

MIC Notes
August 2, 2018
Island Institute, 10:00-2:00
Volunteerism

MIC Members

Roger Berle, Co-Chair, Cliff Island
Donna Wieggle, Co-Chair, Swan's Island
Bill Robecheck, Great Diamond Island
Mark Greene, Long Island
Jay Corson, Chebeague Island
Bev Roxby, Frenchboro

Guest Speakers

Pam Zeutenhorst, Envision Prosperity
Jennifer Crittenden, Assistant Director, UMaine Center on Aging

Legislative Representatives

Chris Rector, Senator King's Office
Owen Cassas, State Representative District 94
Pinney Bebee-Center, State Representative District 93

Guests

Pheobe Donner, Maine Center for Disease Control

Island Institute Staff

Kate Tagai – Island Institute
Andy Theriault – Island Institute
Nick Battista – Island Institute
Kim Ratner – Island Institute
Hannah Borrowes – Island Institute
Courtney Simmons – Island Institute
Yvonne Thomas – Island Institute

MIC Business

Roger – MIC summary/ history of the group

Eldon Mayer and Roger worked with Philip Conkling to convene a group of islanders to talk about common issues. The dates were chosen arbitrarily and have remained as they are through tradition. February's date is dictated by the legislature's schedule. The November date changes on election years. August is busy: the volunteers are out volunteering. Is it time to change the quarterly schedule to be more convenient around busy seasons?

May MIC voted to move meetings from Fridays to Thursdays to make attendance easier. There is currently no quorum to take a formal vote but Roger and Donna will survey the

MIC members before the next meeting. Proposal: move the August meeting to September after Labor Day.

Treasure's Report:

All members but Diamond Cove have paid their yearly dues.

Island Institute Updates

Energy Policy: Nick Battista has been working with the senator's offices and partners in Alaska and Hawaii to make Federal money available to islands wanting to transition their energy systems. The money would also apply to islands with small cables.

Maine's 21 million-dollar portion of the Volkswagen settlement is going to be used to trade out and upgrade diesel engines. The Maine Department of Transportation has a request for proposals available right now. Proposals can cover upgrades to school buses, trucks, and other diesel engines in the community. The deadline is September 15th. The Maine Marine Trades Association also has an RFP for part of the money to apply to helping fishermen upgrade boat engines. The money will cover up to 40% of the cost and there is a different deadline. Any community/fisherman needing help in crafting their proposal should contact Nick Battista.

Broadband Policy: Nick has been working with officials at the state level and candidates for governor to improve understanding about the importance of broadband and the need for continued funding of infrastructure buildouts. The Cranberries got a grant from USDA to complete their project, so the head of the USDA was out there recently for a ribbon cutting and they made sure to educate him on the importance of broadband for rural communities and the work that still needed to be done across the state.

Fellows: In September there will be three returning Fellows on Swan's Island, North Haven, and Islesboro along with five new Fellows on Monhegan, Frenchboro, Peak's Island, Isle au Haut and in Millinocket.

Roger – How did you decide to place a Fellow in Millinocket?

Kate – We were approached by the library and Our Katahdin. We were looking for ways to support and share the model and their project to help build a regional volunteer database fit very well. Millinocket is paying the full cost of the Fellow.

Donna – There should be clear language explaining that the Millinocket fellow is fully funded by Millinocket. People think that because there is a Fellow in Millinocket, it means there is one less Fellow for the Islands.

Kate – No, it was the same when we placed a Fellow in the Great Lakes- these Fellows costs are fully covered by the communities, at \$50,000 while for the islands the costs have remained \$8,000 for the first year and \$10,000 for the second year.

Roger – Cliff has had 2 ½ fellows. You ask every year. We find that we are not really able to use someone. But every year we look forward to working through this question.

Kate – The Frenchboro Fellow is being shared by 2 organizations. Ben Algeo worked across two islands – Monhegan and Matinicus. There are creative ways share a Fellow when one project isn't enough for the full year or when one single organization can't

cover the cost. It works well when two organizations have shared goals, or even similar goals. It is harder when the two projects need very different skill sets.

Energy Updates: *Andy*: The Spark Grant is still available and accepting proposals for Energy projects that have a significant educational component to them. There will also be an Energy focused ILEAD offered in the fall.

Marine Update: *Nick*: Matt Nixon and the Maine Coastal Program will have another round of funding for working waterfront easements. Nick will share that information when it becomes available. It may be a quick turn-around for the applications.

