

# MAIN Update

*In Solidarity for Peace, Bread & Justice!*

A Joint Project of Maine Equal Justice & the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods.

## DON'T GET TRICKED BY TABOR VOTE NO ON QUESTION 1

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, Maine People will vote on the so-called Taxpayer's Bill of Rights or TABOR. TABOR makes a lot of promises, but it didn't work in Colorado and the version in Maine is worse! TABOR is a one-size-fits all formula that will hurt Maine's schools, seniors, and families.

### What is TABOR?

TABOR is a dangerous idea. It threatens the future of many government-funded programs that help low-income individuals and families in Maine. TABOR puts harsh limits on how much state and local budgets can grow each year. Any spending increases are tied to changes in population and inflation.

There is a big problem with TABOR. Costs for programs like health care and education grow each year. These costs grow faster than TABOR allows. If TABOR were put in place, spending limits would be set too low. Services, especially education and health care, would face more and more cuts.

*Continued on page 10 . . . .*

### Maine Equal Justice Welcomes New Executive Director!



Maine Equal Justice is delighted to welcome Sara Gagné Holmes as its new executive director. Sara comes to MEJP with superb policy and legal experience and a passion for justice. Most recently, she was the Senior Policy and Legal Advisor with the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance. Prior to that, she was Deputy Legal Counsel for the Governor and his staff. Sara graduated from the University of Maine School of Law in 2001. After law school she clerked for a year with the Maine Supreme Judicial Court. She then spent two years at the law firm of Preti Flaherty Beliveau Pachios & Haley focusing on health care law. Some of you may also know Sara from her culinary talents and business expertise. She and her husband started the Vickery Café in Augusta in 1995.

MEJP's Board of Directors and staff are confident that Sara will be an excellent leader for Maine Equal Justice. We are so happy to have her join us!

Sara can be reached at 626-7058, or [sgh@mejp.org](mailto:sgh@mejp.org).

**Want to be on our mailing list or e-mail network? Call or e-mail us, or see page 11**

Maine Equal Justice Partners  
126 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME 04330  
(207) 626-7058 1-866-626-7059  
[www.mejp.org](http://www.mejp.org) [info@mejp.org](mailto:info@mejp.org)



Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods  
P.O. Box 69  
Hallowell, ME 04347  
Russell Anderson 832-4754 [info@midcoastmaine.org](mailto:info@midcoastmaine.org)

**Please feel free to copy and share this newsletter. Also on [www.mejp.org](http://www.mejp.org)**

# MAIN 2006 Conference—October 14th

*Help Choose MAIN Legislative Goals & Leaders!*

**Mark your calendar! Plan to attend!**

**Saturday, October 14, 2006**

10:00 am – 4:00 pm.

Kennebec Valley Community College, Fairfield

- \* No conference fee
- \* Lunch provided
- \* On-site child care
- \* Travel & child care reimbursement

## Choose MAIN's Legislative Goals!

- Learn about legislation that we know we will have to work on in 2007 and 2008.
- Hear about other possible opportunities.
- Tell us about problem areas in social service programs we might be able improve through legislation.
- Tell us how programs and legislation affect your lives. For example: "I'm having trouble getting my medicines because the "prior approval" process is too complicated." OR "I need more help with keeping my car on the road in order to do ASPIRE." OR "I can't find affordable housing."
- Vote on what you think MAIN's legislative priorities should be:

Participants will break up into small groups. Each group will discuss one of the following issues:

- TANF/Aspire/PaS
- Healthcare
- Low-wage work issues
- Housing/General Assistance/Heating assistance

Small groups will make a list of suggestions that they will present to the whole conference. Each conference participant will then vote on priorities using "dot-mocracy."

At the November 9<sup>th</sup> MAIN meeting, we will then look at the results of "dot-mocracy" and decide what we can realistically work on considering MAIN and Maine Equal Justice's resources. We invite all of you to attend this meeting and take part in this discussion.

