

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# Washington County Development Authority

## ANNUAL REPORT July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

### Introduction

Pursuant to the provisions of Title 5 of Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Chapter 383, Subchapter 3, Article 2-A, the Washington County Development Authority is required to submit an annual report to the Governor, the Executive Director of the Legislative Council and the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over business and economic development matters. The report must be submitted no later than 120 days after the close of the authority's fiscal year. The Authority's fiscal year ended on June 30, 2017.

Section 13083-F of 5 MRSA requires that the annual report of the Authority include:

- A. A description of the authority's operations and activities;
- B. An accounting of the authority's receipts and expenditures and assets and liabilities at the end of its fiscal year;
- C. A listing of all property transactions pursuant to section 13083-D;
- D. A statement of the authority's proposed and projected activities for the ensuing year; and
- E. Recommendations regarding further actions that may be suitable for achieving the purposes of this article.

### History of the Authority

The Washington County Development Authority was established by the Second Regular Session of the 120<sup>th</sup> Maine Legislature as Chapter 568 of the Laws of Maine 2001. The Authority was established in response to the need to create a state entity that could take title to the former Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station in Cutler, Maine from the United States Navy. Since that time, the legislation was amended to broaden the scope of the authority's mission to allow the authority to provide financial and technical assistance to any governmental entity and nonprofit located within Washington County in support of community and economic development projects. Representation was expanded to include all municipalities in Washington County, including the unorganized territories.

For the reporting period, the Authority was comprised of the following members: Bob Whitman (Marshfield), Elizabeth "Betsy" Fitzgerald (Machiasport), Robert Hammond (Harrington), Marianne Moore (Calais), Lewis Pinkham (Milbridge), Heron Weston (Eastport), Lani Smith (East Machias) Josh Bragg (East Machias), and Brian

Mulligan (DECD Appointee). For this time period, the following officers were elected: Betsy Fitzgerald (Chair), Lewis Pinkham (Vice Chair), and Marianne Moore (Treasurer). For this reporting period, the WCDA set monthly meetings on the third Monday of every month at 1:00pm at Sunrise County Economic Center.

The Authority can have up to 13 voting members. At this point, there are 8 Trustees. Bob Hammond is in the process of submitting documentation for his second term. We have invited 3 additional members to join the Board and one has already accepted the invitation.

### **Operations and Activities**

The WCDA Trustees scheduled nine (9) regular meetings from July 2016 to June 2017, though there was not always a quorum present for official business to take place. Major items of discussion during the course of the report period included the following subjects:

The Washington County Development Authority continues to contract with Sunrise County Economic Council to provide administrative services.

The Authority continues to use support from the Washington County Council of Governments Brownfields Program to evaluate the structure's hazardous materials and degradation to the buildings under previous ownership. Through the Brownfields Program the Authority had the basement of the Administration building pumped out. There was the possibility of PCBs, oils, and other hazardous material due to a suspected submerged transformer. Fortunately, no hazardous chemicals or substances were found. The Authority is now preparing an application for clean-ups funds through the Brownfields Program for work on the Administration Building.

The Authority worked with Washington Hancock Community Agency to remodel the old Navy Garage and convert it into a working garage with 5 bays. The WHCA is now a tenant on the commercial side of the Cutler Base in the remodeled garage.

The Authority worked with TRP Logging in remodeling the old Boiler Building and converting it into a salt shed where TRP Logging pays a discounted rent and provides plow, salt, and sanding services to the commercial side of the former base.

The Authority is communicating with a private party interested in opening an outdoor hockey rink and renovating the Recreation Building to rent a portion of the building for a diner. Discussions are also in the very early stages with an aquaculture farmer who is raising oysters.

### **Receipts and Expenditures**

See attached Financial Statement

## **Property Transactions:**

The WCDA obtained no new property this year.

## **Proposed and Projected Activities**

The Authority intends to continue its work to redevelop the former Cutler Navy Base despite the lack of resources of available resources. The Authority receives no direct funding from the State or Federal Government. Sunrise County Economic Council and Washington County Government have provided what staff support they can but the Authority's Trustees are handling much of the day to day management of the property as volunteers. The Authority's sole source of income is rent, which has been entirely used for the maintenance and repair of the property. In short, the redevelopment effort is hobbled by the lack of resources.

With continued support from the Washington County Council of Governments' Brownfield Program, the Authority plans to attempt to raise funds to pay for needed clean up and renovation to some of its property.

The Authority is seeking new tenant to fill vacant commercial space in the base and continues to look for funding to repair former structures.

## **Recommendations**

1. The Authority has no requests or recommendations from the Legislature at this time.

## Attachments:

- ❖ Financial reports: WCDA Annual Income Statement

Respectfully submitted:

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Betsy Fitzgerald  
Chair