Legislative Updates:

Pinney: Technically we are in session, but we are at a stalemate.

Owen: The lawnmower races on Islesboro were awesome. The Islesboro lawsuit against the ferry rate changes is working its way through the court system. Islesboro residents are trying to do their best to absorb that change, but it is difficult.

Donna – Do you have sense of ridership dropping or more use of private transport?

Owen – When Pendleton subsidized the rates it there was a slight decrease of ridership on the DOT Ferry, but Pendleton couldn't keep up the subsidy.

Owen: The elections will be in November, legislators are sworn in at the beginning of December and by the end of December proposals for new legislation need to be submitted. If you have ideas for needed legislation that should be proposed, please send it along.

Nick: The Island Institute is happy to provide support if there are ideas and to connect you to the resources needed for turning those ideas into legislative proposals.

Feature Topic: Volunteer Management

Pam Zeutenhorst, Envision Prosperity

There is a National and Statewide Trend – decreasing number of adults volunteering and decreasing number of volunteer hours. Which means overall fewer people are volunteering for less time.

Looking at volunteer rates in rural areas. The things that keep people from volunteering in an urban area are the same reasons in a rural area: transportation, child care, time, etc. In urban areas standard solutions worked, but rural areas need their own unique solutions.

How do you engage the local community in building the solution? The Fellows program speaks to that approach. By providing an extra set of hands to tackle a unique community challenge. An understanding of the community and being able to build recognition and relationships is also critical.

Engage with the community- we think we are being welcoming to new volunteers, but from the outside it doesn't seem welcoming. If you are engaged in volunteering you may see the

challenges, but someone from the outside may not. Volunteer organizations in small communities require a self-sufficiency.

Points of Light did a study of how nonprofits and municipalities make an investment in their human resources and how they engage volunteers in their organization. They found that organizations that invest in volunteer management are more cost effective and more resilient in rough economic times. Volunteers have a positive economic impact. But any time an organization brings another person in whether they are paid or unpaid it is going to cause more work and so how do you ease that for small organizations?

It is important to approach volunteer management as if it is human resources management because it is about managing people. Proper management will help people best use their skills and find the greatest benefit to the organization. A manager can also recognize when the particular skill set of a volunteer isn't useful, and while we never want to tell volunteers they aren't needed, sometimes organizations need to let them go.

The tradition model of volunteering was built in the '50's with the husband working, the wife volunteering on the committees. But a shift happened in the late 90s in how people volunteered because the number of dual income households increased, the number and type of people in the workforce shifted, and so the type of volunteering changed from long-term projects to more episodic volunteerism. People working full time and supporting families want projects that have a clearly defined start and end point. Now project based volunteering outweighs traditional long-term volunteering.

All the generations have different management styles that they respond to, so to manage five generations of volunteers, you have to respond to the different styles people have generationally, economically, culturally. It is something that takes work and learning. It is a skill that has to be developed.

Any volunteer manager needs to plan how to engage volunteers in the work and how to manage them. Statistically one third of volunteers quit in the first year because they don't feel their time is being used effectively.

There are trainings available for organizations to support volunteer management. The Maine Commission for Community Service runs a service enterprise initiative that helps organizations refine how they manage current human resources and develop future potential resources. The trainings are offered through United Way and it is a requirement for any AmeriCorps funded organization.

Jennifer Crittenden, Assistant Director, UMaine Center of Aging
Encore Leadership Corps. (ENCorps)

This area of volunteer management is broad and varied. The goal of EnCorps is to leverage time and talent that older adults have to give through meaningful volunteer opportunities. It is a statewide leadership training program for volunteers 50+ to increase civic participation and build healthy communities.

They are a resource for building volunteer systems through:
Development of meaningful volunteer opportunities
Providing resources for building volunteer systems

They also build skills within participants through:
Trainings that include: Leadership, Grant Writing, Working with Difficult People, and
Media training among other topics.

EnCorps wants members to become leaders in their communities. Benefits include socializing, learning, and increased well-being. There are 284 Volunteers serving in all 16 Maine Counties.

It is important to share the impact volunteer work both on the community and on the volunteer themselves.