## Choose MAIN Leaders.

**At the Conference, we will be doing something new for MAIN— voting for officers.** Active MAIN members should consider filling a leadership position. If you choose to accept leadership responsibilities, you will be expected to do your best but as always in MAIN, we all work together and learn as we lead.

At the Conference, we will take nominations and vote by show of hands. Those nominated must:

1. Be an active in MAIN for at least 1 year.
2. Give permission to be nominated.
3. Be willing to serve for two years.

If you'd like to talk about taking on a leadership role in MAIN contact Russell Anderson 832-4754 info@midcoastmain.org or Steve Hoad 445-2141. For a description of leadership positions, see the June 2006 *MAIN Update* (www.mejp.org) or talk with Russ or Steve.

# Conference Schedule

- 8:30 Set-up (If you can help out, please let us know!)
- 9:30 Registration. Beverages & Bagels! Connect with friends! Gather and distribute information, including voter registration information!\*\*\*
- 10:15 Welcome by Russell Anderson & low-income MAIN activist (TBA)
- 11:00 MAIN & Maine Equal Justice legislative presentation.  
Question & Answer time.
- 11:45 Lunch break
- 12:45 Approval of new MAIN By-laws & Election of MAIN leaders.
- 1:10 Small discussion groups: What should our priorities be in:
- + **Health care**
  - + **Low-wage work issues** (wages, training, education, unemployment insurance, child care, transportation)
  - + **TANF/ASPIRE/PaS**; (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families—cash benefit for low-income families) (Parents as Scholars—supports TANF participants attending college)
  - + **Housing/General Assistance/Heating assistance.**
- 2:45 Small groups report to conference.
- 3:30 “Dot-mocracy”  
Vote on your top priorities and help set MAIN’s legislative agenda for the next two years!
- 4:00 Clean-up (Please stay and help, if you can!)



\*\* Voter registration and information on TABOR will be available during this time. Information on health care, public benefit programs and MAIN regional groups will also be available. Collect information to take back to your communities and bring things to share from your groups or communities.

## If you have questions about the MAIN Conference, please contact

Russell Anderson 832-4754; [info@midcoastmain.org](mailto:info@midcoastmain.org)  
Steve Hoad 445-2141; [mainefun40@hotmail.com](mailto:mainefun40@hotmail.com) OR  
Chris Rusnov at Maine Equal Justice  
1-866-626-7059 ext 204; [crusnov@mejp.org](mailto:crusnov@mejp.org)

## *We can help with...child care, transportation and housing.*

**Child Care:** On-site child care will be available at no cost. Reimbursement for child care and transportation will be available for those who need it.

**Transportation:** Car pooling is encouraged. If you can give a ride or need a ride, please let us know and we will do what we can to connect people. If you are taking a bus, let us know and we will pick you up at the Waterville bus depot and reimburse the cost of the bus ticket.

**Housing:** Do you have a spare bed in case someone needs a place to sleep on Friday evening? Please let us know. (MAIN does not have funds to reimburse for motel accommodations.) If you want info on local motels, contact Chris Rusnov toll-free at 1-866-626-7059 ext 204.

## Directions to the October 14, 2006 MAIN Conference at Kennebec Valley Community College

**From South (Portland):** Take I-95 North to Exit 132. Turn right, KVCC entrance is the second left.

**From North (Bangor):** Take I-95 South to Exit 132. Turn left, KVCC entrance is the second left after the overpass.

**From North (Skowhegan):** Take Route 201 South until it meets Route 139. Turn right on Route 139 (Western Avenue). KVCC is approximately one mile on the right.

**From East (Belfast):** Take Route 139 west until it meets Route 201. Turn right on 201. Turn left onto Route 139 (Western Avenue). KVCC is approximately one mile on the right.

**NOTE:** Western Ave. in Fairfield is Route 139



Look forward to seeing you at the Conference!  
Ask a friend to come along too!

**October 14, 2006**  
**MAIN Conference Registration Form**

Please mail in this registration to help us plan better.  
If you can't pre-register, we will be happy to register you at the door on Oct. 14th.

