

Bucksport Planning Board
6:30 P.M., Wednesday January 11, 2012
Bucksport Town Office
50 Main Street

SPECIAL MEETING
AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

John Daniels

Marc Curtis

George Hanson

Gail Hallowell

Rosemary Bamford

Edward Belcher

David Grant

3. Review and Acceptance of Minutes: Minutes from the January 3, 2012 meeting.

4. Workshop Session

A. Title 1 (the "Right to Know Law"): Attorney Diane O'Connell will be present to explain the law and answer questions.

B. Application review procedures

5. Adjournment

Bucksport Planning Board
6:30 P.M., Wednesday January 11, 2012
Bucksport Town Office
50 Main Street

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** 6:30 P.M. by George Hanson, Chair

2. **Roll Call**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Daniels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Marc Curtis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> George Hanson
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gail Hallowell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosemary Bamford	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Edward Belcher
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Grant		

Staff present : Jeffrey Hammond, CEO
 Also present : Town Councilor Belle Ryder

3. **Review and Acceptance of Minutes:** The draft minutes from the January 3, 2012 meeting were reviewed.

MOTION(Grant): To approve the January 3, 2012 meeting minutes.

SECOND(Belcher)

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: 7-0 Motion adopted

4. **Workshop Session**

- A. **Title 1 (the “Right to Know Law”): Attorney Diane O’Connell will be present to explain the law and answer questions.**

Diane O’Connell introduced herself and provided the board with a brief background description. She provided the board with handouts including information on the Right to Know Law, officially known as the Freedom of Access Act. She then proceeded to describe the main parts of the law:

Public Proceedings (including the public’s right to participate)

Public Notice

Public Records

Executive Sessions

The board asked numerous questions during Ms O’Connell’s presentation. One memorable point made dealt with communication among board members outside a scheduled meeting. As few as two board members meeting intentionally or unintentionally, and discussing board business, constitutes a public proceeding. Ms O’Connell also advised the board that any member meeting with the CEO or other town official to discuss board business should be discouraged.

Details about how to properly conduct a site visit with full public participation were discussed. Ms O’Connell noted that to be judged a violation of the law, the act must be found to be willful.

The board was advised that notes they may make during a meeting are public records. As a practical matter, preserving handwritten notes is usually not done, though the law would otherwise apply. Notes could be scanned to be preserved electronically.

The board was advised that discussing application reviews without the applicant present should not be done. A recap at the end of a meeting noting what had been done on an application is ok, provided that further review is not part of the discussion.

Ms O'Connell concluded her presentation by noting that Right to Know Law training is required for elected officials, and the training is available online. Her presentation also would constitute adequate training, and newly-appointed town councilor Belle Ryder was present to benefit from the presentation.

B. Application review procedures

The CEO provided the board with some ideas about how to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of application reviews.

Conducting a thorough study of the application prior to a meeting, and being prepared to discuss any identified concerns at the appropriate point during an application review might result in expediting the review process.

Reviewing each standard thoroughly at the time it is found to be applicable is important. That is the time when the board should raise any concerns about the sufficiency of documentation to prove a standard has been met.

The CEO noted that important information being presented during an application review may not be heard by all parties when two or more members are having a sidebar conversation. It also makes it difficult to clearly hear all comments on the audio record of the meeting.

5. Adjournment: 9:25PM

Minutes prepared by
Jeffrey Hammond
Recording Secretary