By understanding why people choose to volunteer, it can help organizations better support the volunteer. There are broad reasons why people volunteer including:

- Altruism – help others, improve community
- Personal Growth – skills, self, others
- Self-Oriented – keep busy, feel better, new friends
- Financial – stipends;
 - There is a personal cost to volunteering which should be taken into account when asking/recruiting volunteers. If there isn't enough for a stipend, perhaps providing a meal, or offsetting the cost of travel could help motivate people to volunteer.

Be upfront about the support you can provide to the volunteers, but think creatively, too. No one wants to be bored. Can you get a speaker to come talk while volunteers are stuffing envelopes to provide a learning opportunity? If the volunteer's goal is to meet people, make sure there are social events where they can meet lots of people. By engaging volunteers based on their personal goals creates a more committed volunteer.

Provide the opportunity to share successes – ENCorps creates newsletters
Recognize Volunteers (there are many ways)

- Events, awards, hand written notes, newsletter, upper management recognition,
- Important to ask people how they want to be thanked.

Clear and Open Communication is always important

- Keep lines open
- Help volunteers see the impact of their work

Principals of Practice (from EnCorps volunteer network)

- Flexibility
 - Volunteer priorities change making volunteers come and go.
- Don't Go it Alone
 - Who can support you? How can you join forces with other non-profits or volunteer support organizations to help manage volunteers or co-create recognition events?

- Have systems for management.
 - Is there a clear protocol for training volunteers?
 - Is there a person they can ask for help?
 - Is there a way to fire volunteers? Sometimes you have to say “This doesn’t seem like a good fit. Can I help you find something that is a better fit?”

In small communities’ organizations have to overcome the perception that those who always step up to volunteer will do so again, and others aren’t needed.

- Are we recognizing the volunteers?
- Who are organizations encouraging to volunteer? By asking for specific skills and focusing on short term, task-based opportunities it shifts the paradigm of volunteering.
- Make a personal ask. Invite people directly, especially those with identified skills the organization needs.

Volunteerism does have a positive economic impact

Island Volunteer Best Practices

Christine McDuffie, President, LICA

Recruitment:

1. Target specific skills
2. Tell the world what you need volunteers to do: Listservs, newsletters, Facebook, paper plates stapled to phone poles, whatever methods work on your particular island.
3. Try to weed out grumpy people. Nobody else will want to work with cranky people.

Retention:

4. Give credit where credit is due. Personal thank you notes and published thanks.

Karen Rea, President, Long Island Historical Society:

Recruitment:

1. Ask folks directly who may be interested
2. It’s not hard to get volunteers to do something once or twice; it’s much harder to get volunteers to do the ‘heavy lifting’ of a long-term, or time intensive volunteer commitment such as planning exhibits or data entry.

Training:

1. In June we hold a 1 hour session for those who will be hosts for the exhibit. It’s pretty informal, but there are 2 handouts – 1 that goes over logistics (lights, doors, putting out the sign, etc.), the other which is created every year to give an overview of the exhibits.
2. The 2nd training is one-on-one for how to enter data into the Past Perfect system that we use to catalogue items. Although we have an official training manual, last year I created a “short-cut” training binder for just the info that we need (we don’t use all the capabilities of the program). Having said that, we haven’t trained anyone new

since it was created. Speaking of my training, it's taken months and months for me to get comfortable with working with the system, and I still don't get everything right. Meredith and I have been talking about training folks to do just 1 small task, which would be much less overwhelming than trying to learn everything as I have done.

3. Having folks take some of the on-line Past Perfect training classes offered by the company. Also having someone attend Maine Archives and Museum workshops.

Retention:

1. Lots of positive feedback
2. Ongoing support for questions and a clear system for getting information
3. Thank you notes
4. Public recognition of the work they've done.

Susan Hemond, Director of Programs, Long Island Historical Society

Training:

In the work I do on the island I am not often training people. Either I asked for the help because it is something the other person already can do better than me, or I chose the person because I felt the job played into their skills and would be fun for them.

A hands-on session where I feel like the person who asked for help is willing to get me up to speed and answer questions. After that, offering multiple ways to enhance/repeat the learning is very helpful as we all need something different. Providing a set of notes, a phone number to call, a couple trial runs, or a reference binder as resources and reminders.

Consider how the volunteer learns, especially for one on one trainings. Would they do better to do several short sessions with lots of reassurance, or one long, detailed session?

I usually just work one on one with each person to make sure they know what is needed. Then I do follow up reminders right before in case any further questions or someone forgot to put it on their calendar.