**Please PRINT clearly.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town/city \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

The **Conference is FREE** but donations (to cover food and reimbursements for travel and child-care) are welcome. Enclosed is a donation. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN provides travel and childcare reimbursement for those who need it.** We will have on-site child care but if you need to arrange your own and need help paying for it, we can help. Travel reimbursement will be available at the conference. You will need to tell us how many miles you traveled by car or give us a bus ticket receipt.

**Request for Reimbursement.**

(You can request reimbursement on the day of the conference even if you can't fill out this section now.)

I will need travel reimbursement. Miles round trip \_\_\_\_\_ Amount requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
MAIN encourages car pooling whenever possible.  
It's fun, saves on gas and creates less pollution.

I can give a ride to \_\_\_\_\_ many people. I need a ride \_\_\_\_\_

I will use the on-site Child Care. Number of children \_\_\_\_\_ Age(s) of children \_\_\_\_\_

I will arrange my own child care and will need reimbursement. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please let us know if you have any **special needs** and we will do our best to accommodate you.

**Send Registration Form to:**

M.A.I.N., P.O. Box 69, Hallowell, ME 04347

# Important Food Stamp Information

Be sure to read this if you are *receiving food stamps and*:

- You are between the ages of 18 and 50; and
- Have no children under the age of 18 living with you.

Federal law limits Food Stamp benefits to people between the ages of 18 and 50 with no minor children at home to 3-months in a 36-month period. For the last three years, no one in Maine has been affected by this time limit. This is because federal law allows us to “exempt” a certain number of people and we had enough exemptions to cover everyone who would have been affected by the time limit.

Unfortunately, we have now run out of exemptions. As of July 1, 2006, the 3-month time limit started to run in Maine. This means that some people will begin to lose food stamps on October 1<sup>st</sup>. *But, it does not mean that everyone in this group will lose their food stamps.* There are still some very important exceptions to the 3-month time limit on food stamp benefits.

**If you are between the ages of 18 and 50 without dependents, you can receive food stamps for *more* than 3-months in a 36-month period if:**

- \* You are working at a job at least an average of 20 hours a *week*;
- \* You are earning at least 30 times the *federal minimum wage* (\$154.50 a week);
- \* You are a migrant or seasonal farm worker with a contract to begin work in the next 30 days;
- \* You are, or will be, in a training program an average of at least 20 hours a *week*;
- \* You are doing volunteer community service for at least 24 hours a *month*;
- \* You must take care of a child *under 18 even if you are not the parent or step-parent of the child and even if that child is not on food stamps*;

- \* You must take care of an adult who needs help taking care of his or herself;
- \* You are not able to work 30-hours a week because of a physical or mental health problem (even if you have not been found officially “disabled”);
- \* You are pregnant;
- \* You are getting unemployment benefits;
- \* You are going to school at least half-time and otherwise qualify for food stamps; OR
- \* You are in a drug or alcohol treatment program.

**If you meet any one of the requirements listed above, your food stamps will *not* be limited to 3-months in a 36-month period.**

**In addition, the 3-month time limit does not apply in certain geographic areas of the State with high unemployment.**

**Right now those areas include all of Franklin, Oxford, Piscataquis, Somerset and Washington Counties.** Certain towns in other counties are also exempt. A complete list of these geographic areas can be found on the maine.gov website.

<http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/10/ch301.htm>  
(Go to 100’s GENERAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS/NONFINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY FACTORS: Then go to section 111-7 page 1a. This page is also page 43 if you’re scrolling down.).

*This list will change over the next few month.* You can ask your food stamp worker if your town is exempt just to be sure.

*continued on Page 7*

(FOOD STAMPS—Continued from page 6)

If you are cut off from food stamps because of the 3-month time limit, you can re-qualify for 3 more months of benefits by:

- \* Working for 80 hours in a 30-day period;
- \* If *self-employed* earning at least the federal minimum wage for 80 hours of work (\$412);
- \* Participating in an employment or training program for at least 80 hours (job search programs do *not* count); OR
- \* Participating in a volunteer community service program for at least 24 hours.

