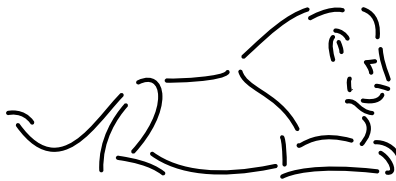


**REGIONALIZATION:
WHAT IS THE BEST FORM
OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
FOR THE FUTURE OF MAINE?**

BY LEADERSHIP MAINE'S LAMBDA LIONS



*Michael Bourque
Patrick Costin
Anne Gauthier
Chip Griffin
Janet McLaughlin
Stacey Morrison
Shalom Odokara
Jim Pierce*

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Local Government for Maine's Future

Introduction

To most Mainers the term 'regionalization' means consolidation of services, but to a growing number of Maine leaders and citizens – who both embrace and embattle this concept, it also means combination of governmental units. Regionalization (sometimes referred to more politely as "collaboration") seems to mean more than simply merging services. While cost savings seem to be the primary goal to regionalizing, the gains are elusive and difficult to quantify. In fact, the enhancement of service, which often is seen as a secondary goal, appears more attainable. Many Mainers voice concerns over diminishing local control and sense of community, yet there seems to be less concern about regionalizing service delivery such as snow and garbage removal. Whatever their view, a growing number of experts on governmental issues agree that regionalization could become the major Maine battle – not only over costs and taxes, but about competing values of participation and professionalism.

During the 2003-2004 year, this Leadership Maine group interviewed more than 20 Maine leaders including economists, planners, town managers, educators, legislators, bureaucrats, county representatives and citizens. We appreciate the generous time given by so many Maine leaders; none turned down our requests to interview them. Most welcomed us with enthusiasm and loaded us with ideas. These and other written sources are contained in the attached resource list. In addition, we read and synthesized a myriad of written reports and newspaper articles on the subject. Yet, so large is this issue that we leave it feeling as though there is still much to learn.

Why Do You Ask?

In a perfect world, these issues might never come up. If Maine's tax burden weren't high, if its economic development engines were burning hot, there would likely never be a consideration about whether or not Maine might consider more efficient forms of government. But, of course, Maine is far from perfect. Questions about tax burden and its attendant drag on the economy leads, quite rightly, to questions about spending. And questions about spending lead to the numbers. Leave it to Leadership Maine Alum Laurie Lachance, Maine State Economist, to recite them:

"Maine has little more than a million people, who are supporting over 400 local governments, 16 county governments, 285 school districts, myriad sewer, water, solid waste, economic development, planning districts – plus a large state government infrastructure. Regionalization can help reduce the cost of government by restructuring the delivery of regional and local government services. This is an integral part of why Maine's tax burden is so high."

So, there it is. Too many governments. Or are there? And, if there are, which ones should we keep and which should we give up? These are the questions that Maine leaders are facing today.

This report will explore those questions by considering the historical context and then efforts at school consolidation, service sharing, and governmental regionalization issues. We will delve into the sense of community theme, and search outside Maine toward successful regionalism models. Finally, we will share the many conclusions of Maine leaders.

Historical context

Like a good rower, we cannot see where we are going without first looking backward. Only after we see where we have been, can we row forward and jump ashore.

Most Maine towns and cities were incorporated during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, long before the advent of so much that is integral to modern life. In those days, a typical Maine town included several small villages. People would walk or ride, often hours, from one part of town to another to do business in town or see a show. The sense of community was generally much smaller than the town as a whole. However, voters generally elected selectmen to manage their day-to-day local government and assembled at the annual town meeting to debate and decide town budget and other issues.

But Kenneth Palmer, retired professor of political science at the University of Maine, notes the past 50 years have brought dramatic change in all three branches of Maine government.

“In few American states over the past four decades have changes in government and politics been more significant – and more far-reaching – than the ones that have taken place in Maine.” Palmer added, “Maine’s political culture is deeply community-centered; it emphasizes the importance of on-going participation of citizens in the affairs of their government.” During this period all three branches of state government have “moved from the mostly citizen-run bodies – which they had been since 1820 – to governmental agencies staffed by persons specifically qualified by skills, education, and experience to perform their assigned functions.”

With this historical perspective, Palmer discussed the differences in recent regionalization between local units of government contrasted with schools and services:

“Measured purely by numbers of units, Maine’s local governments have seen relatively little change since 1960. . . . In contrast, we have fewer school districts, thanks in large part to the Sinclair Act of 1957, which consolidated very small districts – the little red schoolhouses -- from over 400 in the 1950s to the current total of 285. But we have seen an increase in other types of districts, such as water and sewer districts, and we have added regional planning districts to our

governmental mix. . . . Local government has increased by 30 percent in the last decade. We used to be below the national average in staffing per citizen; now we're above the national average.

While that would seem an indictment of local government, Palmer is quick to add: "(T)he Legislature has a hand in this. State mandates have required more technical expertise at the town level which requires positions like the code enforcement officer or a solid waste expert who is full time and well trained. It used to be that these were part time or even volunteer positions. . . . On the other hand, state government has been fairly flat despite an expansion in public services."

Maine, like the rest of New England but unlike the rest of the country, has recognized only the town as its general purpose unit of local government. During the new era of federalism, Maine (in 1969) and most New England states fortified towns with constitutional home rule powers. Now, home rule is limited ("one part law and two parts motto"). Home rule packs plenty of political power, but is illusory as to the tidal wave of regional forces washing over towns. Home rule has helped towns resist regionalism, despite calls for efficiency, protection of large environmental systems, and management of sprawl. But, according to Evan Richert of the Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine, towns do cooperate with each other, but on their own terms. For example, Richert says, in his report titled "Regionalism, New England Style" that almost half of Maine towns share code enforcement officers or plumbing inspectors. Virtually every municipality has a mutual aid agreement for fire protection, and most are bound by agreement to share regional waste handling.

Still another important piece of historical context comes from how Mainers view their state. Maine is viewed as a rural state, but this rural nature is generally been more legend than reality. Michael Gallis, a leading national expert on regional development, points out that, in 1800 Portland was the 7th largest city in the U.S.; in 1850 Portland, Bangor, Augusta, and Bath were among the nation's largest cities; in 1900 only Portland was among the largest cities; and since 1950 no Maine cities rank among the nation's largest.

The rural reality has been eclipsed as development along much of the state's I-95 corridor has now put most of the state's population within an urban area as defined the U.S. Census. Nevertheless, most of us cling to our rural myth. Charles Colgan of USM's Muskie School of Public Service explains in his paper "The Rise of Urban Maine":

"Since the arrival of the first 'rusticators' in the post Civil War era, Maine has seen itself as the quintessential anti-urban society. That view intensified as we defined ourselves as 'vacationland' in the 1930s. . . . Maine has become almost identical to the rest of the United States, and we must respond accordingly. . . . All or most of York, Cumberland, Kennebec, Sagadahoc, Penobscot, and Knox counties are defined as being part of an urban centered region today. . . . Urban areas around the world struggle with the same issues. . . . The point is that there is

not likely to be a single solution to the problem of regional governance in the urban region. Matching political boundaries with economic and natural boundaries is one possible approach, but it is not the only one. . . . Such a regional perspective (of knitting the urban region together) is widely supported by the public. . . . Maine’s rural regions will depend on the economic health of their urban centers as much as the state as a whole. . . . We are a state where the vast majority of us work in cities, live in cities or suburbs, but everyone thinks they’re in the middle of the country. . . . To stay rural, Maine will have to decide how best to become more urban.”

