

Welcome – 10 mins (10-10:10)

MIC Members

Roger Berle (Cliff Island-Co-Chair)

Donna Damon (Chebeague)

Mark Greene (Long Island)

Eva Murray (Matincus)

Cheryl Crowley (Cliff Island)

Katie Ford (Great Diamond Island)

Shey Conover (Islesboro)

Lauren Jennings (Frenchboro)

Gabe McPhail (Vinalhaven)

Kendra Chubbuck (Isle au Haut)

Ingrid Gaither (Cranberry Isles)

Carley Feibusch (Monhegan)

Peggi Stevens (Isle au Haut)

Donna Colbeth (Chebeague)

Guests

Bob Anderson (GLIA -Beaver Island)

Kelly Cotiaux (Senator Collins' office)

Barbara Hayslett (Sen. Golden's office)

Chris Rector (Sen. King's Office)

Yvonne Thomas (Island Institute)

Robin Chernow (Island Institute)

Kate Tagai (Island Institute)

Pre-meeting chitchat

- It's very windy these days
- Noticing more erosion on Chebeague beaches

Kate – MIC Schedule for 2021 is to have more frequent shorter meetings and two longer deep dives in the late spring and early fall.

Kelly Cotiaux – H1B visas, PPP loans, great vaccine effort in Maine.

Barbara Hayslett – wrapping up community projects funding process, next week will submit info to appropriations on 10 projects, not sure what will be funded, offices are busy working with businesses/individuals on PPP and other IRS issues

Welcome from Roger (Donna on Vacation)

Housekeeping

- Short meeting so please introduce yourself in the chat and/or when you unmute to speak for the first time.
- Stay on at the end if you'd like to continue the discussion

Topic 1. How is your community using the American Recovery Act Funding?

- Donna – Town manager estimates Chebeague will get \$35K, TBD on what to spend it on but it will be projects, maybe dredging or broadband, not tax reductions. Question – What are other town’s getting?
- Mark – Selectmen has said that they won’t commit it until they see if. Came up short in state money to build wave break, so it might go there. \$35K sounds low – thought it was more like \$250K over two years
 - o Kelly – still waiting, formula makes it so each town gets a different amount, can find out the information from the Portland office
 - o Barbara – each county might be handling it a little differently, ex. some might do a selection process, reach out to your county administrators
- Eva – Town administrator has no information – does every town get something no matter what, or is there ground work that must be done? They aren’t expecting anything.
 - o Kelly – doesn’t think that ‘towns’ have to do anything, but what about plantations? She will look into it and will share info with MIC and Kate. There is a lot of broadband money coming in, but that’s separate. It is confusing.
 - o Kate – working to help town’s get the biggest bang for the different bucks that are coming in. because there is a lot of Broadband funding proposed at the state and federal level and if these funds can be matching they could help leverage more funding.
- Ingrid – They found out about it through the newspaper, not a lot of information.
 - o Are there restrictions? Kate says there don’t appear to be on the American Recovery Act.
 - o Mark – heard that it can’t be used to reduce taxes, has to go to stuff
 - o Did Chebeague get official notification? Town manager estimated based on population – still somewhat unclear.
- Shey – They estimate \$55K, and is looking for guidance from Maine Municipal Association, hoping to offset COVID expenses that the medical center has incurred
- Kendra – Does it go to large cities or to the county – who distributes to the small towns? IaH is a town in Knox County.
- Peggy – read \$10K in the paper, Jes on Monhegan has a resource from MMA, thinks no strings
 - o Kelly – will work to get a fact sheet
- Donna – 5 big cities that qualify for the federal programs are getting significant funds, they have lots of social services/expenses, still lots of questions about access, reach out to the county leaders
- Kate – feel free to email any further questions to us or directly to Kelly or Barbara with the Federal delegation
- Gabe – VH – slated to get \$110K, going to put it into the sewer project to catch up on repairs
- Chris Rector – waiting for guidance, Kelly will share notes

Follow up email from Kelly Cotiaux:

