

**MINUTES OF BUCKSPORT NEXT  
BUCKSPORT TOWN OFFICE  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021**

**Welcome (1) and Introductions (2)**

**In Person Attendees:** Meeting Team: Rob Carmichael, Hans Krichels, Colleen Gross and Mary Powell (Bucksport Next Meeting Team). Representatives: Tracey Hair (HOME Co-Op); Ron Russell (Northeast Historic Film and Main Street Bucksport); Nancy Minott (Buck Memorial Library, Heart and Soul Stewardship and WERU); David Weeda, Derek Cole (Bucksport PRIDE and Solidarity Bucksport); Landon Fake (Great Pond Mountain Conservation Trust). **On Line (Zoom) Attendees:** Meg Keay (Bucksport Downtown Merchants Association); Paula Kee (Wednesdays On Main), Mary Jane Bush (Bucksport Planning Committee) and Jeanette Tardif (Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition)

The group representatives introduced themselves. Hans added that he spoke to Dr. York from the Elm Street Congregational Church will attend in the future as the director of Brown Hall. He reported that Brown Hall is being developed as a community center open for use for no charge for events.

**(3) Meeting Purpose and Community Goals and Vision**

Rob Carmichael welcomed the participants. He noted that while recently relistening to the recording of the last meeting (October 2020), he was reminded that most importantly Bucksport is about communication. The group promotes the sharing of activities and plans by the participating organizations. This creates opportunities for sharing and maximizing limited resources for the benefit of Bucksport.

**(4) Organizational Needs and (5) Minutes**

Hans sent out the minutes of the last meeting held prior to the pandemic shut down (October 20, 2020). They were prepared from the recorded session. Mary Powell from Main Street Bucksport has agreed to serve as the volunteer scribe and note taker. Rob Carmichael (Facilitator), Hans Krichels (Keeper of Archives) and Colleen Gross (Community Convener) will continue to serve as volunteers supporting the organization. The Minutes from the October 20, 2020 were approved as distributed.

**(5) Updates:**

**Downtown Merchants Association:** **Meg Keay** presented the activities. Bucksport is one of six featured towns for Maine Craft Weekend (October 1-3). The event promotes state arts and crafts and there will be numerous artists and other performers conducting demonstrations and sales in several downtown merchant locations. In addition, Meg stated that there would be the Opening Day of Hunting Sale (25<sup>th</sup> Annual) and they were looking to options for holding a downtown Candy Cane Festival with Fill-A-Cookie Tin Event, specials for Veterans and their families, and a Christmas Tea. Mary Jean Bush encouraged the group to plan for these events to be conducted safely in the context of covid. Meg assured her that precautions would be taken for social distance spacing and the individual wrapping of any food.

**Comprehensive Plan (Implementation):** **Hans Krichels** noted that the late **Jeff Fitzgerald** had previously been in charge and provided updates at this meeting and on the website.

**Heart and Soul Stewardship – Nancy Minot** reported for Bob Cotrell that the group had not met since before Covid. However, Deb Fallows had published an article on the Our Towns Civic Foundation website in August 2021 entitled [Bucksport Finds Its Heart & Soul](https://www.communityheartandsoul.org/blog/bucksport-maine-find-its-heart-soul/). The Fallows (Deb and Jim) visited Bucksport in July and met with several participants from the Community Heart and Soul Stewardship group and other town officials. The Fallows are studying what dynamics keep towns thriving at a time where many communities face debilitating polarization and deterioration. The article on Bucksport is located at <https://www.communityheartandsoul.org/blog/bucksport-maine-find-its-heart-soul/>

**Buck Memorial Library – Nancy Minot** reported that Trustees and the new librarian Lisa Ladd reopened the building to the public on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. During the period of closure the Trustees initially and then with Ms. Ladd worked hard to clean out the building, and catalog books with new bar coding. Nancy described how the Library is becoming a social center supported by the community. For example, Port O'Call offered \$15 gift card for people getting a new library card. New weekly events include story hour held each Wednesday at 10:30 am and Thursday at 4:00 pm. There will be crafts available on Maine Craft Weekend and events during Ghoulspout. Other educational programs include speakers: Tracey Hair will be speaking about HOME and a monthly program on Afro Futurism and African Futurism funded by a grant and led by speakers from the Maine Humanities Council.

**WERU - Nancy Minot** reported from the Board of WERU that the station would be using funds from a Maine Arts Commission grant that was funded to support Maine musicians during the pandemic for music at Maine Craft Weekend. Originally, scheduled to be held in the Buck Library, several musicians will perform on Main Street on Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. WERU is working on its strategic plan to recruit younger listeners and volunteers and now operates the station studio with solar power.

**Bucksport Pride: David Weeda and Derek Cole** described the activities of Bucksport Pride and Solidarity Bucksport. David read the unbridged letter of appreciation that was edited for length when published in The Enterprise. David and Derek wanted to acknowledge the support of Bucksport House of Pizza, McLeod's and Warren's restaurants, as well as Hannaford's for their donations of food. They also thanked the Town of Bucksport. He noted that proceeds from the June 12<sup>th</sup> event were distributed to the Bucksport High School and Reach School Gay Straight Alliance groups (\$500 each). The Health Equity Alliance served as fiscal agent for donations. The youth in the GSA shared that it was rewarding to see what could be accomplished in our community and expressed their feelings of hope for the future, love and acceptance.