Evan Richert noted the overwhelming nature of sprawl in recent decades. He warned that Maine and New England towns may not be adaptive enough and, in fact, have lost much local control. Regionalized town joint purchasing and mutual aid agreements can’t match the forces of land use, technology, and regional economics that live by rules on a scale far larger than Maine. Unlike other areas of the U.S., New England town boundaries are fixed, mostly small, and have no powers of annexation. Sprawl and strip development have obliterated many town boundaries. Richert points out that the geography of typical residents – where they work, shop, socialize, and recreate – once matched town boundaries but now covers a few hundred square miles, not 40 or 50. Much of local revenue now comes from the state, and control over municipal budgets is split between the municipality and the state. Local control over land use, budgets, environmental, and educational policies, Richert says, are increasingly shaped by rules and expectations elsewhere. Artificial municipal boundaries, fortified by cultural and legal home rule, create a barrier against continued adaptation for responding to regional forces.

Municipal boundaries create issues of land utilization and can impede economic growth. As John Bubier, City Manager of Bath, says: “We have developed to the municipal boundaries and not naturally.”

Nevertheless, these powers beyond Maine offer benefit to the state in other ways. While Gallis points out that the major trade corridors to the south and to the west are not far away, Maine remains in “a giant bubble” which has not enjoyed new infrastructure in recent times. Still, Colgan points out that the global currents carry enormous opportunities to transport Maine ideas and exports far and wide. This “glocalization” as its coined holds promise for economic development in the state.

School Consolidation: What Comes Around, Goes Around

Maine’s school consolidation efforts are, perhaps, the most recent and most comprehensive models to consider when reviewing the issues around regionalization. Today, while the issue of cost remains at the forefront, there seems to be a consensus that this consolidation has ultimately produced a higher quality educational experience for Maine students. To wit, Maine’s high graduation rate is primary points of pride for the state.

The bulk of school consolidation occurred in the 1930s, slashing perhaps half the number of schools, mostly one-room schoolhouses and elementary schools, between 1931 and 1941. This was the result of the Depression and federal public works programs. The Community School District (CSD) Law of 1943 laid the conceptual framework, and the Sinclair Act of 1957 created the financial incentives, especially for high schools. (MMA Regionalization).

In the 1950s, remembers former Maine Congressman Stan Tupper of Boothbay Harbor, school consolidation was a necessity; people realized that the era of “the little red schoolhouse was over, and the quality of education required consolidation.” Nevertheless, the perceived success of these 20th century efforts are leading to 21st century calls for even more. In his 2004 State of the State Address, Governor Baldacci looked back to the school consolidations of 50 years ago as the prime example of regionalization generally and school consolidation particularly for the next generation:

“(W)hile enrollments decline, the cost of education doesn’t. We’ve had few changes in the structure of our schools since the Sinclair Act incentives ended. We must operate schools as efficiently to ensure quality education for every student. I’ll be submitting legislation based on the Task Force report. I’ll propose Regional Cooperatives and Regional School Districts, with state funding to encourage collaboration. We must provide essential programs and services to students all over Maine. And we must provide these services in a cost-effective way to relieve property taxes. We need a Sinclair Act for the 21st Century.”

There is some evidence to suggest that more consolidation among schools is warranted. As municipal budgets are strained, local schools which account for a significant portion of local spending, will come under scrutiny.

According to Richert, Maine’s 285 school districts each average just over 1,000 students, which is just one-third of the modeled optimal size of about 3,400. That, he says, imposes a cost penalty of as high as 13.5%.

Jim Rier of Maine’s Department of Education doesn’t disagree. Maine school districts, he said, are too small, superintendents and school staff too many, and school inefficiencies too great. Although no school district should have more than 5,000 students, Maine’s school districts could be slashed to just 26 using this parameter. Rier sees an added benefit. He said that regional economic boundaries could be reinforced by similar school districts to reflect the training and skills needed by that region, adding “We need to integrate education and economic development to meet a larger vision than merely cost savings.”

Lachance says that demographics suggest that Maine needs to consider schools when looking at ways to reduce cost pressures. “We have had a declining number of school-age children for 25 years, yet we are building more schools,” Lachance says, “The upkeep of this infrastructure is a strain on the whole state.”

While state officials talk about the need for more, ongoing efforts to collaborate are already saving money. Aroostook County, for instance, has formed a consortium of seven school systems. They work together on staff development, purchasing fuel and school supplies, and share transportation (giving formerly part-time drivers full-time jobs). By combining resources they have saved costs and enhanced services. People of “The County” work together fairly easily with a real sense of cooperation. ().

Still local schools are the center of community in many small towns. The connection to the institution is strong and not without merit. In state where the current system is believed to provide good quality – as evidenced by the state’s high ranking (top 5 in many rankings) – change will be difficult. Again, the question is asked: At what cost? The state may create incentives but the local decision-making process will be painstaking. It is likely that there will be various levels of consolidation and accommodation. Said Eastport City Manager George “Bud” Finch, only partly in jest: “To solve the problem of school consolidation, just “consolidate the high schools and keep your gymnasiums.”

May We Be of Service? Together?

It’s true that most municipal officials and Mainers generally limit regionalization to consolidation of services, not governments. That being the case, most municipal officials would rightly express that they have made great strides in regionalization. Whether it be schools or mutual aid agreements or sand/salt sheds, most cities and towns have in place working partnerships with neighboring communities. Gardiner City Manager Jeff Kobrock, a LM classmate, calls regionalization “ “a system of service that is approached from the market point of view rather than from the government point of view.” The main barrier to these agreements, said Kobrock are “turf, turf, turf.” He said that both rational and emotional discussions are needed to overcome these impediments of protection of turf and the status quo. Concrete proposals that have been carefully created are the most likely to succeed, he said.

Said Eastport’s Finch: “As long as leaders don’t have turf issues, it can be done.”

The Maine Municipal Association (MMA) which some leaders believe is an impediment toward greater regionalization, supports discussion of regionalization that includes fact-based analysis and service-delivery focus based on the following factors: (1) analysis should precede policy; (2) cost savings should be documented; (3) service quality should be maintained or improved; (4) citizen access to decision-making should be preserved; and (5) volunteerism should be continued and encouraged. Regionalization should also be a grass-roots approach with financial incentives and assistance.

Some municipal leaders believe that this kind of regionalization is not something that can be legislated by the state. “The best is when communities choose by themselves to work together” said Neil Allen of the Greater Portland Council of Governments.

Perhaps one of the best recent reports on the service sharing arrangements comes from the City of Portland Task Force which released its report in February of 2004. It provides a well-considered review of the best practices for in cooperation between municipalities. Here's an excerpt:

“Regional efforts should only be pursued if they either lower costs, and/or improve services, and successful regional initiatives must offer a mutual benefit to the participants. [Due to] the impact of escalating property taxes, in combination with tax burdens from all levels of government, . . . it is less important to residents what insignia is on the truck that plows their street or responds to an emergency service call as long as the streets are plowed and emergency medical services are dependable and professional. . . .

Important among the recommendations was the concept that there are no one-size-fits-all structure. For instance, Portland's group believed that on certain issues it made sense to cooperate with towns to the north, yet on others it might be better off to work with towns South or West. Finally, the report recommended “a series of short-term actions or ‘baby steps’ that hold the promise of yielding immediate cost-effective benefits. We should pursue shared training, expand joint purchasing, pursue agreements, consider consolidations, develop an asset inventory, and consider regional opportunities.”

What works and what doesn't is the subject of debate, of course, but another model that earns support around the state comes not from government but from business. Municipalities are increasingly looking to the business community for examples and even for leadership, especially in regionalization issues: Said Jack Cashman, Commissioner of the Department of Economic and Community Development: “Include business leaders to explain to local leaders the benefits of regionalization.” And Lachance: “We need business people to come to the table on this. They understand the problems with tax burden. They know how to make tough choices.” Yet the business sector seems strangely disengaged on the regionalization side of the tax equation.

