cooper came out for a meeting and were apologetic. Erin Love, island fellow, is
working on a service-learning project with the school. We have new subcontracted snow plow people for the winter who are islanders, which is much more popular. Two folks completed EMT training. Online classes for EMT were helpful! There were deer tick bites even in winter, two cases last week. There is a general fear of slipping backwards.

Matinicus- Eva has no exciting municipal news to report. New sense of town at 19 people; really isn't a town. It is the lowest population we've ever had. However, no bickering, fighting- everyone is just working together to deal with the snow! There are all kinds of snow removal issues- had to airdrop plow parts. There are lots of hybrids happening; municipal equipment on private trucks. Wharf repair is done! Our postal backup is going to North Haven to sub for three weeks. She is willing to be a traveling postal sub! It could develop into something. Vinalhaven, North Haven, Matinicus, Islesboro EMS consortium- Maine Island EMS consortium- Eva is inviting other islands to participate. Contact Pat Lundholm for information; plundholm@vinalhaven.org

Eva has a children's book coming out in May!

Peaks Island- Peaks Island Council has been in existence for 8 years, after a succession attempt. Their duty is to create a budget for the city for travel and other expenses, up to $40,000. It has a controversial history. This is the first year that everyone has been elected. However, 2 resignations means two open seats again. It is difficult to get people involved. Last night a budget was passed, which needs to be approved by Portland. They elected to give money to the taxi to help folks without cars get to the store, med center. Also in the budget, money was allocated for fuel assistance, food pantry, needs based ticket program for doctor's visits. Portland has piloted a great program called 'Fix It'; it is an app where people can photograph an issue and send into the city directly. Affordable housing is a big issue. Many year round rentals have turned into seasonal. Sam Saltonstall is working with the CIERA program to update the school energy (possibly make it an emergency center with solar panels?). CERT program is up and running. Five island scholar intern positions posted! We are hoping to get interns to fill positions. Police came out for a meeting. They did a survey beforehand and ‘enforcement’ was the biggest issue. Increased enforcement may not be welcome, but time will tell.

Swan's Island- We had a tragic fire on Monday of this week. A couple on island lost their home and we are trying to rally around them. Twelve firefighters responded and six went through fire academy. Lots of mainland support of equipment and additional manpower support came. Municipal Advisory Committee is talking about EMT pay, which is all-volunteer now. Might try to compensate people when they have to travel to over on the ferry. Town meeting is this Monday. Dexter will not be seeking reelection in two years. Sonny is running for reelection again (after 40 years). Dialogue has been opened for administrative assistant because of Dexter leaving. Telemedicine can now connect with Ellsworth and MDI hospital. Store has been open one year! They are doing a fantastic job and remaining neutral. Walter Kuminga is helping with license increases. We paved a road on the north side of the
island; two more are up for paving this year. It will be a hard sell at town meeting. Electric Cooperative questions- should we disband our cooperative? Tom McAlloon did a report on becoming a direct customer through CIERA program and it will go to a vote tonight at a meeting. Biggest uses of our telemedicine program are behavioral health counseling.

Vinalhaven- Not a lot of municipal drama; new town manager will present his budget, with a record number of budget committee members. Economic development plan meeting after comprehensive plan has passed- supporting main street and small business. Wellness coalition had a meeting last night- how to keep it going after Kelsey leaves. New PA and new principal with their 6 children have stayed. All is quiet (for right now...).