There is no limit to the number of times a person can re-qualify for these extra benefits.

### Respond to DHHS notice—Don't delay!

If you are receiving food stamps and *may* be affected by the 3-month time limit, you will get a notice from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) soon. This notice will tell you that your food stamps may end on September 30<sup>th</sup>. It will list the groups of people who can get food stamps for more than three months and ask you if you are in one of those groups. **If you are in one of those groups, send the form back in or call your food stamp worker right away.**

**For more information  
call your DHHS food stamp worker.**

You can also call Maine Equal Justice toll-free at:  
1-866-626-7059.

## **NEW** Proof of Citizenship Requirement for MaineCare

As reported in the last MAIN Update, Congress passed a new law that affects MaineCare applicants and current members. The law requires that people getting MaineCare prove that they are U.S. citizens. Before the new law, when you applied for MaineCare, you could simply state on the application that you were a citizen.

**Now most MaineCare applicants must show papers to prove both their citizenship and their identity. Most current members also have to show these records when they reapply.** People will be given some time to collect their papers. No one should be denied MaineCare or lose MaineCare because they don't have the necessary papers.

The new law does not affect Medicare and SSI recipients. These recipients are exempt from the new requirement.

It also does not affect legal immigrants. Legal immigrants have already had to show papers that prove their citizenship or legal status.

If you have one of these records, it will count for both citizenship and identity:

- A U.S. Passport
- A Certificate of Naturalization
- A Certificate of U.S. Citizenship

If you don't have one of these three, you will need two different records:

One of these:

- A birth certificate
- A Report or Certification of Birth Abroad
- U.S. Citizen I.D. card
- Adoption Papers
- Military Records, if it shows place of birth.

AND one of these that proves your identity:

- a current state driver's license or state ID card
- School identification (ID) card
- A federal, state or local government ID card
- A U.S. Military identification (ID) card.

If you were born in Maine, you should not need a copy of your birth certificate. The Department of Health and Human Services will collect birth certificates from the Maine Division of Vital Records for people born in Maine. However, there are some people born in Maine who will not be in the state's vital records. If the Department tells you that you are not in the state's records, you will need to show a copy of your birth certificate. You can get a copy from the town where you were born.

Many groups are working with the Department to help make this new rule as simple as possible. We are trying to set up a system so that people can get help to get the documents they need.

## Update on the Non-categorical (“Non-Cat”) MaineCare Program



The “non-categorical” MaineCare program serves non-disabled childless adults between the ages of 21 and 64 who are living below the poverty level. The federal government put a limit (“cap”) on the amount of money that can be spent to provide services to this group. Because of the cap, no new people were put on the program after March 2005. A waiting list was started. To further cut costs, some services were cut back in December 2005.

We have some good news to report:

**Some of the people who were on the program’s waiting list have been enrolled into the program.** In August more than 5,000 people from the waiting list were enrolled in the Non-Cat MaineCare program.

**On September 1<sup>st</sup> enrollment for the program was opened to new applicants. People who think they might be eligible should apply.**

There is still a cap on the number of people that can be enrolled in the program. That means that enrollment may not be open for long. However, the state will keep a waiting list of everyone who applies. New slots will open every month as enrollees drop off the program. People at the top of the waiting list will be put on the program first. For that reason, it is important to apply so that you can get on the waiting list.

**To apply for MaineCare, call the local DHHS office. You can apply over the phone or ask for a paper application. You can also visit your local DHHS office to apply.**



## MaineShare’s 15th Annual Hike and Bike Fundraiser

Sunday, September 17, 2006

Bradbury Mountain State Park, Pownal, Maine

Fundraiser to support 35 nonprofits working to prevent and solve human and environmental challenges in Maine.