Sharing and Modeling

Business models offer still other examples beyond the purely economic. Mark Doiron of the supermarket chain Hannaford's pointed out that his company succeeded amid consolidation and systemic collaboration in part because of its insistence on keeping decision-making decentralized.

Healthcare is another sector of the economy that has been rocked by the need to reduce costs while improving service structure. There are several good examples in Maine in healthcare. At MaineHealth, the southern and central Maine consortium of hospitals that include the giant Maine Medical Center, significant cost savings are achieved by reducing redundant administrative positions, keeping the workforce who do the work and by allowing local institutions to retain control over the day-to-day operations while

gaining a greater universe of savings for the customers. Said MaineHealth's Bill Caron: "Perhaps regionalized services or even regionalized local governments, like merged or expanding businesses, can retain local decision-making."

Mid Coast Hospital's recent effort to consolidate a pair of community hospitals has also earned praise. Keys to its consolidation included open debate, the considerable longevity of leaders, and other personal touches. Long-term relationships and planning were also an important part of the mix, according to CEO Herb Paris. The hospitals adopted an agenda of compatibility and recognized that each community hospital was an equal; the two existing administrators met privately and agreed to promote the merger and agreed as to which one would emerge as the administrator. They determined the points of existing compatibility, reviewed liabilities and assets, and exposed the hidden ghosts in the closets. They started with one small project and then built on that success. Efficiencies were sufficient to pay for a new hospital. Regional planning led to integration and improvement of services. (Herb Paris).

MaineHealth's Caron points out the value of a greater vision. The unassailable vision was to create better access to healthcare while improving quality. Said Caron: Better access and higher quality for all trumps local control.

Still critics say that some vision might not be so clear. "(P)olitical leaders, the media, and academics who support regionalization appear to have more of a vision than a concrete set of recommendations" Reports the MMA Municipal Perspectives magazine.

Fewer Governments?

With all of the conversation and consideration about Maine's governmental structure, the issue of consolidating of governments is 800-pound gorilla sitting quietly in the corner – at least for now. Advocates and scholars make a strong case in the aggregate, showing that Maine has higher than average number of governments with authority to raise money through taxes.

Said Ken Palmer: "Maine towns may be too numerous and local governments too inefficient. While Maine has one-half of 1% of the national population, Maine has 1% of the number of the nation's local units of government. While Maine's counties remain among the weakest in the nation, its municipal home rule powers are among the strongest.

Lachance is even more direct. "Units of government are killing us." She said. "Our system is expensive. We (govern) in the least efficient manner possible." She argues that the disconnect between Maine citizens and their governments may, in part, be driven by the number of them and by their ability to play off one another. "People talk about 'the state' like it's someone else! There's a disconnect about who is responsible."

Some advocates have called for county governments to take on more responsibility, as they do in many other parts of the country. They call Maine's counties "under-utilized" in their potential. The added benefit is that there is a basic structure already in place. "County government, although weak and much maligned, already exists," said Cashman. "(It) can possibly become the unit of government to be strengthened and used to replace town planning, land use, and other functions currently performed by towns and cities.

Bath's Bubier adds: "For county government to be effective it must be professionalized, more representative, and more accountable." One way to do this would be to increase the number of commissioners from 3 to 5-9 representing specific districts. Nevertheless, counties, at this point, are without any natural constituency and seem unlikely to earn the trust needed to change that paradigm.

Advocates of consolidating governmental entities also have the burden of proving that bigger really is better or cheaper. While there is no doubt that some municipalities have reduced costs through regionalized services, it is not a given. Tax reform advocates such as Bob Stone of Auburn believes that there is savings to be had. Counties may or may not be the answer. Stone said:

"2+2 should equal 3. If there isn't a commitment on the part of the voters to reduce governmental cost, then I'd recommend that we leave things alone and resolve to pay the piper. Our existing governmental spending load is requiring a taxation load that is literally forcing people from their homes and creating the worst business climate in the nation. The design and operation of our governmental infrastructure is almost totally within our control. . . .The strength is that smaller governmental units permit the average citizen to have a greater say in local matters. The weakness is that it is prohibitively expensive (and killing our economy). . . . So the reengineering might involve redrawing, or ignoring, county lines."

Still as many point out, municipalities might be in the best position to find efficiencies. And without expensive overhead. Peter Nielson, Town Manager of Wilton wrote in the MMA's Maine Townsman:

Towns are not isolationists but rather "intergovernmental coordinators," founding recycling associations, councils of government, public safety mutual aid agreements, business parks, purchasing of electricity and road culverts and salt. Towns share unfunded and state-mandated personnel such as assessors, code enforcers, and animal control officers. Volunteers, as well as poorly paid selectmen and employees, are a better deal than centralization and regionalization to increase efficiencies and decrease taxes. We generally spend our own money more wisely than we spend someone else's. Towns also have the local ability to customize service to the preferences of the community.

Cents or Sense of Community?

Many Mainers have a profound sense of community. It is integral to how we have defined ourselves. Nancy Raye of Eastport, owner of Raye's Mustard, defines it simply as compassion. Many of us fear a loss of this sense of community. Some of it comes from forces beyond Maine, such as technology and a changing economy. There seems a certain fear that regionalization will accelerate this perceived loss of community. For Raye, this is not something Maine can afford to lose. "The values of the 19th century keep Eastport alive," she said, "We cannot afford the new values."

But others argue the opposite – that regionalization can, in fact, enhance the sense of community. Said Michael Finnegan of the Maine State Housing Authority: Sharing of services will create higher community synergy and in the end a higher level of social capital.

Kevin Hancock agrees: "Sharing services can strengthen our sense of community. Consolidated school districts are an example. Lake Region is a consolidated school system comprised of four towns (Bridgton, Casco, Naples, and Sebago). The school district has brought the four towns together as a community."

Jon Ziegler, manager of the Boothbay Region Water District agrees. Ziegler helped oversee the regionalization of the two Boothbay area water districts produced modest cost savings, tremendously enhanced service quality, considerable economic development planning, and long-term cost savings. "Community does not match municipal borders; rather it must be geographical, not necessarily in proximity, but in familiarity," he said.

Richert, of USM's Muskie School, argues that our concept of community is very elastic and is based on the amount of social capital -- what we have in common, and the way people live their lives.

Many interviewed pointed out that Maine communities are already rapidly changing, with people living more regional lives. The Portland Regionalization Task Force reports this from the perspective of a service center community which is called upon to support many services that are used by the entire region. Their report said: "Residents of many different communities often work side-by-side in offices and other locations throughout a broad area. All area workers and residents rely on public infrastructure and common facilities such as highways; airports; seaports; refuse recycling and disposal, plowing and sanding; and interstate rail, bus, and freight systems"

Many, if not most, workers devote more time in the areas of their employment than their residence. We must now view regionalization through the multiple prisms of workers, seasonal residents, and tourists, as well as the voters of a particular town, county, or other geographical district.

Important measures of community involvement are included in the Maine Development Foundation's Measures of Growth. Maine has shown positive movements toward the benchmarks of voter turnout, citizen participation in community activities, and business

involvement in communities and schools. Maine has retreated from the benchmark of Maine people who reside in service center municipalities. However, the 2004 report did show Maine declining against the benchmark of citizen participation in community activities.

State Economist Lachance again offers a summary for every Maine to consider: “Our view of community is very quaint. Very nice. And very expensive.”

Answers from Away?

To consider solutions, Maine can look to other states and even countries. There is much to be learned. And, in fact, one of the state’s most important achievements of the last 25 years provides it own example for finding other models – workers’ compensation reform. “Copying other states worked for trimming costs of Maine’s workers’ compensation system,” said Cashman. Lachance also points to the comp reform model as a systemic one. This is a lesson that anyone considering large regional efforts ought to take into account, she said. “Workers comp reform didn’t work until we looked at the whole system,” Lachance said. “Now, in 10 years, we’ve had a 30 percent decline in rates. That happened because we looked at the whole thing and everybody gave something.”

