

## **Upper Valley Economic Council**

Meeting Minutes: February 22, 2021

***Next Meeting: Monday March 22, 2021 at 4:00 pm.***

---

The meeting was brought to order at 4:05 pm.

**Present:** Alvin Theriault, Steve Gould, Chris Smith, Julie Johnston, Lois Eash and Jeff Packard.

**Guests:** Trisha House - State Office Representative for U.S. Senator Susan M. Collins.

**Minutes:** It was moved, seconded and passed to accept the minutes of January 25, 2021.

**Treasurer's Report/Sign Warrants:** Office Manager Packard presented the Treasurer's report for February 22, 2021. The Board voted to approve the report as read. The Board signed the warrants.

**Trish House:** The Federal Highway Administration announced that the Katahdin Woods & Waters Scenic Byway has been designated as a National Scenic Byway. Sen. Collins was able to secure 16 million dollars for the program. Trish House will email Jeff with more information for the process to apply for the funds. Sen. Collins is working with a couple of different groups on President Biden's covid package to accomplish more of a bipartisan agreement. Sen. Collins continues to push for helping small businesses and the Provider Release Fund for Covid which provides funds for testing, administering and production of vaccines.

**Town Meetings:** Stacyville and Sherman will hold their Town meetings on Monday March 15, 2021. Stacyville's meeting starts at 6:00 pm and Sherman's meeting starts at 7:30 pm.

**Millinocket Lake Project:** In progress.

**Office Manager's Report:** Gloria McKenzie passed away on February 16, 2021. Her foundation has funded several Organizations and Municipalities in our area. Brenda Qualey who helps run the UVEC Food Pantry is recovering from open heart surgery.

**Food Pantry Report:** January: 74 Households served, Sherman – 34 Households Stacyville – 14 Households and Other Towns - 27 Households for a total of 174 people. February: 72 Households served, Sherman - 32 Households, Stacyville - 15 Households, and Other Towns - 25 Households for a total of 156 people.

Office Manager Packard is writing the grant application for Stacyville's request for a Vital Records Storage Building to the Gloria McKenzie Foundation.

**Business up-date:** UVEC received an email in to our letter to the Aroostook Savings and Loan President John Swanberg: Thank you for your letter discussing the need for a bank for the Amish. We are fully aware of the issue. The larger banks, including Katahdin Trust do not allow the Amish to bank with them without a Social Security number. We have been doing business with the Amish for over ten years

especially with Amish that have no SS#. We are nimble enough to accept other forms of ID to meet Federal regulations. We come down to your area six or seven times a year to assist Amish families with their banking. Sherry Clark, the Branch Manager in Presque Isle, and I will visit new families to the area and setup checking accounts. Over time we have been able to lend money on purchasing farms and equipment. If you know of any Amish needing banking assistance, please give Sherry Clark a phone call (764-6491) or email to let her know.

We believe we offer true community banking. Driving an hour and a half from the nearest branch to service three to four families in a day is not cost effective. But we believe they deserve the help when so many other institutions shunned them. Alvin and Jeff comprised a follow up letter and invited them to drop by the UVEC Office.

Scenic Byway Update: Jeff and Fred are working on a new application through Legal Zoom.

UVEC RBEG Update: There is \$55,570.25 available for loans.

Sherman Boralax Plant: No Update

Broadband/Fiber Optics: No Update

Solar Project: Sean Thies, PE, Senior Project Manager sent a email to UVEC: We have finally completed our survey work on this site and we're preparing a proposed site plan. We're trying to determine what is needed for permitting for both Sherman and Stacyville. We should have a draft site plan that we can share in the next week or two. It appears that the project will be wholly located in Stacyville except for a section of access road in Sherman. We'll be in touch when a plan is ready, unless you can provide more information without seeing that plan. Jeff emailed him and asked him to send the final plan to Stacyville.

County Wind Project: No Update.

Meeting ended 4:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

John Qualey, Treasurer