

The Dispatch

Winter 2010

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2009—2010

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Jayne Riley, Maine MEP
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Executive Director's Report December 2009

FY 2009 Audit - KVCOG's Auditor, Runyon, Kersteen, & Ouellette reported on their findings for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2009 at the KVCOG Board of Director's meeting December 17, 2009. The firm noted that the report contained no findings or exceptions, i.e. a "clean audit". KVCOG managed a small addition to its "unrestricted net assets". Its reserves meet the suggested standards for similar operations and its financial situation is "sound".

Next CEDS Meeting – February 3, 2010 at KVCOG from 11 to 1. Speaker, John Dalton, CEO, Inland Hospital.

Budget FY 2010 - July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010:

At the Annual Meeting in September, the KVCOG General Assembly and Board of Directors adopted the FY 2010 Budget and set the Annual Membership Fee schedule for FY 2011 (Beginning July 1, 2010). The current budget includes a \$1,667 increase in expenses over last fiscal year; essentially flat. Revenues are projected to be up very modestly reflecting increases in Federal money. Our cash position remains good. Our lending operations are under some stress that reflects our borrower's

efforts to deal with the recession. We are running quite lean and controlling expenses is a continuing priority. I anticipate that both calendar 2010 and next fiscal year will be difficult for our members as the state's budget transfers more cost to the property tax.

No FY 2011 Membership Fee Increase - The Annual Membership Fee for FY 2011 starting July 1, 2010 will be the same as the fee for the year ending in June 30, 2010. KVCOG has kept the fee flat since July 2008.

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Joint Purchasing - Calendar 2008 is another very successful year. Joint purchasing savings are a strong incentive to join and to stay with KVCOG.

KVCOG calculates that member municipalities saved \$79,138.71 in calendar 2008 by purchasing rock salt, weight/bump signs, flake calcium chloride, and culverts through KVCOG's Joint Purchasing program.

In 2008 savings as a percentage of membership fees ranged from a low of 1 percent to a high of 341 percent of the member's annual fee. On average participants saved 31% of their Annual Membership Fee by using KVCOG's Joint Purchasing.

A Brief Review of Current Projects:

PLANNING: Chris Huck, Jennifer Boothroyd, Ross Nason and Fred Snow.

SHORELAND ZONING ORDINANCES, which should have been adopted by June 30, 2009, are still undergoing revision in many towns; other towns *have not yet started*. KVCOG Planners are available to assist and have helped a number of towns with maps and ordinance language over the past few months.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATES: Updates are being drafted and implemented by many towns that are concerned with state pending deadlines. With KVCOG assistance, Skowhegan will complete its plan within the next few months, Winthrop, and Freedom are in mid-process, Manchester is just starting up, and several other towns are expected to begin the process in 2010.

LAND USE ORDINANCES: KVCOG planners are compiling model language to fit a multitude of local regulatory situations. We have new model standards available for cell towers, parking lots, wind turbines, and open space development. KVCOG is working to develop standards for Low Impact Development (LID, storm water management) and outdoor advertising (signage). KVCOG also has access to ordinances developed in other jurisdictions that may also address local issues – ask.

SOLID WASTE: KVCOG managed **four** regional household hazardous waste & pharmaceutical collections during the fall of 2009. These events served 128,000 residents (70% of the regions' population of 183,000) in 31 participating municipalities, including a new and well-attended collection this year in Jackman. As a result, over the past two months 2,850 gallons and 11,400 pounds of household hazardous waste were removed along with six 55 gallon drums filled with unwanted prescription medications. This year we added a very successful and popular free e-waste collection to these events.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING: In January 2010, KVCOG will begin a plan integrating future development with transportation improvement planning in the I-95, US 201 corridor from Fairfield to Gardiner. KVCOG is working with Waterville area planners and the Town of Skowhegan to develop bicycle and pedestrian plans. KVCOG is active in *Sustain Mid-Maine's* Transportation Committee, currently planning several park-and-ride lots for the Waterville and Fairfield I-95 interchanges.