Richert has, perhaps more than any other, looked beyond Maine to other states for lessons on regionalism. He sees that Maine has far more inefficiencies than its peer states in the delivery of local services. Maine requires 410, as to its peer states’ 350, full-time equivalent government workers per 10,000 people, to deliver local services. If Maine delivered local services as its closest peer state Idaho, the Richert believes that Maine would reduce its costs by \$141 million per year. The numbers of municipal governmental units, not geographical size and density, appear to be the driver behind the cost of local government. Where Maine has small town governments, its peer states have small county governments. A larger governmental unit is the answer, Richert declares. A large geography under a single political jurisdiction does not ensure a better outcome, but it is a prerequisite. The few U.S. places, such as Portland, Oregon and the Pinelands of New Jersey, which have meaningfully tackled sprawl are on a regional scale.

Peter Vigue, Chief Executive Officer of construction giant Cianbro cites the examples of Ireland and North Carolina as models of collaboration and focused plans between business and education for Maine to emulate in the areas of technology, banking, and pharmaceuticals. Jack Cashman draws a closer comparison with the Irish when it comes to regionalism: “We never would have designed the present system of local government. Cashman said Maine should study Ireland’s one-state police force, county planning, and volunteer community fire protection. Cashman expanded on the law enforcement example: “Ireland has 1 police force...while Maine has 16 county police forces, numerous local police with the lowest quality officers, state police with the best quality officers, marine patrol officers, and other forces.”

Speaking recently at Colby College in Waterville, U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand John Wood spoke about that country's model of highly successful regionalization. New Zealand, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, reduced the number of local governments from 700 to less than 100. Economic crises precipitated a political consensus and coalition. This regionalization resulted in a transformed and highly successful New Zealand economy. The country has moved from one of the world's most regulated (comparable to eastern bloc countries) to one of the world's most free (next to only Singapore and Hong Kong).

Conclusions

The wide spectrum of Maine leaders whom we interviewed, not surprisingly, show a wide spectrum of ideas about the questions surrounding the affordability and structure of local government in Maine. They vary in their view of the benefits or possibilities associated with moves to regionalize on any level. Regardless, the topic remains relevant. In fact, even in the course of our study, new information was appearing constantly in newspapers, speeches by public figures and in studies by scholars.

There is no consensus except that there is no consensus. Still, most interviewed seem to believe that while the topic has been explored before, the time is at least approaching the stage when action will occur. In fact, as this report shows, whether you are an advocate of the change or not, there are aspects of regionalization occurring already throughout Maine. Most of these arrangements take the form of service-sharing. As a result they do not ask the larger questions about local government. Still, these arrangements would seem to be acting as "pilot projects" (or even confidence-building measures) which could give birth to more wide-ranging efforts in the future.

Much has been written and spoken on this topic but perhaps the most practical report on the topic came from a recently released document from the City of Portland's Task Force on Regionalization.

"Regional efforts should only be pursued if they either lower costs, and/or improve services, and successful regional initiatives must offer a mutual benefit to the participants. . . . the Task Force recommends a series of short-term actions or 'baby steps' that hold the promise of yielding immediate cost-effective benefits. We should pursue shared training, expand joint purchasing, pursue agreements, consider consolidations, develop an asset inventory, and consider regional opportunities."

This advice is probably not a revelation to most town managers in Maine, who don't get the credit they deserve for working creatively to find partners. It will be important for those who feel that these efforts are worthwhile to cheer these baby steps, no matter how small. It's not the size of the step, but the direction.

Kevin Hancock, similarly, describes an evolutionary shift toward regionalization.

“Economics will drive collaboration. Communities will collaborate when the benefits of uniting outweigh the negatives,” he said.

However, without a well-known track record, the state may remain paralyzed by the inability to answer the quite reasonable questions about the value of any form of regionalization. Short of demonstrable savings, naysayers will own the day. We heard this when House Minority Leader Rep. Joe Bruno was asked about the value of regionalization. “Regionalization will save money, but not much,” he said. Jack Cashman and Evan Richert each use double digit percentages to describe savings they see but, in general, their versions of regionalization are broader than most citizens seem ready to consider. Specific savings are very difficult to identify. No matter your algebra, when one side of an equation is missing a key piece of information, it will not be solved. This remains a challenge for supporters of broad regionalization.

This report cannot conclude without important consideration of the powerful and resonant ideas that support our sense of community in Maine. Whereas some states might be reticent to be seen as outliers from the norm, Mainers traditionally embrace the idea that we are different (whether we are or not.). As part of the debate about broad regionalization (such as consolidation of towns), supporters of traditional community have not only the power of the status quo but also time-honored Maine skepticism. We have found these ideas are more than just meritorious; they must be part of any debate about how Mainers govern themselves. This clearly means that discussions of this sort must be seen as “bottom-up” movement and not as a mandate or even have the official guidance of the state. To their credit many seem to understand this yet putting it into practice will prove difficult.

There is an important opportunity for leadership in this area. The current economic climate coupled with Maine’s high tax burden guarantees that debate about the cost of government will not go away any time soon. It is rife with all of the challenges that good leaders must face. Says Ken Palmer: “The topic of state and local relations is fairly arcane, but it’s going to be *the* topic in Maine of the next decade.”

Finally, let us offer Palmer’s optimistic vision. We hope and believe, as he does, that as they have for nearly 400 years, Mainers will find a way to work together and live in this wonderful place:

“Looking to the year 2010, it seems that struggles over our governing arrangements – which I argue are really clashes over political values, namely, the value of citizen governance and citizen participation versus the equally relevant value of expertise, competence and coordination in the framing and administering of public policy – will be fought out at the local level. . . . They will concern decisions over local consolidation and cooperation, that is, how much direction should come from the state and how much the sharing of services should be instigated by individual communities.

“The other quality of Maine governance is our long-standing willingness to innovate, to look for methods and solutions that work and are special to this state. We see that throughout our state and local governments – from legislative elected executive officers in Augusta to the hybrid nature of local government management in many smaller communities, where a professional manager works with a town meeting. Those well-established habits of moderation, innovation and pragmatism should bode well for us as we look ahead to the end of this decade.”

Leaders and Leadership

Are there obvious leaders?

Throughout our research, we found leaders in many sectors, however, we did not find a lot of consensus on the right approach, nor did we find an emerging leader or champion with a vision that all parties would rally around. There is plenty of evidence that concepts around appropriate local government, including regionalism, will be prominent public policy issues for many years to come and will touch the lives of every Maine citizen. Our success or failure lies in our leaders' ability to move the general public toward a vision of a more efficient approach to governance that will meet the needs of Maine citizens' at the lowest cost while maintaining a satisfactory level of local control.

We discovered several important leadership characteristics threaded through many of the interviews and research. We analyzed all the data looking for trends and evidence for what was working and for where there may be a lack of leadership. Leaders must avoid disenfranchising any groups and lead with a delicate balance that engages ordinary people in areas that are specialized and understandable and leave the complex public policy development to professionals without the overall perception of the loss of local control.

Jeff Kobrock, Gardiner City Manager and a Lambda Class member, said it well, "The greatest impediments (to regionalism) are emotional protection of turf and status quo. The challenge is having rational and emotional discussions and, at the same time to get something done. [We will] need vision and leaders to carry it out and get beyond politics."

Our report would not be complete without mentioning two members of the Lambda class who are leaders in these efforts. Representative Janet McLaughlin chaired the Joint Special Committee on Regionalization and Community Cooperation for the 2nd session of the 121st legislature. With her leadership, the committee successfully passed legislation that creates the Intergovernmental Advisory Group to improve efficiencies and communication within all 3 branches of government and to provide state assistance to encourage regionalization and cost-effective service delivery. Another classmate, Norman Cyr is the Madawaska fire chief and he has been working collaboratively for many years with St. Agatha and Frenchville on shared services like regional waste collection, vehicle registration, and fire department services. Years ago Norm saw that volunteers were fewer than in the past and recognized that the towns could cut costs and provide better services if they combined resources.