**For More Information, Please Contact:**

**MaineShare**

**207 622-0105**

**Email: [giving@maineshare.org](mailto:giving@maineshare.org)**

**Or visit their website: [www.maineshare.org](http://www.maineshare.org)**

**Maine Equal Justice is a proud member of MaineShare**

# Get Educated! Get Involved!

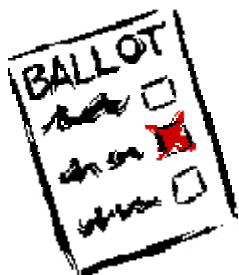
## Get to the Polls & *VOTE!*

*A message from M.A.I.N. President, Russell Anderson*



Elected officials make decisions about things that are important to you – your wages, your health care, your education, your housing and your security. Too often, low-income people don't feel that their vote can make a difference. We need to realize that political decisions affect our daily lives, from the price of milk, bread and gasoline to the quality of "safety-net" programs available if our families should need them. I believe that each one of us must be responsible for who gets in office if we want to make government work for what is best for us all.

Making an informed decision means learning what candidates' value and how they intend to represent us on the issues we value.



- ✓ Get educated. Don't just depend on the 30-second TV ads.
- ✓ Read about the candidates and ballot measures.
- ✓ Attend, listen to, or watch any debates.
- ✓ Go to candidates' web sites.

**Go to forums and ask candidates, if elected, what they will do...**

- To help low-income people go to college or get more training?
- To raise wages for low-wage workers?
- To make sure MaineCare is available to all who need it?
- To protect the Dirigo Health program that insures more than 10,000 individual, the self-employed, and small businesses?

- To reduce the cost of prescription drugs?
- To create more affordable housing? Child care? Transportation?

If you find a candidate you like, then work on their campaign and continue to teach them about issues that affect people with low incomes.

**Don't let others decide. *Vote!***  
**Your life depends on it.**

**58% of eligible adults with income under \$35,000 registered to vote.**

Of those, only 45% voted.

**77% of eligible adults with income \$35,000 and higher registered to vote.**

68.5% of them voted.

*Based on the 2000 US Census.*

In the year 2000, of the 15 million young women (18 – 35 years old) eligible to vote, 11 million were not registered.



**Make sure your voice is heard.**

***VOTE!***

**Election Day is November 7<sup>th</sup>.**

**Want to Register to Vote...**

Contact your town office or city hall if you want to register to vote. Contact Chris Rusnov at MEJP 1-866-626-7059 ext 204 if you have questions.

*Continued from page 1*

## **Can The Limits in TABOR be changed?**

TABOR makes it hard to change spending limits when hard times hit. First, it requires a two-thirds vote of the 'legislative body' (which in many communities is a town meeting) to raise fees or taxes, or change the spending limits. Then, the proposed change has to be approved by a majority vote of the people in a referendum. The requirement for both legislative and voter approval makes it difficult to respond to budget problems when they occur.

## **Will TABOR Harm Low-Income Seniors and Families?**

Yes. The state of Maine has a good history of supporting programs for the state's most vulnerable people. Maine steps in when the federal government or others fail to help. TABOR makes it almost impossible for local governments and the legislature to do their most important job -- to respond to the needs of Maine's people.

The following two examples show how TABOR could hurt low-income families and seniors, if it had been in place in 2006:

### **Low-Income Energy and Heating Assistance Program**

The cost of heating oil skyrocketed this past winter. Even though oil costs went up, federal funding for the Low-income Heating and Energy Assistance Program (LiHEAP) did not go up. In January, the Governor and the legislature put \$5 million in state funding for the LiHEAP program. This was the first time that state funds went to the LiHEAP program. They knew that having enough fuel to stay warm was an issue of life or death for some families.

If TABOR had been in place, the legislature would not have had the flexibility to deal with this immediate need. The health and safety of thousands of low-income seniors and families would have been in danger.

## **Medicare Part D**

The new Medicare prescription drug plan (Part D) began on January 1, 2006. There were problems with the new program for low-income people. Part D meant higher co-payments for prescription drugs. Also, the Medicare Part D drug plans didn't have to cover the same prescription drugs as Medicaid or Maine's Drugs for the Elderly (DEL) program. This meant that thousands of low-income seniors and people with disabilities faced losing access to drugs.

