

Working with communities along the Kennebec River since 1967. Serving Kennebec, Somerset, and western Waldo counties.

# Member Communities Make it Happen!

Member municipalities, like yours, are the backbone of KVCOG. Membership dues provide matching funds for over \$200,000 in government grants; make our vital services, such as data collection, analysis, and communication, possible; and allow us the flexibility to create new programs in response to our regions needs. Thank you!

## Our Members:

Albion | Anson | Athens | Belgrade | Benton | Bingham  
Brighton Plt. | Burnham | Cambridge | Canaan | Caratunk  
Chelsea | China | Clinton | Cornville | Embden | Fairfield  
Fayette | Freedom | Gardiner | Hartland | Highland Plt.  
Jackman | Litchfield | Madison | Monmouth | Moose River  
Moscow | New Portland | Norridgewock | Oakland  
Palermo (new) | Palmyra | Pittsfield | Pleasant Ridge Plt.  
Randolph | Readfield | Ripley | Rome | Skowhegan  
Smithfield | Solon | Starks | The Forks | Troy | Unity  
Wayne | West Forks | Windsor | Winslow | Winthrop

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## From the Executive Director

We'd like to thank you all. The spring has been a time of uncertainty for all of

us. We've changed our working environment to keep our staff and your families safe, we've created new programs and expanded existing ones in the hope that we can better serve our communities, and we have sought out funding that will allow us to remain attentive to the changing needs of our towns, small businesses, and partner organizations. Through all of this, you've been there cheering us on. As a member organization, we are focused on operations that benefit our municipalities. But ultimately, we do this service work because we care about each and every resident. We're learning everyday what that looks like and your outreach and support has helped show us the way.

Our amazing staff have been working remotely since March. In addition to navigating this abrupt change, they have been able to prioritize projects that have helped our towns and residents conduct the routine businesses that we all depend on. The health crisis has forced KVCOG to rethink how we provide services to our communities as priorities shift and social distancing has complicated our traditional approach. KVCOG rapidly deployed technologies to help towns manage their select board meeting, engage in town planning services, facilitate joint purchase programs, procure reusable protective face coverings, and schedule annual household hazardous waste pick-up days. We have educated ourselves on the evolving legal and social issues affecting our communities, made countless calls to program participants, and met each challenge with creative solutions.

In our 53 year history, we have met every challenge with a combination of creativity and determination. Although these events are unprecedented on many levels, KVCOG will deliver the ideas and efforts of our talented staff to ensure that every community is supported. ⚙️

*Laura*  
Laura Cyr, Ph. D.  
Executive Director

# Gearing Up!

The KVCOG Newsletter

August 2020



## A Community on the Rise

Interview with Earla Haggerty, Clinton Town Manager  
By Kate Raymond, Membership Coordinator

Clinton, Maine. To some, it's a place more populated by cows than people. To others, it's the way life should be. To Clinton's Town Manager, Earla Haggerty, Clinton is a community on the rise!

I sat down with Earla on a bright and sunny Thursday afternoon recently to discuss Clinton's vision for the future. Now in her third year as Town Manager, it is clear Earla has a passion for the community she both serves and calls home. "Over the past few years our residents have chosen to make important investments in the future of their town," said Earla. "They are choosing to support what they own and protect the investment of the past for their future."

Recently, Clinton's residents have made many improvements to the infrastructure of their town. As I sat in Earla's newly renovated office we broached the topic of renovations and revitalization. While some renovations at the Municipal building, including that of Earla's own office, have been spurred on by social distancing measures surrounding COVID-19, many other efforts were well underway before the pandemic.

After many years without one person holding the responsibility for the care and maintenance of town owned buildings and lands, Clinton has appointed their Code Enforcement Officer to have oversight over these facilities; assessing each one and bringing important projects to light. This new decision by the people of Clinton showed immediate results. "One of the first projects to be assessed and addressed after this change was that of a leak in the library attic, which was jeopardizing the libraries collections," explained Earla. "With one person in charge of assessing the needs of our town facilities, it was much easier to evaluate the problem, understand it's urgency, and ultimately fix the leak."