The Vision Thing

Much is written and discussed about the ability of a leader to paint a picture of the future and to articulate it in such a way that others can see the way forward toward that

vision. There is no clear picture for regionalism right now and the murkiness is causing many to rebel against leaders who are trying to define what could be.

Neal Allen, Executive Director of the Greater Portland Council of Governments, shared that people fear change to the unknown. In the absence of a clear vision, there is a tendency to protect turf; people are afraid to lose what they have.

Bud Finch, Eastport City Manager, suggested that we rename regionalism to collaboration, which would be less inflammatory and more acceptable. He said the key is how to bring people together where local and community can coexist. He believes there is a lack of vision and leadership. Leaders need to stand up and do what's needed and they have to be tough. Sometimes you need to just do things and not worry about consensus; others will have to trust the leaders to make the hard decisions.

Jim Rier, Maine Board of Education, when talking on school consolidations, said: "By helping communities to see themselves in a larger context (outside of the town or SAD boundary), they can prepare their children to be successful in the future."

Charlie Colgan, Economist with the Edmond S. Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine, asked, "How do you lead people to where they don't know they want to go?"

The regionalism debate is currently mired in finger pointing and turf battles. Many municipalities view the state as trying to take away local control and the state sees municipalities as not facing the realities of the tax burdens that citizens are rebelling against. What is the common goal? This is an obstacle – there is no apparent common goal. Some want fewer units of government. Some want more shared services.

Laurie LaChance, Maine State Economist, put it well, "Our view of community is very quaint, very nice. And very expensive."

The Greater Portland Council of Governments has a mission that is representative of how most municipal officials view regionalism. The Council was designed to combine the purchasing power of nearby communities and to build relationships and confidence within communities that they can work together without infringing on local control and town and municipal identity. Shared services are certainly the right place to start to gain efficiencies and save money, but is it the true vision for regionalism? The powerful message we learned about leadership is it begins with a strong and positive vision of the future and then a plan to create opportunity for the benefit of the whole community.

The success of any vision is dependent on one's ability to articulate it in sufficient detail so that you can picture yourself in the middle of it. Leaders will need to show how the pieces of governance could fit together and through their magnetism and persuasive powers, enjoin others to see the future on the same canvass, picking the same colors and wanting the same details. Leaders will need to bring the vision to life and make it real for people. Most importantly, we need leaders who are consistent and repetitive, continually

explaining and reviewing the details; always pointing out how things will be better in the future. It will be important to use all mediums available, especially those most used by the younger generation and to understand how to best use technology so that citizens don't feel disconnected

Bill Caron, President of Maine Health, shared, "In the case of MaineHealth, the vision is to create a system whereby access and quality to an integrated health care system is equal regardless of where you live in the ten county region. The point here is to offer a positive benefit to join in a collaborative system. Better access and higher quality for all trumps local control. "

John Turner, Peru School Superintendent, said "Both systems have given up some things for the betterment of the whole,"

No leadership without followership

On our visit to Cianbro, Peter Vigue, President, told us "Maine's greatest strength and Maine's greatest weakness is our independence."

That independence often causes us to go our own way and not follow. At this juncture there are more people and groups trying to lead in the regionalism efforts than there are people or groups willing to follow. Followership is a voluntary process and citizens need to participate, study, discuss and move down a path together. Currently, municipalities are not responding positively to mandates from the state.

Only a small percentage of the population is involved. Leaders have not effectively been able to show how the current governance system hits their pocketbook. Ideally, regionalism would be reengineered by non-bureaucrats and remain apolitical. In the absence of strong leadership, ideas are pushing ideas and resistance is easily building.

Evan Richert, former Maine State Planning Office Director, noted that less than 10% of the voting public shows up at town meetings, except when school issues are at stake. The consequence of this over time has been a proliferation of redundant services in a population that is not growing.

From Certain Trumpets, Gary Wills: "Calls are always going down into the vast deep, but what spirits will respond. We do not lack leaders. Various trumpets are always being sounded. Take your pick. We lack sufficient followers. That is always the real problem with leadership. Calls are always going down into the vast deep, but what spirits will respond? The mystery of leadership and followership goes on all around us – and within us."

Leaders need to understand the timing of when Maine people will be ready. As with any change process, it takes vision, a certain amount of pain and clearly identified steps to move forward, before a group will progress down a path together. Regionalism is a

large-scale change process that will require delicate orchestration, precise selection of a broad based citizen representation, and lots of harmonizing.

Who do you know?

Probably the most common leadership thread among the successful efforts in this area was who knew who, who had worked with whom, who trusted whom. In other words, relationships are key to which municipalities worked with each other, what hospitals were willing to share equipment, which communities were willing to engage in discussions about joint services. It is readily evident that long-standing relationships provide the best basis for exploring areas to share services and maybe even regionalize on a larger scale.

Jeff Jordan, South Portland City Manager, recently announced a pilot project with Westbrook to share property tax assessors. The South Portland assessors will work two days a week for Westbrook. Westbrook was having difficulty finding a qualified assessor and South Portland is looking for ways to be more efficient. When asked why he chose Westbrook and not Cape Elizabeth or Scarborough, Jeff explained that he had worked with Jerre Bryant, Westbrook City Manager, for years and both men felt comfortable trying out this arrangement.

Herb Paris, Mid Coast Hospital Administrator, also brought this point home when he shared, “There are many benefits of building upon the personal touch through planned social events and I attribute much of the hospital’s success to the relationships formed through such contacts.”

Peter Crichton, Cumberland County Manager, believes that Mainers trust their local government more than state.

Peter Vigue, President of Cianbro, said, “It’s all about people values: dignity and respect, keeping your word as a bond”.

Regionalism will only move forward with leaders who have credibility, are accountable and well-respected, and encourage and support the efforts of those working on the local level.

John Wood, New Zealand’s Ambassador to the U.S, advised to look for non-traditional leadership from sectors outside of government. He explained that the leadership success in New Zealand was derived from accountability and professionalism of the local chief executives separated from but accountable to local politicians.

Bud Finch knows that further support from the community comes from trust of the leaders and doers. You need to communicate with people below the top and put in the time. Momentum comes from the hard driving force of a few leaders supported by local and state government and by leaders doing their jobs and being accountable. It is a process of communication and credibility. It takes 3-5 years for groups to work. You

continue to support the group until it is self-sustaining. When support exists, success happens.

Who's missing?

Regionalism is a classic Catch-22. State officials and legislators believe that municipalities are not responding to Maine citizens' cry for lower property taxes and the cities and towns point to the state for not paying its fair share of school funding.

Governor Baldacci, in his state of the state, made his feelings clear, "While K-12 enrolments decline, the cost of education does not".

Jack Cashman explained that 32 cents of every tax dollar are spent in Augusta; the remaining 68 cents are spent outside Augusta. There is much cost-cutting happening at the state level, and all agencies are being reviewed. The same must happen outside the state level of government where more money is spent. We must look at municipal government and education as well.

Municipal leaders are resentful that the state is making judgments about their spending and claims that they are unwilling to combine local resources. Municipal officials quickly point out that their budgets taken individually have not risen very much over the last decade. They quickly point out examples of shared services and collaboration with nearby cities and towns.

Gardiner's ambulance service serves 7 other communities, its wastewater 2 other communities, recreation 3 other communities, library 4 other communities.

Madawaska, Grand Isle, Frenchville, and St. Agatha have shared a regional waste facility that serves a population of 20,000 people for the last 20 years.