Recruitment:

Most students now have volunteer requirements to fulfill for National Honor Society or even graduation. Building awareness at the school so students know what is available is important.

If I have a job a young person can do and I think they would enjoy it I approach them directly and ask if they are looking for volunteer time. Students want to do real work. So, I try to make sure I am keeping them fully occupied.

Designing a task to be concrete with a beginning and end works best as I find attention spans are a bit shorter

Acknowledging the volunteer service to people they are connected to so those people can also provide praise, i.e., parents, teachers.

Retention:

Most of the things I need help with are one shot but I do find if the person has fun, doesn't feel overwhelmed and knows how much I appreciated the help, usually he or she is willing to help me again the next time.

I try to spell out in a communication or at a meeting exactly what I need and see who responds. If no one responds, I reach out to specific people.

General calls for help rarely work for me but if I spell out just what I need and break it down to manageable tasks with a beginning and an end, I have better luck. Especially on the island where we are all here to also hopefully enjoy ourselves too, people seem reluctant to sign on for big, nebulous, no end in sight jobs. Everyone wants to help, they just need to fit it in around lots of other things, so most people will sign up for specific, concrete tasks.

Katharine Stewart, Owner, Katharine's Gardens:

1. **Attract visitors** (families, individuals, groups) to an **environment** that is inviting and interesting. In this case, **signage** directs visitors to the garden where they may wander through pathways lined with a jungle of flowers, fruits, vegetables along the breath-taking tidal vistas shores of Harbor De Grace and beyond. **Business cards** are handed out. Owners of rental cottages are provided with a **magnetic business card** which they may place on refrigerators for their guests. Advertising and invitations are sent out over **emails, facebook**, and in the *Long Islander* (Long Island Civic Association bi-monthly news letter). **Signs** are posted on bulletin boards and around the island. **Word of mouth** turns out to be very significant in promoting success. Visitors are always greeted with a **sincere welcoming, enthusiastic and genuine smile**.
2. **Define the purpose** of the business and how it will benefit volunteers. In this case, the purpose continues to be to **promote** better health by **making** wholesome and nutritious food more easily **available**; and by eating vegetables, herbs, and fruits that are grown organically, taste delicious, and are "so **good** for you." There are chairs and benches in the shaded pergola to **create comfort** so visitors and volunteers alike may rest a while, converse, "spread the love around," share a snack and make purchases.
3. **Invite visitors** of all ages to participate in all facets of the diverse and ever-changing environment. There are always chores to do in the gardens: from planting, making signage using shells/stakes, caring for, composting, harvesting, and sampling.

4. **Match people** with “chores” or “activities” that need to be accomplished in a manner that **meets their age, physical abilities (strengths), health, interests, and educational needs** such as volunteer hours mandated by their schools; and **make the work fun**.

5. **Training is experiential, visual, oral, written, and reflective:** Participants record their volunteer hours in *Katharine's Garden Guest Book*. At the end of each volunteer session, volunteers **reflect on and record** what they have experienced: projects worked on/completed; including their **thoughts and discoveries**. This record, with reflective notes, is maintained so that volunteers may later receive a certificate and letter of their hours of service and work rendered at Katharine's Garden.

Island Updates:

Chebeague

The broadband committee has put together a 17-minute video about the project. Watch it here: <https://vimeo.com/282176752> Axiom is asking town to put up money to install an improved infrastructure. The committee is collecting information and facilitating an ongoing conversation with the hope to vote on if the town will approve this request during the 2019 town meeting. There have been requests for a fireworks ordinance and so the selectmen are looking at the ordinance drafted and approved by Long Island.

The town voted to fund a bond for \$1.6 million in order to do the necessary renovations to the school including a new roof, air handling, new classroom space, a new office space and a renovated kitchen. The tax rate went up by only \$0.10.

There is an ongoing need for year-round housing. The issue is that when houses come up for sale on the island they are not necessarily being bought for year-round housing and there are not enough year-round rentals. There are two to three families who can't find year-round housing. The question is how do we incentivize more year-round housing rental and ownership?

The community solar project is finally going to be built. The summer community calendar is packed with fundraising and charity events put on by the local non-profits.