Revolving Loan Portfolio Status Report: **As of October 31, 2009**

Loan Status:

of Loans/Total Amount

Current:

36 / \$2,805,892

Past Due:

3 / \$173,076

In Liquidation/Bankruptcy:

9 / \$816,974

Available to Lend: As of 9/30/09 \$1,001,596

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG):

KVCOG provided technical assistance to twenty-two (22) municipalities and one (1) county in our region during the first five months of the 2010 CDBG grant program (July 1 through November 2009): Anson, Athens, Belgrade, Bingham, Cambridge, China, Fairfield, Fayette, Gardiner, Madison, Manchester, Norridgewock, Palmyra, Pittsfield, St. Albans, Skowhegan, Solon, Starks, Thorndike, Waterville, Winslow, Unity and Kennebec County.

Brownfields Assessment Grant:

KVCOG’s environmental consultant performed Phase I assessments in the towns of Madison, Manchester, and Winslow, and finalized the Quality Assurance Project Plan for a Phase II assessment in Manchester. We will continue to work with municipalities in our region to identify prospective sites suitable for re-development.

KVCOG will leverage CDBG funds for Brownfields projects where appropriate.

Other Projects of Particular Note:

Kennebec River Initiative – The work plan for Spring 2010 includes continued work on supporting the development of a carry-in boat access point on the east side of the River in Vassalboro; establishing Maine Farmland Trust’s staff position with a regional focus on the farmland preservation in the central Kennebec Corridor, and the work of the Merrymeeting Trails Initiative to extend the Kennebec River recreational rail trail between Gardiner and Topsham. KVCOG will conduct at least two (2) regional training

sessions for municipal officials and interested parties who want to undertake and complete conservation and land protection projects that further municipal comprehensive plan initiatives in cooperation with local, regional, state and national actors. See the web site for details.

K-16 Business-Education project with MSAD 47, 49, Waterville, and Winslow. Partnership with CMGC & MMCC. Co-sponsored a second Work Ready Project in Waterville. An additional Work Ready project set for early 2010. The region’s economic development professionals are working on a plan to advance an ambitious workforce development agenda – see below

Regional Workforce Projects – Meeting regularly with KVCOG ED Forum participants to explore formation of a regional entrepreneur network. Will repeat College Internship Fair for area firms and students from Colby, KVCC, Thomas, and Unity at Mid-Maine Chamber B to B Trade show in Waterville in 2010. Exploring expansion in Augusta area.

New Business Development – International Wood Fuels plans to begin construction shortly of its new wood pellet manufacturing facility in Burnham.

Mobilize Maine – Work on this statewide economic development project continues with goal setting and planning for a second regional meeting in the spring.

Personnel – Recruited Cole Palmer as KVCOG’s new Revolving Loan Fund Manager to replace Vic Reinfelds who retired.

Maine PTAC Trainings to be held at KVCOG:

- Session I: Intro to Government Contracting and Conducting Market Research: Wednesday, February 3rd 9:00-11:00 AM
- Session II: Understanding the Federal Contracting Proposal Process: Wednesday, March 3rd 9:00-11:00 AM
- Session III: Intro to GSA Schedule Contracts: Tuesday, March 23rd 9:00-11:00 AM

Preregistration is required. Contact Heather at hcarey@kvkog.org or 453-4258 ext.11. More information can be found on our website at www.kvcog.org

Revolving Loan Fund

Cole Palmer, RLF Director

Opportunities in a Bleak Economy

The local economies in our state continue to struggle with reduced business revenues, rapid declines in consumer spending, and rising costs. The question for the business owner is: What can be done? There is an old saying that one “controls what she/he can control”. That bit of wisdom is even more powerful today.

In my mind, the best businesses are those that continually reinvent themselves. They thrive on change and integrate it as a key element of their strategic plans. Now is a perfect time to embrace this notion. Use the economic downturn to determine where your business can run more efficiently. Seek advice from others in your industry to see what they are doing. Doing so will result in even better financial performance when the economy turns.

There is a process that developed in manufacturing called Lean Manufacturing and Process Improvement (“LEAN”). The process helps eliminate redundant or unnecessary steps in the manufacturing of a product. LEAN is now used to identify and evaluate unnecessary steps in the delivery of services. It is used in industries as diverse as Non-Profits and Medical Services and is used successfully to reduce costs time and time again.

Another technique that can benefit a business owner is to take a good hard look at one’s skill set. What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? I find that the best managers are those who know themselves well enough to acknowledge their weaknesses and take advantage of their strong suits. These managers surround themselves with top talent in the areas in which they need the most help.