The towns of Mapleton, Chapman, and Castle Hill have shared administrative and public work services for many years.

Windham and Gorham share a fire truck

The Cumberland County Budget Advisory Committee is made up of 9 local elected officials in CC (John Arsenault, Freeport, chair). Their time together and common purpose have allowed them to develop some trust and a broader view of the regional issues.

Caribou provides ambulance services to outlying and unorganized towns.

Municipal leaders want credit for what their efforts. The perceived lack of appreciation is causing resistance and creating impenetrable walls. Municipalities have not accepted regionalism as a blue print for what Maine needs to reduce the overall tax burden. The Maine Municipal Association supports shared services, but has not endorsed the broader

concept of regionalism. The organization is influential with its members and will work hard to protect their interests.

Chris Lockwood, Executive Director of the Maine Municipal Association, explained that municipal government is important for New England. We shouldn't assume bigger is better. He suggested a grass roots approach from local government rather than from the top down.

Many town councilors and selectmen view regionalism as a means to reduce local control. These locally elected officials must be at the table because, in most cases, they have the trust of the local citizens. They need an important role in the process and must be brought into the discussion and policy making. The recent Portland Task force on Regionalism report cites examples of regional cooperation that is coming from within Cumberland County communities and they are finding different towns are grouping together depending on the issue and the need.

The Governor and Legislators could do more to communicate and promote the good things that are happening and publicly credit municipalities for the successes. Regionalism will need more leadership that inspires shared visions and encourages the heart, and less challenging the process at this time. It's too early to try to combine or eliminate units of local governments. Maine people are not ready. Leaders who can educate and engage the general public will make the most progress. Regionalism will take years, maybe even as many as 20 years, and requires patience, a lot of patience.

Evan Richert noted that the business community engagement is also critical to help push the process of regionalism along. So far, the business community seems to be so alienated from government that the trust needed to engage in the process is absent. We also heard similar comments from Peter Crichton. Our research confirms that the business community is not very engaged at this point. The recently passed LD 1930, An Act to Promote Intergovernmental cooperation, Cost savings and Efficiencies, establishes an Intergovernmental Advisory Group that does include "two members appointed by the Governor who represent nongovernmental entities". This may be a start to bring the business perspective and influence to the table.

Celebrate Good Times!

We learned that there are many successful shared services throughout the state. As noted, many municipalities feel alienated because they are not given credit for their work. Everyone needs their due and also the recognition for the efforts that may have not been successful but are full of learnings and rich discoveries. It's important to look for the regionalism champions and to support them well.

Bud Finch believes the models to use are the ones beyond the success stories. The ones struggling have tremendous examples of how they got there and what was done. They were able to break the barriers down. The Marion transfer station is a good example; they reduced operating costs by paying others to take away recycling and are making

money. It took a business plan, implementing it, and making the tough decisions along the way.

Laurie LaChance, Maine State Economist, “We need to be able to reward those who are doing good things. Maybe we need some kind of demonstration project.”

Chris Lockwood sees that there will be many upset people and that we need a system where cheerleaders and supporters are there.

Jack Cashman likes the idea of Start a “pilot project” and experiment with one county.

Herb Paris, advised to start with one small project and then build upon that success.

Kevin Hancock, President of Hancock Lumber, believes Maine is already doing a great deal of collaborating and regionalizing. And that Maine will continue to regionalize and collaborate wherever it makes sense to do so. He believes that the people of Maine are not getting enough credit for their efforts in this area.

In summary

Regionalism is very difficult to move forward and we did not find much momentum to re-engineer Maine’s governance structure. Success will more likely come from the bottoms up than the top down. There are many ideas about what regionalism could be, but not a compelling vision with sufficient detail for the general public to embrace. The timing just may not be right yet.

State and local officials need a common vision that can be rolled out to Maine citizens in such a way that there is an equal voice between state and local governments. The implementation of the vision will require a work process that is engaging and generative and leaders will need a lot of patience to give the process time to work. Recognition and reward will motivate the risk takers and early adopters and will build capacity for a leadership infrastructure that can motivate others to follow.

Lessons Learned

Based on over twenty interviews, plus our own individual perspectives and experiences, we find that **Turf, Trust, and Tenacity** are constants in the leadership and content lessons learned from our pursuit of investigating the best form of governance for Maine.

These three traits represent 1) a barrier, 2) a necessary part of the process, and 3) a leadership characteristic for those wanting to make changes - in this case, in how we choose to govern ourselves. “Turf” and our natural, sometimes emotional, tendency to protect what we consider to be “our turf” often present a barrier to making changes in how things are done. Trust and the building of trusting, respectful relationships are vital components of how people work together for sustainable results. Tenacity and perseverance reflect the often long-term nature of achieving a change and the absolute necessity to keep one’s eye on the final goal and the vision.

Characteristics of a desirable outcome

Generic characteristics include:

- Respect for all the players involved.
- The outcome will be a good value and have a positive benefit.
- Able to demonstrate that it meets and fulfills the original objectives.
- Understanding that the process is evolutionary - that you are never there because you must keep adjusting to change outside your control.

Outcome characteristics specific to the form of governance for Maine include:

- Acknowledgement of a broader, more elastic, definition for “community”.
- More innovative and responsive to citizens’ needs.
- Optimized service delivery and efficiency.
- Creation of a bond within the community. This can result in people seeing that a new situation is starting to work and can be the foundation for future endeavors.
- Result in cost benefits (18%-20% cost savings overall) and/or improved access to and quality of service.
- Result in the overall state tax burden being at or below the national average.
- Has to be system-wide.
- Fewer governmental entities with larger geographical and population service areas.

What works to produce the desirable outcome

Universal steps to produce a desirable outcome include:

- Beginning with a powerful and positive vision of the future.
- Taking the time needed.
- Develop the capacity for leadership.
- Proceed with honesty, integrity, respect, and sensitivity.

- Have a planned, non-turf agreement where all have a voice.
- Making public the successes - and celebrating them.
- Identifying and supporting champions of the cause.
- Identifying and finding ways to capitalize on new trends, i.e., using technology.
- Careful and thorough long-term planning.
- Use 3rd party facilitator if necessary.
- Determine the points of existing compatibility; review liabilities and assets; expose the hidden ghosts.
- Start with one small project and then build upon that success.
- Need to deal with fears and emotional responses, i.e., emotional resistance to factual data, fear of increased costs for a non-player, different goals and missions for participating entities.
- Lead by example.
- People must be encouraged to participate at all levels, be given opportunities to participate and be genuinely heard.
- Have tasks for everyone, including some that don't require a meeting time. There need to be other ways to contribute.
- Fails when there is a barrier that needs to be broken down and isn't.
- Have regularly planned meetings.
- Having a knowledgeable Board that also has some courage.
- Real factual numbers and logic must be used.
- Communicate, communicate, communicate - within and between all levels of participants.
- Momentum comes from the hard driving force of a few leaders. These leaders must do their jobs and be accountable.
- Imagine other solutions.
- Get diversity for lots of ideas.
- Establish benchmarks representing tangible achievements.
- Having skilled public speakers.

Specific steps for our outcome include:

- Leadership of appointed and elected officials.
- Commitment on the part of voters.
- May need to be precipitated by an economic crisis.
- Institute a pilot project and experiment with one county.
- Don't reinvent the wheel - look at other states and countries for examples.
- Need a good business model.
- Develop a plan to create opportunity for the benefit of the whole community.
- Set goals at the state level.
- Preserve local operational control within a larger, regional master plan framework.
- Have clear benefits for each member of the collaboration.
- Needs to be a grass roots process with the support from the top.
- Educate people about the consequences of their choices.

- Demonstrating savings and showing the long-range plans which benefit the entire community.
- Have financial incentives or upfront costs to encourage new systems.