**Main Street Bucksport – Ron Russell** (Board of Directors President) noted that the group had considered redoing the Bucks Bucks coupons which could be distributed in couple of different ways for both residents and for visitors. Bucks Bucks were important during last winter for both merchants and the participants who used the coupons. **Mary Powell** (director hired in May 2021) reported collaborating on the 4 Port Festival, the Bucksport Art Festival with Lighthouse Gallery and the Maine Craft Weekend. She has “cross-walked” the ADAPT plan/Heart & Soul Recommendations/the Marketing Plan, linking actions with the Main Street Bucksport Strategic Plan to plan events for 2022. She is collaborating with the Friends of Fort Knox ensure

complementary programs and to attract into downtown some of the 100,000 annual Fort visitors. This is a prominently featured idea from the Bucksport Town Marketing Plan.

**Northeast Historic Film and The Alamo:** *Ron Russell* reported that Northeast Historic Film has been able to get covid economic support and other funding for improvements and enhancements. David Weiss has able to improve the Alamo lighting, the catalog and audio systems (for the hearing impaired) and other infrastructure. The theater is not currently showing movies, but the space and sign are still for rent.

**Wednesdays On Main:** *Paula Kee* sent a written report to Mary Powell via email which read as follows: Paula noted that she hopes to reactivate Wednesday's On Main for as a monthly event next summer (beginning June 2022). Paula plans to request funds from the Town and will be actively looking for sponsors. She would definitely choose to have Barcelona perform in August and will provide regular updates to Bucksport Next. She thanked everyone for staying active and involved.

**Bucksport Planning Board:** *Mary Jane Bush* noted that the 2020 Census results have revealed that Bucksport experienced little to no growth since 2010. The community still lacks direction on housing options and the implementation of Project ADAPT. Mary Jane emphasized that a lack of housing will continue to hold back economic development. She believes that the task of implementing the Comprehensive plan might be brought up to the Town Council.

**Bucksport Bay Healthy Communities Coalition:** *Jeanette Tardif* noted that she is proud to see masks and have the opportunity for remote access to this meeting. The Healthy Communities Coalition has several small programs in the works. Of special note is the Thriving in Place program which produces a safety net for keeping seniors in their homes. Jeanette also noted that VISTA volunteer Lilly McCoy worked hard to link programs between the Coalition, the Health Center and Town of Bucksport. She is leaving and will be missed. Lilly was well-liked by all who met and worked with her and accomplished a lot for the community.

**HOME Co-Op:** *Tracey Hair* noted that HOME was able to stay open during the pandemic, training staff to conduct covid tests and serve people in flexible ways. Many of these changes to services will become permanent. She added that about 178 people they assisted at HOME were from Bucksport. They are still working actively to provide food through take out in the soup kitchen during the summer. All their facilities (such has the thrift shop) were, however, closed part of the time. There was significant work accomplished in Maine to protect people during the pandemic – for example a Statewide Shelter System using hotels was opened for victims of domestic violence. HOME now has an endowment fund, solar power and will be hiring a recovery coach to help people address substance use disorders.

**Great Pond Conservation Trust:** *Landon Fake* said that the 5000 acres of the Trust was widely used during pandemic as more people sought safer outdoor activities. Recently, the Great Pond Conservation Trust trails were the host location for an adventure race. The event attracted 250 people and was planned by a group from southern Maine. The Trust has bought some new land and begun as capital campaign but has stopped in person programming as a result of the pandemic. David Weeda noted that the Trust might be a great location for GSA events and activities. Rob Carmichael noted that the National Guard might be able to assist with trail upkeep and construction projects.

## **(7) Points of Discussion**

**Protocols and Covid Precautions** Rob and Hans indicated the next meeting would be again held live with an option for remote access. The group discussed selecting a fixed location versus rotating through locations throughout the community. Previously, the meetings were held in the Bucksport High School Library. Hans said that Dr. York had invited the group to meet in Brown Hall Community Center – indicating they have new audio/video equipment for broadcasting live. The next date was set for January 10<sup>th</sup> at 6PM. Maine Maritime has also offered its training center for meetings in the future.

**Membership Roles and Lists:** Since Bucksport *Next* is designed as an “umbrella group of organizations,” members are required to be representatives of a specific group. As Rob previously described, this meeting is a forum for organizations to share plans and collaborate, but it is an open meeting. Bucksport *Next* meetings are open to guests without an organizational affiliation. Mary Powell observed that she worked as the volunteer secretary for 20 years for a similar model statewide organization in North Carolina. She shared that this group evolved over time, eventually creating three at-large membership positions for individuals who did not represent an organization. Along with encouraging guests at meeting, this group expanded to improve communication and collaboration around important issues.

## **(8) Conclusion and Next Steps**

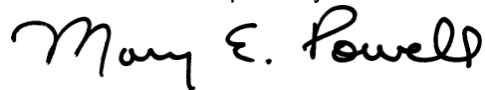
- Speak to Sue Lessard about the Comprehensive Plan (Rob Carmichael)
- Contact the National Guard (Rob Carmichael)
- Update member email listing (Hans Krichels)

## **(9) Adjournment**

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:20PM

NEXT MEETING – JANUARY 10, 2022 at 6PM at BROWN HALL – 31 Elm Street.

Recorded and Respectfully submitted



Mary E. Powell