Thankfully, the state made sure that people had access to their prescription drugs as they went into the Medicare Part D program. The state would **not** have been able to step in with this safety net if TABOR had been in place.

State governments need to be able to respond to meet emergency needs of its citizens, in order to protect its most vulnerable residents from harm.

**We need to stop TABOR so that it doesn't hurt Maine families.**

**What you can do!**

**Vote 'NO' on Question 1 on Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Help get out the vote**

**Help MAIN with:**

Mailings

Phone calls

Letters to the editor, and

Going door-to-door to tell people about TABOR, and registering them to vote.

If you can help, please contact Ana Hicks at 626-7058 ext 210 or ahicks@mejp.org.

**For more information on TABOR, visit [www.notabor.org](http://www.notabor.org).**

## Regional MAIN Contacts

### Northern Regional MAIN

Meets in Orono

Contact for meetings:

Laura 827-2176 Teddsred@aol.com

### Midcoast MAIN

Meets in Waldoboro

Contact for meetings:

Russell Anderson 832-4754

info@midcoastmain.com

## Got E-MAIL?

Want to be on MAIN's  
e-mail **Action** network?

Find out about meetings, events,  
legislative action alerts,  
informational updates,  
public hearings.

To protect your privacy,  
we hide e-mail addresses &  
don't share our list.

To get on the email network,  
contact: [crusnov@mej.org](mailto:crusnov@mej.org)

On the  
MEJP and MAIN  
web sites you'll find...

Our newsletters, meeting notices,  
action alerts, events, comments on  
state rules and regulations,  
MaineCare workshops, litigation, and  
links to related sites.

[www.mejp.org](http://www.mejp.org)

MAIN's website is easily reached  
from the MEJP home page.

**NEW**

MAIN statewide  
meeting minutes will  
now be posted  
on the website.

# MAIN *needs* YOU!

*You have the power to make change!*

## MAIN Membership Form

- I would like to come to a MAIN meeting. **Please send me a meeting notice.**
- I am *already* a MAIN member. Here is \$1.00 for membership dues. (Extra donation \$\_\_\_\_)
- Here is \$1.00 for individual membership dues. I'd like to make an extra donation of \$\_\_\_\_
- I can't make a donation at this time, but would like to be a member and receive the newsletter, *MAIN Update*.
- Here is \$50 for our **organizational membership**. Here's an extra donation of \$\_\_\_\_. List our group on the MAIN brochure: YES NO (circle one)
- I am interested in a regional group.  
Northern/Orono\_\_\_\_ Midcoast/Waldoboro\_\_\_\_

*Please PRINT!*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION (if organizational membership) \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN/ITY \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Town in which you live \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks out to:**

MAIN

**For tax-deductible donations, make checks out to:**

Maine Equal Justice/MAIN Expenses

**Mail form to:** MAIN, P.O. Box 69, Hallowell, ME 04347

When you return this form—with or without a donation—you will become a MAIN member, and will receive MAIN's newsletter and other informative mailings. **If you want to get meeting notices, be sure to check "meeting notice" above.** Those with e-mail will get meeting notices, action alerts, etc. by e-mail only unless you also ask for them by regular mail.

## INSIDE

TABOR	Page 1
MEJP's New Executive Director	Page 1
MAIN Conference	Page 2
Conference Schedule	Page 3
Directions to Conference	Page 4
Conference Registration	Page 5
Important Food Stamp Information	Page 6—7
NEW Proof of Citizenship for MaineCare	Page 7
Update on MaineCare Non-Categoricals	Page 8
V O T E !!!	Page 9
MAIN Membership Form	Page 11

### !!!GOOD NEWS!!!

*Thanks to Governor Baldacci and the 122nd Legislature, Maine's minimum wage increases to \$6.75 per hour on October 1st, 2006!*

## Statewide MAIN Meetings

Get updates on issues and actions.  
Help us make decisions.