What attributes, skills, characteristics of leaders make them effective or ineffective

We find that effective leaders:

- Can sort through details.
- Can propose specific policy changes.
- Can have both rational and emotional discussions at same time.
- Build upon long-term relationships.
- Recognize each other as equals.
- Understand the need to take necessary time for good process.
- Have unflappable and unwavering patience.
- Have an optimistic outlook.
- Have well developed ideas.
- Are consistent and dependable.
- Take a long-range view.
- Can take the heat.
- Are persistence personified.
- Embrace change and its challenges.
- Put all the cards on the table and let the people see them.
- Articulate a common purpose, a vision.
- Want to make a difference.
- Can deal with complex issues.
- Welcome cheerleaders and supporters.
- Build constituencies.
- Retain good staff.
- Have strong mission statements with a sense of purpose - that are short in length and annually reviewed.
- Hold frequent meetings with community groups.
- Are visionary.
- Are charismatic and risk-takers.
- Have guts, do not back down.
- Answer questions before they are asked.

Ineffective leaders are more inclined to:

- Protect their turf and the status quo.
- Posture.
- Lack vision.
- Rely on control, rather than leadership.
- Lack competence.

- Resist change.

How do formal leadership structures influence the issue

These structures negatively influence the issue when:

- Turf issues cannot be resolved.
- There is shrinking Federal financial assistance.
- There are duplications and inefficiencies in the delivery of services.
- There is overwhelming resistance to change.
- Process runs amok or leads to paralysis by analysis.
- There is an over reliance on property taxes to fund services.
- Political, geographic, and economic barriers are not challenged or explained.

These structures have a positive influence on the issue when:

- Citizens have access to key policy makers.
- Professional management exists and can deal with complex issues.
- There is strategic and focused state funding, reflective of supportive policies.
- There is positive public information through the media.
- Funding incentives support change.
- Technical assistance is provided.

How could these structures be more effective

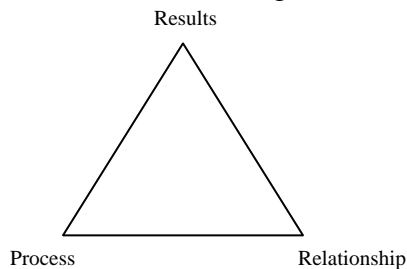
These structures could be more supportive by:

- Getting people in office that understand the relationship of government spending to a lower standard of living.
- Having more involvement of non-bureaucrats and nonpolitical citizens.
- Engaging the business community.
- Promoting more involvement of the community.
- Overcoming the existing lack of regional leadership.
- Exploring ways for using technology to make people feel connected, rather than disconnected, from the community.
- Lowering citizens' expectations of government.
- Delegating more regionally.
- Sharing services.
- Encouraging a stronger focus in school to understand the function of the government.
- Promoting the role of citizenship.
- Being transparent, open, and honest.
- Preparing concrete data and presenting it with unbiased conclusions.

Group Process

Goals, Roles, Procedures, Interactions (GRPI Model)

Goals: We established a Team Charter at the opening retreat.



Team Charter

“Have fun and aim high!” Triangle of results, process, relationship.

1. Show up! Make time, keep commitments, help each other, and always check in.
2. Be present! Have fun, listen, laugh, planning/evaluating/deadlines, be supportive.
3. Tell the truth! Respect each other’s truths, plus/delta reviews, clear communication.
4. Let go of the outcome! Be flexible, rotate roles, learn, celebrate.

We agreed that the purpose was “to experience the process of working with a diverse group of leaders from different sectors and regions of the state and to examine the leadership associated with a critical issue facing Maine’s economy.” We discussed the end result was “not to solve the problems identified but to learn more about the issue and the role that leadership plays in addressing it.” The end result would be a compilation of what we learned presented in a written format and oral presentation.

Roles: All members were charged with participating and contributing to the process. We acknowledged that all of us had personal and business commitments and that there would be occasions where some of us couldn’t participate. We were supportive of each other and took time to call to fill each other in on what happened or just to check in. We all had assignments throughout the process and everyone tried to responsibly complete them within the given time frame.

Procedures: We established regular monthly meetings outside of the opportunities provided to us during the Leadership Program. We alternated the meeting location between three sites. Each meeting was scheduled for two hours with an agreed upon agenda of items we wanted to accomplish.

At the start of each meeting we established a moderator and a recorder for meeting minutes. Everyone participated in each of these roles at least once. It was the role of the moderator to keep us on the meeting agenda within the established time assigned to each item. The recorder of meeting minutes captured the salient points and distributed them via e-mail. Most all of our communication was done via e-mail.

After we decided how to coordinate the process through established meetings and e-mail we continued to proceed.

First we provided each other with our personal bios with our strengths and our personal agenda on the topic. Then we began educating ourselves by gathering articles on the subject and best practices. Some members attended outside leadership events.

As we educated ourselves we expanded the contact list. We started drafting questions to ask in an interview process. We decided the interview should be no longer than an hour. We refined our questions and categorized them into governance structure, sharing services and leadership. From the long list of potential interviewees we identified whom we wanted to interview and tried to get a cross section of people representing state and municipal government, service sectors, business, and schools. Then we each chose 3 to 4 people to interview. We agreed to summarize the interview in written format of question and answer to more easily process the data. Each member sent summaries to each other. We discussed the written report and some members offered to write portions it. The other members were charged with providing feedback.

Midway through the process we began discussing the oral presentation. The idea of a play or a few vignettes was discussed. We continue to discuss the oral presentation and develop the final presentation.

Interactions: All team members contributed to the project in various roles. Some members were able to take on more responsibility than others. Our personalities and leadership styles did not hinder the process. Members were respectful and supportive of each other. We were committed to our charter.

Plus/Deltas

We used the plus /delta process at the end of each meeting. It allowed us to provide positive and negative feedback in a way that was non-threatening. A way in which we as a team could improve our process and working relationship.

Meeting Dates

October 15, 2003

+	Δ
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Enjoy the group.+ Space, food and location worked well+ We did get a lot done. Stayed focused and on task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Nothing mentioned.- Everyone needs to complete assignments by deadlines.- Facilitator role needs to get everyone's opinions and ideas out.

October 23, 2003

+	Δ
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Leadership question is the key.+ We're educated on local governments.+ We held our meeting even though we were tired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We need to keep each other on track and focused.- Need to keep time frames for discussion.

November 5, 2003

+	Δ
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Being heard as the process was challenged.+ Team decision-making.+ Individuals feeling more secure in speaking up.+ Quiet voices being heard+ Reflection (three cups of coffee!) is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Never enough time.- Missing Chip's voice and ideas.- Anxiety from the task-oriented among us.

January 6, 2004

+	Δ
<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Good to be back together.+ Appreciate what's been accomplished.+ Equal contributions from all.+ Fewer interruptions - we were on-task!+ Working better as a group.+ Divided tasks into smaller, manageable pieces.+ More clarity at this point in time.+ Michael's good attention to time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We missed Jim!- We need more social time together (hence, see plans for 1/16).

January 27, 2004

+	Δ
+ Positive interaction. + Good work by team members. + Positive energy. + Good attendance. + Process well conceived.	- Hard to attend other team member's interviews. - More people (that we want) to interview than time permits.

February 24, 2004

No plus/deltas recorded.

March 23, 2004

No plus/deltas recorded.

April 12, 2004

+	Δ
+ We got to see nearly everyone! + Great individual efforts by Chip and Anne to keep us moving toward our goal. + Presentation got a little more concrete. + Coming together is always good.	- Yikes! Not much time left. - All will need to focus on their part to get us lined up for the Migis presentation. - We need the group to provide each other with prompt feedback April 28.