I am sending you a document that may be a little bit of overkill for what people were asking, but as things unfold they may have more questions. <https://www.ncsl.org/ncsl-in-dc/publications-and-resources/american-rescue-plan-act-of-2021.aspx>

I have this ugly spreadsheet that I am looking at and pulling the towns I can find from it I am not 100% how each town is structured so I was unable to find some towns listed on the allocation list because they are part of a larger town/city. Islands not on the list below: Cliff, Peaks, Great Diamond (Portland)

Chebeague Island town	Maine	\$34,496
Cranberry Isles town	Maine	\$13,758
Frenchboro town	Maine	\$5,882
Monhegan plantation	Maine	\$6,779
Matinicus Isle plantation	Maine	\$7,178
Isle au Haut town	Maine	\$6,680
Islesboro town	Maine	\$55,931
Long Island town	Maine	\$23,728
North Haven town	Maine	\$35,393
Swans Island town	Maine	\$32,302
Vinalhaven town	Maine	\$112,360

A section right on the front page of the link above and the second page may answer some of the burning questions (copy and pasted):

State and Local Aid • Provides \$350 billion to help states, counties, cities and tribal governments cover increased expenditures, replenish lost revenue and mitigate economic harm from the COVID-19 pandemic. • State and local government recipients could use the funds to cover costs incurred by Dec. 31, 2024. The funds would be distributed in two tranches, with 50% delivered no later than 60 days from the date of enactment, and the remainder delivered no earlier than one year later. States would have to distribute funds to smaller towns within 30 days of receiving a payment from the department. States that miss the deadline would have to pay back any undistributed funds. A town cannot receive more than 75% of its budget as of Jan. 27, 2020. The Treasury Department could also withhold up to half of a state or territory's allocation for as long as 12 months based on its unemployment rate and require an updated certification of its funding needs. • Provides \$195.3 billion to states and the District of Columbia: ○ \$25.5 billion would be equally divided to provide each state a minimum of \$500 million. ○ \$169 billion would be allocated based on the states' share of unemployed workers over a three-month period, from October-December 2020. • Provides \$130.2 billion to Local Governments: ○ \$65.1 billion for counties. ○ \$45.6 billion for metropolitan cities. ○ \$19.5 billion for towns with fewer than 50,000 people. • Provides \$4.5 billion to U.S. territories. • Provides \$20 billion to tribal governments. • Provides \$10 billion for a Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund to carry out projects to support work, education and health monitoring during COVID-19. NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES 2 • Use of funds: ○ Respond to the COVID-19 emergency and address its economic effects, including through aid to households, small businesses, nonprofits, and industries such as tourism and hospitality. ○ Provide premium pay to essential employees or grants to their employers. Premium pay couldn't exceed \$13 per hour or \$25,000 per worker. ○ Provide government services affected by a revenue reduction resulting from COVID-19. ○ Make investments in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. • State and local governments cannot use the funds towards pensions or to offset revenue resulting from a tax cut enacted since March 3, 2021. • State and local governments could transfer funds to private nonprofit groups, public benefit corporations involved in passenger or cargo transportation, and special-purpose units of state or local governments.

Please let me know if this helps.
Thanks, Kelly

Topic 2. How is your community welcoming new members or welcoming people back for the summer?