This tool can be used in a one person operation. As an example, say you are an excellent sales person,

but do not a clue about accounting. The obvious and easy answer is to retain the best accounting help you can afford. Any business owner should have a cadre of advisors to offer advice on an ongoing basis. Establish strong communication bonds with your banker, your accountant, your attorney, and your insurance agent. Choose these individuals carefully. Let them know that you will be calling on them from time to time for advice.

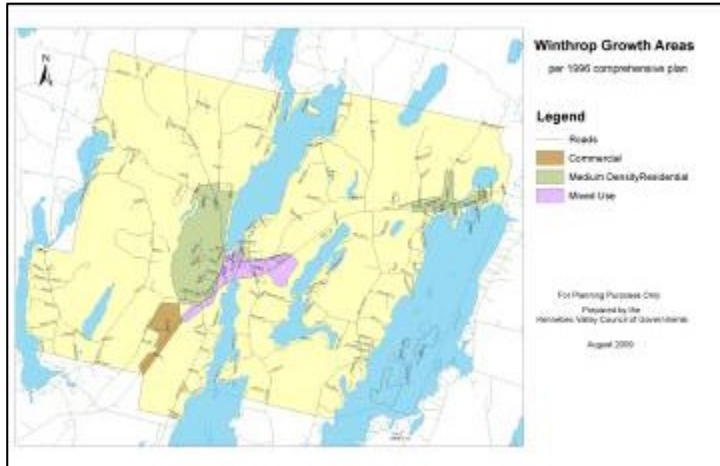
The point of all of this is to control what you can control, to take stock and to look at your business with fresh eyes. KVCOG does this day in and day out with an eye toward giving the small business owner useful advice...perhaps something that the business person has not considered. One aspect of our mission is to attract new and to assist in retaining existing jobs in the region. The only way that I know of to do that is to have strong companies in the communities that we serve. We partner with banks, other economic development entities, consultants, and state and federal agencies that are on board to serve the small business owner. KVCOG offers loans through our Revolving Loan Fund Program. We also partner with the Maine Manufacturers Extension Partnership (MMEP) and the Maine Small Business Development Centers (Maine SBDC)with offices here at KVCOG in Fairfield. Both of these partners are able to offer low (or sometimes no) cost help to make your business more efficient. MMEP works primarily with manufacturers in Lean, ISO 9000/14000, IT Management, Workforce Development, and Plant Layout. The Maine SBDC offers assistance with Business and Strategic Planning.

Please contact Cole Palmer, RLF Director and Economic Development Manager, to learn more about ways in which we may assist you at 453-4258 ext. 13 or cpalmer@kvcoq.org.

Got Maps?

Jen Boothroyd, Community Planner

Did you know that KVCOG now does all our GIS mapping in-house? With recent hardware and software upgrades, we are able to provide members with high-quality digital or printed maps for planning or illustrative purposes. Using GIS data layers from the Maine Office of GIS, member municipalities, and other sources, we can provide maps in the traditional, large-scale printed format, perfect for displaying on a wall or for group brainstorming. We are also able to provide maps in digital PDF format, perfect for posting on-line. Recent software advances also allow us to provide “multi-layer PDFs”, which allow the user to toggle the layers of their digital map on and off. We can prepare shoreland zoning maps to accompany your official ordinance, and detailed maps for your comprehensive plan. We can provide draft maps for discussion in your planning sessions, and detailed trail maps against an aerial photo backdrop.



Additional maps and layers are available; contact Jen Boothroyd at jboothroyd@kvkog.org or 453-4258 ext. 26 to discuss your mapping needs.

In addition to our professional mapping services, we encourage municipalities to take advantage of the free web-based mapping services that are now widely available. Google Maps can be extremely valuable in obtaining driving directions and printable local street maps and aerial photos, but did you know that the service also provides a “street view” for much of Maine? This function allows the user to select a point on a map and view it from a street-level vantage point. When combined with the free, downloadable Google Earth, the maps are enhanced to three dimensions, and additional layers of information are available. Spend some time getting to know the programs and what they offer. KVCOG’s towns and cities have many mapping options, and we’d love to see you take full advantage of them in your planning endeavors!

Announcing the:

Innovation Engineering Leadership Institute

Presented by Maine MEP and MDF

January 27-29th at Sugarloaf

February 24-26th at Sunday River, Bethel

March 24-26th at the Eastland Park, Portland

See the KVCOG website for more information at www.kvcog.org.