"I believe accurate and timely information is key to any successful town," continued Earla. "To that end, the town has undergone a technology overhaul bringing us firmly into the 21st century." Both the computer system and website have been brought up to date and now allow the town to give accurate and timely information to its residents.

Clinton's Transfer Station has also seen revitalization during Earla's tenure. "It's not just the town dump," said Earla. "Now, many opportunities for reuse and recycling are available at our Transfer Station." Successful recycling programs such as Apparel Impact's textile recycling program, Paint Care Inc.'s paint recycling program, a bottle redemption program benefiting community projects, and a successful community recycling initiative the *Recycling Exchange Shop* (responsible for taking hundreds of pounds of household goods from the waste stream and into the hands of those who can reuse them at area shelters, the humane society, and local schools) have all been introduced in the past two years.

On the horizon, Clinton hopes to revisit its Charter, which was written in 2000. "After 20 years, it is time to ensure Clinton's living documents reflect the values of its community members now," said Earla.

(continued inside)

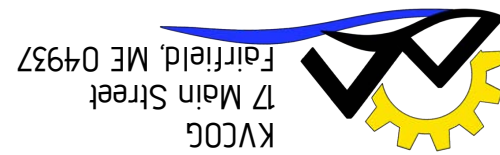
AN UPDATE ON POLICY, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

# SOLAR ENERGY

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2020  
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM  
VIRTUAL MEETING  
OPEN TO ALL  
SPACE IS LIMITED  
REGISTER BY SEPT 14 HERE: [BIT.LY/2Q7BQE4](https://bit.ly/2Q7BQE4)

Following up on our Solar Session last January, join KVCOG and our expert partners for this interactive virtual session updating us on the status of municipal & residential Solar Power in Maine. Learn more about the August 31, 2020 MPC Notice and have an opportunity to ask the experts!

Logos: BOYLE ASSOCIATES, nexamp, MAINE Audubon, Natural Resources Council of Maine, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments





# Protecting Togus Stream

By Nick Aschauer, Community Planner

KVCOG is excited to begin work on a new project in the capitol region!

Earlier this year the town of Chelsea approached KVCOG asking for assistance in the preparation of a Resource Inventory and Protection planning document for Togus Stream. The document will aid in the conservation of streamside properties in the short term and allow the stream to secure Section 319 grant funding, for greater resource protection in the long term. The project will be completed in two stages, beginning with the Togus Stream Resource Inventory Project in 2020, and followed by a Watershed Management Plan in 2021/22.

Togus Stream is an important tributary of the Kennebec River and drains a 44 square mile watershed that contains Augusta, Chelsea, Randolph, and Pittston – all coastal communities in KVCOG's geographic footprint. As such, much of the cost of this project is eligible for funding through the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry's Municipal Planning Assistance Program.

The stream has historically been home to Atlantic salmon and will see stockings in the next few years as part of a restoration effort spurred by the construction of a new fish way at the Lower Togus Pond Dam.

Working with local stakeholders, KVCOG will produce a resource inventory document this year that details and maps various layers of information, including, but not limited to, geological formation, soil type, water quality and hydrologic function, fish habitat, wildlife habitat, and local land use and policy.

KVCOG believes strongly in conservation and resilience efforts and is thrilled to be a part of this important project. ⚙️



Togus Stream Fish Ladder  
Photo by Nick Aschauer

## KVCOG Staff:

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Apparel Impact Bins, Skowhegan  
Photo by Gabe Gauvin

## Textile Recycling with Apparel Impact

Interview with Gabe Gauvin, Environmental Planner; by Kate Raymond, Membership Coordinator

This month KVCOG has introduced a new addition to our lineup of Environmental Management programs! Through a new partnership with Apparel Impact, a textile recovery and recycling company based in Portsmouth, NH, KVCOG placed twelve new textile collection points in nine communities throughout Kennebec and Somerset Counties on August 10th. These collection points are free to KVCOG's communities and are maintained, at no cost, by Apparel Impact.