In summary, our team worked particularly well because we had goals, a vision, and a process. We had leaders and followers. We checked in along the way to provide support to each other and decide to change process if needed. We were flexible. We celebrated success as time allowed but more through positive communication. We stayed committed to the goals, the process and each other.

If we could change anything in the process it would be to have more time for meeting when we were at our leadership events to discuss our conclusions about regionalization and what Maine's future governance structure might look like and to celebrate success more by interacting on a social basis outside of the leadership program and our monthly meetings.

REGIONALIZATION RESOURCES

INTERVIEWS

- a. Allen, Neal W., Greater Portland Council of Government Executive Director (By Shalom Odokara; summary attached or available).
- b. Bubier, John, Bath City Manager (2/11/04 by Jim Pierce and Chip Griffin; summary attached or available).
- c. Caron, Bill, President of MaineHealth (By Patrick Costin, summary attached or available).
- d. Cashman, Jack, Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner (1/21/04, by Chip Griffin and Anne Gauthier; summary attached or available).
- e. Colgan, Charles, Leadership Maine Mentor (2003-2004).
- f. Crichton, Peter, Cumberland County Manager (2/5/04, by Anne Gauthier; summary attached or available).
- g. Cyr, Norm, Fire Chief, town of Madawaska and Lambda Class member (2/9/04 by Anne Gauthier; summary attached or available).
- h. Finch, Bud, Eastport City Manager, (By Stacey Morrison; summary attached or available).
- i. Finnegan, Michael, Maine State Housing Authority Director (3/ /04, by Shalom Odokara; summary attached or available).
- j. Freeman, Martha, Maine State Planning Office Director (1/30/04, by Chip Griffin; summary attached or available).
- k. Hancock, Kevin, President of Hancock Lumber and Lambda Class member (3/14/04, by Shalom Odokara; summary attached or available).
- l. Kobrock, Jeffrey, Gardiner Town Manager (3/4/04, by Stacey Morrison, summary attached or available).
- m. Lachance, Laurie, Maine State Planning Office State Economist (1/26/04, by Mike Bourque and Chip Griffin; summary attached or available).
- n. Lockwood, Chris, Maine Municipal Association (By Stacey Morrison; summary attached or available).
- o. Palmer, Kenneth, University of Maine Retired Professor of Political Science (2/13/04, by Mike Bourque; summary attached or available).
- p. Martin, Dorothy "Dottie", Maine School of Mathematics and Science Executive Director and Lamda Class member (2/9/04, by Anne Gauthier; summary attached or available).
- q. Paris, Herb, Midcoast Hospital Administrator (2/12/04, by Janet McLaughlin, Jim Pierce, and Chip Griffin; summary attached or available).
- r. Peters, John, Downeast Energy President (2/19/04, by Jim Pierce; summary attached or available).
- s. Richert, Evan, Associate Research Professor for the Muskie School of Public Service and former Maine State Planning Office Director (By Patrick Costin; summary attached or available).

- t. Rier, James, Management Information Systems Team Leader, Maine Department of Education (By Patrick Costin; summary attached or available).
- u. Stone, Robert, Mainers for Common Sense founder (2/4/04, by Anne Gauthier; summary attached or available).
- v. Tupper, Stanley R., Boothbay Harbor lawyer and former Congressman, Ambassador to Canada, Maine Sea and Fisheries Commissioner, selectman (1/19/04, by Chip Griffin and Janet McLaughlin; summary attached or available).
- w. Ziegler, Jonathan E., Boothbay Region Water District Manager (2/4/04, by Chip Griffin; summary attached or available).

OTHER RESOURCES

- x. Baldacci, John, Maine Governor, State of the State Address (1/20/04; attached or available).
- y. Baldacci, John, Maine Governor, Presentation to Lambda Class (2/3/2004).
- z. Colby Leadership Institute (March 24, 2004, attended by Chip Griffin and Stacey Morrison – as well as Linda Butler and Cheryl Miller; summary attached or available):
 - i. William Adams, Colby College President, introduction and concluding remarks;
 - ii. Michael Gallis, leading expert on large-scale metropolitan and regional development strategies; John Wood, New Zealand Ambassador to the U.S.
 - iii. www.colby.edu/spec.prog/other/leadership/bios.html
- aa. Colgan, Charles, The Rise of the Urban Maine (11/25/03; attached or available).
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Leadership Maine Lambda Lions Interview Contacts

Neal W. Allen
Executive Director
68 Marginal Way
Portland, Maine 04101
nallen@gpog.org
774-9891 ext 214

Mr. John Bubier, City Manager
City of Bath
55 Front St.
Bath, Me. 04530
phone # 443-8330
email jbubier@cityofbath.com

Bill Caron
President
MaineHealth
465 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101
Tel. 207-775-7001, Fax 207-775-7029
caronw@mmc.org

Commissioner Jack Cashman:
jack.cashman@maine.gov;
624-9800;
Department of Economic and Community Development,
Burton M. Cross
Building, 11
Sewall Street, 3rd Floor,
Augusta, ME 04333-0059.

Peter Crichton,
Cumberland County Manager,
crichton@cumberlandcounty.org,
871-8380

Norman Cyr,
Madawaska Fire Chief,
428 Main Street
Madawaska, ME 04756
madfire@nci1.net,
207-728-7716

George "Bud" Finch
City Manager
City of Eastport
78 High Street
Eastport, ME 04631
Tel: (207) 853-2300
Fax: (207) 853-4712
eastport_mgr@ptc-me.net
www.eastport-me.gov

Michael L. Finnegan
Director
Maine Housing Authority
353 Water Street
Augusta Maine 04330
mfinnegan@mainehousing.org
626-4611

Martha Freeman:
State Planning Office,
187 State Street, Augusta, ME 04333
lisa.leahy@state.me.us;
287-1588

Kevin Hancock
Chairman, President and CEO
Hancock Lumber
PO Box 299
Casco, ME 04015
khancock@hancocklumber.com
627-4201

Jeff Kobrock
City Manager
Gardiner City Hall
6 Church Street
Gardiner, ME 04345
Tel: (207) 582-4200
Fax: (207)582-6895
citymanager@gardinermaine.com
www.gardinermaine.com

Laurie Lachance,
Maine State Planning Office
38 State House Station, 184 State St.
Augusta, ME 04333

Laurie.Lachance@state.me.us
Telephone: 287-3261

Chris Lockwood
Executive Director
Maine Municipal Association
60 Community Drive
Augusta, ME 04330
Tel: (207) 623-8428
Fax: (207) 626-5947
clockwood@memun.org
www.memun.org

Ken Palmer
Professor, Political Science, Retired
University of Maine
Kenneth_Palmer@umit.maine.edu
Home Telephone: 439-5747

Herb Paris, CEO
Mid-Coast Hospital
123 Medical Center Drive
Brunswick, Maine 04011
Tel: 729-0181
Email: unpublished/call Cheryl Rooney if needed.

Mr. John Peters, President
Downeast Energy
18 Spring St.
Brunswick, Me 04011
phone # 729-9921
email john@downeastenergy.com

Evan Richert
Associate Research Professor
Muskie School of Public Service
University of Southern Maine
Program Director
Gulf of Maine Census of Life
P.O. Box 9300 - Law 608
Portland, ME 04104-9300
Tel. 207-780-4824
erichert@usm.maine.edu

Jim Rier

Maine Dept. of Education
Management Information Systems Team Leader
Tel. 207-624-6794
Boothbay, ME 04537
jim.rier@maine.gov

Bob Stone,
Mainers for Common Sense,
bstone@adelphia.net

Stanley R. Tupper:
jktup@zwi.net;
633-3945h; 633-4000w;
102 Townsend Ave.,
P.O. Box 430,
Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538.

Jonathan E. Ziegra:
jziegra@bbrwd.org;
633-4723w; 633-6634h
184 Adams Pond Rd.,
P.O. Box 520,