KVCOG Regional Information Exchange (RIEx)

Ken Young, Executive Director

KVCOG's Regional Information Exchange, **KVCOG-RIEx**, is an Internet-based "group" that enables KVCOG members/municipalities to share and exchange cost saving information about municipal operations from around the region.

KVCOG-RIEx makes it easy and convenient to discuss the latest developments regarding the most cost-efficient and effective ways to deliver municipal services used and tested in the region. The aim is to build an expanding knowledge base and reference point as KVCOG member municipalities look for ways to respond to the demand for high quality municipal services at a reasonable cost.

Participants may post and read messages, share files, conduct discussions, and search for information about how best to deliver municipal services. Discussions may range widely from where to get the best deal on snow tires for a particular type of truck to the latest technology for allocating plots to aspiring home gardeners.

Municipal officials and their staffs have an abundance of practical, hard earned, hands on experience squeezing efficiencies from local budgets. KVCOG-RIEx is the place to share that information for the common good. If you would like to become a member, contact Heather at hcarey@kvcog.org for more information.

COMPOST BIN SALE:

Register now with the Maine Resource Recovery Association
at 207-942-6772 or victor.horton@mrta.net

Orders accepted until April 30th

Delivery of bins and pails during the week of May 10th

See the KVCOG website for more information: www.kvcog.org

Population Estimates for KVCOG Region

Chris Huck, Planning Director

Each year, KVCOG collects and tabulates information from our towns on the number of new housing units, and uses this information to estimate population growth. The 2009 population estimates (based on new housing through April 1, 2009) are represented in the tables below.

As towns may already have concluded, 2008-2009 was the worst year for new home construction in this decade. A total of 495 new homes, mobile homes or multi-family units were created in 2009, compared to a ten-year average of 780. Compared to 2008, housing construction was down by 40 percent in Kennebec County and 22 percent in Somerset County. Curiously, due to a mini-boom in Palermo, the rate of new housing in the KVCOG

portion of Waldo County more than doubled. Perhaps even more curious, all three major towns -- Augusta, Waterville, and Skowhegan -- reported an increase in new housing.

The 2009 population estimate for the region as a whole was 183,138, a rise of just 137 from 2008. Somerset County showed a net loss in population. The new totals will be posted on the individual community profiles available on the KVCOG website within the next month.

2010 is the year of the decennial census. Census results will begin to trickle out about October of 2010. At that time, KVCOG will adjust its estimates and methodology if necessary, to become more accurate over the coming decade.

<u>TOWN NAME</u>	<u>2009 estimate</u>	<u>Annual Growth</u>	<u>2000 Census</u>	<u>since 2000 yr units</u>	<u>as of 2000 yr units</u>
ALBION	2,039	0.53%	1946	72	741
AUGUSTA	18,375	-0.11%	18560	242	9325
BELGRADE	3,423	1.66%	2978	251	1233
BENTON	2,820	1.14%	2557	163	1054
CHELSEA	2,721	0.70%	2559	114	1007
CHINA	4,466	0.98%	4106	224	1611
CLINTON	3,412	0.24%	3340	88	1375
FARMINGDALE	2,901	0.39%	2804	91	1260
FAYETTE	1,243	2.17%	1040	107	436
GARDINER	6,388	0.34%	6198	182	2672
HALLOWELL	2,519	0.23%	2467	71	1223
LITCHFIELD	3,736	2.24%	3110	321	1244
MANCHESTER	2,542	0.35%	2465	81	1013
MONMOUTH	4,383	1.76%	3785	317	1491
MOUNT VERNON	1,661	1.00%	1524	86	636
OAKLAND	6,406	0.83%	5959	303	2530
PITTSTON	2,620	0.32%	2548	75	1053
RANDOLPH	1,885	-0.15%	1911	24	871
READFIELD	2,547	0.88%	2360	117	900
ROME	1,222	2.74%	980	123	403
SIDNEY	4,572	3.35%	3514	490	1352
UNITY PLT				0	
VASSALBORO	4,522	1.30%	4047	276	1624
VIENNA	588	1.29%	527	36	222
WATERVILLE	15,332	-0.19%	15605	87	6752
WAYNE	1,216	1.04%	1112	67	482
WEST GARDINER	3,441	2.06%	2902	278	1151
WINDSOR	2,422	1.10%	2204	133	883
WINSLOW	7,970	0.33%	7743	248	3433
WINTHROP	6,597	0.65%	6232	282	2602
BURNHAM	1,284	1.39%	1142	83	467
FREEDOM	700	0.95%	645	38	291
PALERMO	1,259	0.36%	1220	44	546
THORNDIKE	732	0.32%	712	22	308
TROY	1,008	0.51%	963	37	387
UNITY	1,942	0.31%	1889	57	803

