

# CEDS COMMITTEE MEETING

## MINUTES

Thursday, November 16, 2023

10:00 a.m.

17 Main Street, Fairfield, ME 04927

### 1. Attendance

#### In person:

Jessie Cyr, KVCOG • Joel Greenwood, KVCOG • Matthew Underwood, KVCOG  
Kathe Bolster, Town of Benton  
Stephanie Thibodeau, Town of Fairfield  
Erin Benson, Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board  
Katie Doherty, Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Hildie Lipson, GrowSmart Maine  
Christian Savage, Somerset Economic Development Corporation  
Tenley Skolfield, Main Street Skowhegan

#### Via Zoom:

Jeff Hewett, Town of Skowhegan • Melissa Lindley, City of Gardiner  
Joy McKenna, Maine General

### 2. Approval Of Minutes

No action was taken.

### 3. Presentation by Maine Connectivity Authority

Kendra Jo Grindle and Maggie Drummond-Bahl from Maine Connectivity Authority were present and gave an overview of their program. They discussed in depth, the current state of our region's goals, what milestones have been met, what the next goals are, barriers, incentives, resources, funding opportunities, and next steps for Maine moving forward. They encouraged members to reach out with any specific questions.

**4. Review and Discussion Regarding the Status of Identified Projects**

The eight drivers of success that are identified in the CEDS are the foundation of our regions economy. The success of the projects identified by the Committee under each driver is what will help us meet our 5 year goals. These are: Industry Clusters, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Workforce Development and Higher Education, Access to Capital, Infrastructure, Environment, Leadership, and Resiliency. Workforce Development was identified as currently having many barriers to the growth and success of our region.

**5. Round Table discussion**

A round table discussion began about the barriers members are seeing in the area of workforce, noting that this is not just in our region. Members spoke about the growing industries and trends in our region and the lack of qualified skilled staff in the workforce. Discussion was held with respect to reaching the unskilled younger working age group and how we can assist with their needs and subsequently help get them into getting them into the workforce. This was suggested as a topic for the next meeting.

**6. Next Meeting Agenda Items/Topics/Guests**

Our next meeting will be held on February 15, 2024 at 10am. In person at KVCOG or via Zoom.

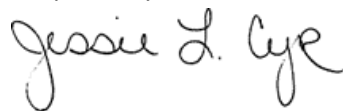
**7. Other Business**

None.

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jessie L. Cyr  
Economic and Community Development Specialist  
Kennebec Valley Council of Governments