

**Simplification Study
Policy Working Group – Standards & Costs Subcommittee**

**Friday, February 5, 2010
Maine Municipal Association**

Attendees:

Subcommittee Members

David Bernhardt, MaineDOT (Co-chair)
Richard Crawford, MaineDOT
Greg Dore, Skowhegan Road Commissioner
Rhonda Fletcher, MaineDOT
Denny Keschl, Belgrade Town Manager
Roger Raymond, Bucksport Town Manager
Tony Smith, Mount Desert Public Works Director (Co-chair)
Erik Street, Yarmouth Public Works Director
Bob Watson, MaineDOT

Subcommittee Staff

Peter Coughlan, MaineDOT
Kate Dufour, MMA
Dale Doughty, MaineDOT
Randy Geaumont, MaineDOT

Other Guests

Glen Ridley, Litchfield Selectman

Absent

Jim Hanley, Pike Industries
Galen Larrabee, Knox Selectman

Meeting Notes:

Co-chairs David Bernhardt and Tony Smith convened the meeting at 12:40 p.m. and had members introduce themselves. During its two-hour meeting, the Subcommittee had discussions and took actions on the following issues:

Item 1: Revisions to Agenda

None

Item 2: Working Session

- A. *Discussion on MMA Survey & Municipal Costs* – MMA’s Kate Dufour provided an overview of the municipal winter and summer maintenance cost survey that is currently underway. On behalf of the Urban Issues and Standards and Cost Subcommittee of the PWG, a municipal cost survey was mailed to all municipalities on Wednesday, February 3rd. Although the survey due date is February 17th, eleven communities have already submitted surveys. Kate provided an overview of the responses received.
- B. *Municipal Standards & Policies* - The Subcommittee reviewed the road design standards used by municipalities. The ensuing discussion focused on the processes municipalities employ to generate bids, which generally fall into two categories: 1) joint contracting with a planning commission or council of government process; and 2) town-level

contracts, for which municipalities have developed a template to meet local needs. Generally the bid contract template includes the state's specifications as well as other locally determined special provisions, such as sweeping, traffic control, etc. Erik Street of Yarmouth passed around a sample contract he uses for paving projects; Greg Dore of Skowhegan passed around a local road standards ordinance with specifications for private roadways that may or may not become town ways in the future. Municipalities would like to get 10 – 12 years of life out of a project, but existing financial circumstances are requiring municipalities to push life spans out to 15 to 20 years. Municipal officials on the Subcommittee were asked to submit copies of their local-level road standards ordinances to MaineDOT's Dave Bernhardt as soon as possible.

Item 3: Discussion of Standards for Change in Responsibility (Major/Minor Collector Road)

MaineDOT's Bob Watson provided information on the processes most recently used to turn over 57 miles of state roads to several municipalities in Aroostook County and vice versa. The general rule of thumb applied was to turn over roads that were in sufficiently good repair that the municipalities would not have to make a financial investment in the road for a period of ten years. As a result of that case-by-case standard, the cost for the state ranged from \$175,000 for four miles to \$40,000 for six miles. In three cases, municipalities received a fully equipped plow truck that would no longer be needed by the state.

The Subcommittee then discussed the standards that should be applied if the Policy Working Group (PWG) adopted a process for shifting state rural collector road responsibilities to any municipality, or conversely from a municipality to the state. At a minimum, the Subcommittee agreed that the same standards should apply regardless of which level of government was transferring the road. The Subcommittee also agreed that the life expectancy of a transferred road should be at least 10-years and that the turn back standard should take into consideration pavement condition, culverts, ditching, draining, safety issues (i.e., guardrails, sight distances, etc), clear zones and signage issues. In depth hydrology studies would be considered on a case-by-case basis and only after reviewing the drainage history of the area.

Item 4: Action Items

None

Item 5: Future Meetings

The Subcommittee has scheduled meetings for the following dates:

- Tuesday, February 23, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at MMA (lunch will be provided).
- Wednesday, March 10, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at MMA (lunch will be provided).

Item 6: Other Matters

None

Item 7: Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.