Frenchboro

Every agenda item passed at the late June town meeting. There is a new teacher arriving soon. She has a strong science background and people on the island seem very excited by her arrival. There is also a new Island Fellow coming out to the island who will be partially working at the school. A man from Michigan who owns a coffee roasting company has bought a house on the island. He roasts a coffee called Lobster Butter Love which is being sold at TIMS on Swan's Island and he is putting in plans to have it roasted on Frenchboro with part of the proceeds going to the community fund. A lot of the old housing stock on the island is being remolded and rehabbed for year-round housing. The annual Lobster Dinner is on August 11th and they are expecting a crowd. There is the all the roads there are race, auctions, a band. Everyone has a really good time.

Long Island

Town meeting went well. The town is trying to spread out major spending on capital projects across several years. The parking committee recommendations passed, but the proposed \$7500 to build a long-term parking lot got voted down. The Long Island Civic Association is celebrating their 50th anniversary in October. It was the voice to the city when Long Island was a part of Portland. We are waiting for Casco Bay Lines to post the winter boat schedule. Long Island has turned out against their proposal to shift service. There are community events all summer including recreation programs, summer camps and the Wellness Center ribbon cutting. Maine Health is coming out twice monthly to the island to provide clinics.

The new wave break was completed last month which protects the rescue boat and floats.

Great Diamond

The Inn is up and running. The island now has three restaurants. The relationship between two ends of the islands are calm. They are expanding the association float. The school students are now being transported to the Long Island School. Great Diamond is part of the city of Portland so issues with broadband access are out of their control. If there was a Casco Bay consortium there may be interest in that. The association is run entirely by volunteers. Volunteering has changed, as the presentations today said. It is hard to get a board of directors, easier to get volunteers for one time jobs like dishwashing and painting. There is a store being run in the community center by a volunteer. They have created a series of training videos for the store and the fire department to help onboard new volunteers and be able to deliver the basic information without someone having to repeat it all the time. They have also created an event book for annual and recurring events.

Swan's Island

Thank you to Long Island for hosting the Island Institute Trustees meeting. Also, North Haven has a new assisted living facility which is very impressive. It took over six years and was a huge job to renovate the building and raise the money over six years, but they have built a beautiful residence. There are three residents waiting. The shedders have moved in making for happy lobstermen. Ticks continue to be a problem. Swan's is number eight for tick borne disease. Six of the top 20 disease hot spots in Maine were islands. The town and health center are hoping to reduce the deer population. Last year the application was put in too late and the extra season was short, but that won't be a problem this year and so hopefully it will impact the population. The comprehensive planning committee is up and running. The old plan is from 1994. The town brought out the planner from Hancock County Planning Commission (most attendees were summer people). She will be back in Oct. to do another meeting when local folks aren't so busy. The small take out next to TIMS couldn't get enough employees in order to open for the season. The Selectmen have said no to tax dollars being used in support of broadband infrastructure. Swan's is disappointed with the Maine State Ferry Service. Two years ago the island was slated to get a new boat. The funding was in place, but then we were told we would only get the new, bigger boat for the summer season. Now we are being told it isn't going to Swan's island at all.

Monhegan

It is the 50th anniversary at the museum so they are organizing 50 events this summer to celebrate. There are lots of tourists. The town assessors are pursuing grants and surveying for community needs to move forward with a broadband project.

The sustainable community association is having an auction. There are a couple of buildable lots and they are using the auction money to support infrastructure (septic and water). One of the rentals is being bought by a family on the island. There are two new businesses, a coffee roaster and a chocolatier. The coffee roaster is hoping to provide coffee through the winter. The Monhegan boat line is being unpredictable with prices. They are especially unclear on freight costs. They are looking for alternatives, information on other ferry's freight prices and help from state to resolve this issue.

Cliff

Cliff had a visit from the City Manager and Island Liaison. They usually come out on a whirlwind tour of all the islands that are a part of the city of Portland, but this time they came specifically to Cliff and spent 2 ½ hours. The next week they made some progress on permitting issues and followed through on a number of promises. They are improving relationships on a personal basis with city government. Axiom came out to the island last Friday (7/27) and talked with the Sustainable Cliff Island board. Creating an LLC on Cliff – raising \$350k from investors, insuring that there are at least 60 subscribers. They are committed to getting fiber to houses by the end of the year. Those that sign up before October get free installation. Cliff has been working on this plan for 5 ½ years. There is a new teacher in the school this year with three students. The store has new operators, one of them grew up on the island and so it is going well and people are happy to support them.