ANSON	2,654	0.31%	2583	71	1094
ATHENS	879	0.42%	847	32	370
BINGHAM	978	-0.12%	989	13	522
CAMBRIDGE	561	1.56%	492	40	206
CANAAN	2,298	1.55%	2017	163	844
CARATUNK	108	0.03%	108	2	45
CORNVILLE	1,389	1.67%	1208	97	475
DETROIT	892	1.03%	816	51	353
EMBDEN	936	0.70%	881	42	392
FAIRFIELD	6,619	0.08%	6573	136	2774
HARMONY	951	-0.04%	954	16	418
HARTLAND	1,898	0.50%	1816	68	765
JACKMAN	777	0.92%	718	50	392
MADISON	4,662	0.34%	4523	148	2008
MERCER	681	0.58%	647	28	275
MOOSE RIVER	235	0.82%	219	10	89
MOSCOW	572	-0.10%	577	17	449
NEW PORTLAND	851	0.93%	785	47	364
NORRIDGEWOCK	3,608	1.06%	3294	199	1353
PALMYRA	2,128	1.00%	1953	114	809
PITTSFIELD	4,262	0.13%	4214	103	1744
RIPLEY	498	1.13%	452	28	190
ST. ALBANS	1,813	-0.14%	1836	26	766
SKOWHEGAN	8,831	0.01%	8824	171	4026
SMITHFIELD	1,068	1.65%	930	79	390
SOLOON	1,008	0.81%	940	52	443
STARKS	642	1.23%	578	43	263
Unorganized				14	
KENNEBEC CO.	123,427	0.60%	117114	4949	50594
WALDO CO.(pt)	6,941	0.63%	6571	281	2802
SOMERSET	52,924	0.44%	50888	1860	22316
KV REGION:	183,138	0.55%	174573	7024	75712

Announcing a program of the Kennebec River Initiative
hosted by KVCOG and the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust:

A Conservation and Land Protection Workshop for Municipalities
will be held on Tuesday, February 9th from 8:30-12:00 PM
at Long Reach Hall in the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath.

Preregistration is required. Contact Heather at hcarey@kvkog.org or 453-4258 x11.

FAQ: The 2012 Comprehensive Plan Deadline

Chris Huck, Planning Director

Q: I have been told that my comprehensive plan will expire in 2012. Why?

A: A comprehensive plan generally sets out recommendations for ten years into the future. Beyond that period, not just the recommendations but the data and community attitudes on which they are based are less relevant. The original Growth Management Law provided no “expiration date,” but the legislature amended it in 2008 to say that the State Planning Office finding that a comprehensive plan is “consistent with the law” will expire after 12 years. For any plans adopted prior to 2001, the grace period was extended to December 31, 2012.

Q: Will our plan become invalid if it is no longer consistent?

A: The way the law is written, it is not the plan itself that expires; it is the finding by the State Planning Office that the plan is consistent with the law. The loss of the finding does not invalidate local adoption of the plan, nor any of the recommendations that the plan carries.

Q: Why should we care if the state no longer finds the plan consistent?

A: The SPO finding of consistency triggers a number of state actions and benefits. Since passage of the law, various state agencies have tied their growth-related programs to it. The most well-known is the CDBG program, which will not award grant funding for growth-related capital investments to a town without a consistent plan. Other grant programs award point priorities to towns with consistent plans. Some state agencies, such as the DOT, will give priority in funding their own projects to towns with consistent plans.

Q: What about my zoning ordinance? I understand a zoning ordinance must be based on a consistent plan.

A: The law says that zoning ordinances (as defined), together with impact fees and rate-of-growth ordinances (building permit caps) must conform to a consistent plan. The expiration of the finding does not invalidate these ordinances. It does, however, provide an opening for someone who is affected by the ordinance to challenge it in court. While it is hard to believe that a court would throw out an ordinance just because a year had passed, it does create a doubt.