At these collection points, members of local communities drop off unwanted textile items for free. Clothing, bedding, towels, bags, purses, shoes, hats and much more can all be placed in the collection bins and be kept out of the local landfill. The new partnership has added collection points in Athens, Chelsea, Fayette, Hartland, Madison, Pittsfield, Skowhegan, Wayne, and Winslow.\*

"Working with Apparel Impact on our new Textile Recovery program has been one of the most seamless professional experiences I have had," said Gabe. "Knowing they already had a presence in Maine, I reached out to Apparel Impact and explained my reasoning and vision for textile recovery in the Kennebec Valley. Joe Whitten, the founder of Apparel Impact, was extremely receptive and excited by KVCOG's proposal. He has been a driving force to get this program up and running in the KVCOG region."

Textiles make up close to 6% of the average municipal waste stream and translate to tens of millions of tons in the waste stream every year in the United States alone. Even the most rural communities add hundreds of tons of textiles into their waste stream yearly. By removing these items from our everyday trash, we save space in landfills, reduce risks, and save taxpayer dollars.

Also, partnering with Apparel Impact ensures these items will benefit those in need or be recycled.

"Though we experienced some logistical setbacks due to COVID-19, neither Joe, nor I, doubted our ability to get these collection points into KVCOG's communities," Gabe concluded. "With the program now implemented, we are pleased to be receiving interest from other organizations, private businesses, the media, and community residents looking for ways to get involved and expand on what we have started. With continued community support, there is no doubt KVCOG and Apparel Impact will continue to grow the amount of Textile Waste being diverted from the landfill and put into the hands of those in need!" ⚙️

A full article on the program can be found on the Central Maine News website here: [www.centralmaine.com/2020/08/12/kvcoq-launches-new-textile-recycling-program-with-new-hampshire-based-company](http://www.centralmaine.com/2020/08/12/kvcoq-launches-new-textile-recycling-program-with-new-hampshire-based-company)

\*An interactive map showing all twenty+ collection points in the KVCOG's region is available on the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments website here: [www.kvcoq.org/collection-points](http://www.kvcoq.org/collection-points)



Kennebec River, Fairfield  
Photo by Kate Raymond



Brown Memorial Library, Clinton  
Photo by Kate Raymond

## Clinton Continued

Within the next five years Earla also hopes to see an investment by the town in a dedicated Public Safety Building so that the town's Public Safety Department can both better serve their community and continue to be a contributing member in their collaboration with the towns of Winslow and Fairfield; something they now do with the contribution of their K-9 unit *Wrex*, a picture of whom is proudly displayed on the wall of Earla's newly decorated office.

While the timeline of these planned improvements may well be affected by the current pandemic, Earla sees past the current uncertainty. "I want people to understand that Clinton is a progressive and modern town with citizens who participate in the future of their community," said Earla. After having slated her retirement for this past July, Earla recently agreed to stay on as Town Manager for another year. "With the pandemic on our doorstep, now wasn't the time for me to retire," she explained. "The future of Clinton is bright. We will weather this storm together and come out on the other side as a strong and vibrant community." ⚙️

## Save the Date!

### 53RD ANNUAL MEETING OF THE KVCOG GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Thursday, September 24  
11:00 AM  
Fairfield Community Center

Invitations to Follow | Lunch Provided

The program will include Guest Speaker Peggy Schaefer, Executive Director of ConnectMaine, a review of our work over the past year by KVCOG Executive Director Laura Cyr, Ph. D., and our Annual Business Meeting.

Strict social distancing measures will be in place.  
Face Coverings and RSVP'S are required.