- Gabe – selectboard did send out a message last year asking summer people not to come, they are putting out a letter today to give an update and encourage people to be vaccinated and keep up the three W's, help us stay safe, New people – revamping town website, in the past, they haven't had a visitor's tab (thinking it should be the Chamber), and also a residents menu, someone has a cheat sheet for newcomers
- Eva – biggest problem isn't COVID, it's people coming and expecting services that don't exist. People who are March-Oct expect lawn care, house cleaning, baking, etc. – public service workers are 50+, new people want to hire people, workforce shortage, great new neighbors moving in who want to be here for 9 months and want services that don't exist. No car ferry reservations available. Bring your own lawn mower, wagon, etc. get people who don't need workers!
- Kendra – Same problem on IaH, lack of cleaners/care takers, nice new people moving in, boat company and park meet with Peggy bi-weekly, boat has gone from 6-18 people, masking still required, reservations required, ShoreShop opening on June 14, people are staying longer, masking is still required, most of the community has been vaccinated thanks to SeaCoast Mission, welcoming people and hoping for the best, depends on the park and boat company
- Peggy – park is opening a month late, reservations are for 2 camp sites, gone in 10 minutes for the season, different attitude – drop off will be at the public landing in town, park has to follow federal guidelines which are different from state guidelines, masks are required in public/crowded places, boat will open to 50 with masks for the summer, boat company is nervous about too many people coming, We are doing well but the rest of the country and world is not, people want commerce and want to be welcoming, will make changes if need be
- Ingrid – COVID adjustments depend on where you live, ex. GCI is more relaxed on mask wearing than it is on Islesford, still worn in public, but getting a little lenient about it, Islesford has a heightened sense of responsibility – how do you get along with your neighbor when you have a different view. Echoes Eva's point about lack of workforce and workforce housing, COVID has amplified existing programs, big need for childcare for summer families, COVID changed the school schedule, they've hired up the local teenagers and are paying them well (\$15-\$20/hr) so now there is not one to help with the library. Lack of working age, and working class – whoever can pay the most, gets the workers. Town meeting – usually inside in March, delayed to May and outside, will serve lunch but with low contact, noticing burn out of working class/working age islanders, winter was short and there wasn't much of a break due to summer people coming early and staying. Working on attitude!
- Mark – agrees with all of what has been said. So much work and nothing getting completed, unfilled positions, not the core middle aged/younger group to do the work. Groups are welcoming new people, 3 new COVID families have moved in, not a lot of chance to interact due to lack of normal community events, summer people are staying, Selectmen are looking at 4th of July events, and planning weddings, swim-run is a question. We all want things open and return to normal, some things are being cancelled (VFW fair) but still trying to move forward and be welcoming
- Chebeague – 16 weddings planned for the hotel, most are 'small – 60-75, some are way over 100, taxes our bus transportation that can only take 9, boat can take more, doing charter bussing, brainstorming how to increase busing and address Cousin's Island concerns. Historical society – should they be open during weddings, especially since many people will be from out of the state/country – and we won't know if they are vaccinated. Having town meeting outside in mid-June under a tent, rain or shine. People have moved in this winter – haven't been able to be as welcoming due to COVID, CDC nurse has been doing shots, idea – get a list of people who

have moved to the island this year and write a note to welcome them. Questions – do we have a parade, do we have a picnic – probably not, have people do their own pod-picnics? What about discouraging big groups? Ex. extend the parade route to go by every house to avoid big gatherings. Feel better about regular summer people coming back, last year, people started barging cars/stuff and that will continue.

- Roger – taxi service on Cliff is not happening anymore, need to figure it out financially. Swim-run – might be going to Chebeague, Cliff could stop it. Long is not welcoming it, route is in flux – Some Casco Bay specific issues to work on.

Next meeting – May 21, deep dive

From the Chat:

Eva Murray-Matinicus Island to Everyone (10:54 AM)

We will also be having Town Meeting outdoors--we did last year and it worked fine, but we're pretty small-- and I will do a limited bakery as a "farm stand" style, no more people in my house (I didn't open at all in 2020). The trustees decided no church services again this summer.

Eva Murray-Matinicus Island to Everyone (10:55 AM)

You cannot get a vehicle ferry reservation for Matinicus now for love nor money!

Katherine Ford to Everyone (10:57 AM)

We on Great Diamond are gathering outdoors for our events. The Inn and restaurant are planning to open sometime later than usual. Finding help is a major problem and may delay these openings.

Kelly Cotiaux - to Everyone (10:58 AM)

Your resilience is admirable, you have been doing great. Give yourself some credit

Ingrid Gaither, Cranberry Isles to Everyone (10:58 AM)

we've lost at least two "year round" homes this winter to summer buyers. that's not a new problem, but interesting because these two sales were 100% related to new people looking to escape Boston covid.