Q: Can't we just “re-affirm” our old plan?

A: No. The SPO will have to review whatever you write to determine your consistency status, and the SPO's current standards will have to be met. Among other things, data has to be refreshed, conclusions based on that data re-examined, and implementation strategies brought up to date. The SPO has rewritten its rules for reviewing plans since 2001, so in many cases, the entire format of the plan must be changed.

Q: What about plans that have never been reviewed by SPO, or which have been fixed after an SPO finding of inconsistency? Can we still get these found consistent?

A: Generally not. **The window of opportunity for becoming “grandfathered” has passed.** If the data is not up to date (within the past 2-3 years) or if a plan was prepared under the old rule rather than the new one, **there is little chance that it will be consistent with the new rule. You can use the checklist (see below) to estimate for yourself how much additional work may be needed.**

Q: If we decide to update our plan, what would be involved?

A: Unless your town already has a standing “Long Range Planning Committee,” one of the first steps would be to ask the selectmen or council to form a new committee. The committee should evaluate the old plan to determine how much needs to be updated and whether to hire outside assistance for the update. The rest of the process is pretty much similar to the original planning process, perhaps slightly shorter. The process used to last about 18-24 months; the update may be done in 12-18 months.

Q: What’s this about a “new rule?”

A: After September, 2008, the State Planning Office began reviewing all plans under a different set of rules. The new rules are much clearer about content and format. The online version of the rule, www.maine.gov/spo/landuse/compplans/annotated/index.htm, includes live links to publications and other technical assistance. The detailed checklist makes the rule easier to follow: <http://www.maine.gov/spo/landuse/docs/compplanning/checklist.pdf>. However, seeing the level of information and complexity involved may also lead you to conclude very quickly that it is not a job strictly for volunteers.

Q: If we decide to hire a consultant to assist us, what will it cost?

A: Consultants have different billing rates and planning approaches, but you should not expect to spend any less than the budget for your original plan. For most towns, this should be in the \$20,000 to \$25,000 range. Most old plans will need to be completely re-written to conform to the new rule. Also, mapping has moved completely to computer-based formats – easier to read and manipulate than paper maps, but more expensive to create. And of course, most billing rates have increased in the 10-20 years since your last plan.

The 2010 KVCOG Cooperative Purchasing Program

Items we will be coordinating in 2010 include:

- Road Posting Signs
- Flake Calcium Chloride
- Culverts
- Road Salt

Road Posting Signs are available at any time. Costs per sign:

Heavy Loads Limited	\$1.40/members	\$1.80/non-members
Frost Heave or Bump	\$0.75/members	\$1.10/non-members

Schedule:

Culverts
Flake Calcium Chloride
Road Salt

Towns to Order:

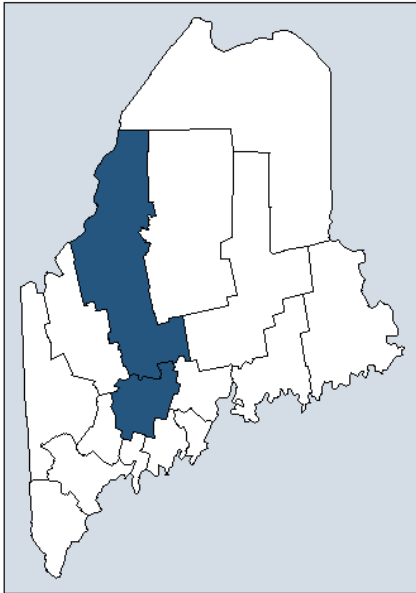
April 2nd
April 2nd
July 23rd

Bid Awards:

April 16th
April 16th
August 6th

For more information, contact Heather at 453-4258 ext. 11 or hcarey@kvkog.org or go to www.kvcog.org.

KVCOG



**Serving municipalities
and businesses in
Kennebec, Somerset,
and Western Waldo
Counties**

This Newsletter is
on the web at
www.kvcog.org

It is located on the right side
bar and can be downloaded as
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Member Communities Make it Happen

Member municipalities are the backbone of KVCOG. Membership fees provide matching funds for over \$200,000 of Federal and State grants; make our website, newsletter, data collection, analysis, and other vital services possible; and allow flexibility in creating new programs to respond to specific local needs.

Dedicated municipal officials serve on KVCOG's General Assembly and Executive Board, guiding policies and programs.