### *MAIN—On The Road In September & December*

September 14th—Orono

October 14th—MAIN  
Conference—Fairfield

November 9th—Augusta

December 14th—Portland

*Need more info?*

*Want a meeting notice?*

Russell Anderson 832-4754

info@midcoastmaine.org

or

Chris Rusnov

1-866-626-7059 ext 204

crusnov@mejp.org

## MAIN Annual Conference

### Saturday, October 14, 2006

Kennebec Valley Community College—Fairfield

**Conference Goals:** *Choose the issues MAIN will work on in 2007-08 & elect officers!*

Conference Agenda—page 3

Registration Form—page 5



MAIN

P.O. Box 69

Hallowell, Maine 04347

MAIN members decided in the spring of this year to update the organization's by-laws that were written in 1980. A committee was formed to bring the by-laws more in line with how MAIN has actually been working. The really new change is in leadership. More positions were created in order to get more people involved — a good thing we think!. In general, MAIN makes decisions by consensus with all members present at meetings.

**These proposed by-laws will be voted on at the MAIN Conference on Saturday, October 14, 2006.**

## **Proposed By-Laws**

### **Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods (M.A.I.N.)**

#### **Article I. Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods.

#### **Article II. Purpose**

Section A. The Purpose of MAIN is:

1. To improve the quality of life for Maine's low to moderate-income residents;
2. To develop leadership in Maine's low to moderate-income communities;
3. To develop local, state and national resources to bring to bear on state and local issues that affect low to moderate-income people;
4. To develop an atmosphere of sharing and cooperation among Maine's low to moderate-income neighborhoods;
5. To involve through direct participation Maine's low to moderate-income residents in self-help solutions to their problems;
6. To strengthen local indigenous organizations through community organizing;
7. To encourage and help low to moderate-income neighborhoods not yet organized to develop viable democratic organizations either as regional MAIN groups or as separate entities;
8. To encourage the interchange of ideas and replication of programs;
9. To further the development of local control, ownership and empowerment; and
10. To build a coalition of low to moderate income community based organizations who will work together to effect major public policy issues and programs that affect the lives of Maine's entire low to moderate income population.

Section B. MAIN has the right to enter into agreements with other groups to further its purpose.

Section C. MAIN has the power and authority:

1. To receive, administer and expend funds and contributions for the purposes outlined above; and
2. To have all powers that may be conferred upon a charitable institution formed under the laws of the State of Maine governing corporations without capitol stock (Maine Nonprofit Corporation Act).

#### **Article III. Area to be served.**

The area to be served will be the State of Maine.

#### **Article IV. Meetings**

MAIN will hold at least eight statewide membership meetings each year at which decisions are made based on the consensus process. If consensus cannot be reached, a vote by 2/3rds of members present will carry the decision. Members, who request it, will be given notice at least seven (7) days notice in advance of all meetings. Every other year, a conference will be held to prioritize which issues will be worked on over the next two years. Election of officers will also be held at this conference. Members will be given at least twenty (20) days notice of the biennial conference.

*Continued on BACK*

## **Article V. Membership**

*(2006 Proposed By-Laws Continued)*

There shall be three classes of membership.

Section A. Community organizations in Maine that have a majority of members that are low-income as defined by MAIN's Board of Directors/membership.

Section B. Community organizations in Maine that have low-income constituencies/clients shall be eligible to be associate members of MAIN.

Section C. Any individual is eligible to be a member of MAIN.

## **Article VI. Dues**

Section A. Community organizations shall pay annual dues of \$100, or whatever the group can afford. Individual members shall pay annual dues of \$5.00, or whatever the member can afford. No organization or individual will be denied membership if unable to pay annual dues.

Section B. The fiscal year shall be January 1 to December 31.

## **Article VII. Officers**

Section A. Leadership in MAIN consists of a Chair, Vice-Chair (two, if possible), Treasurer, Secretary & Membership Chair. They will be elected at the biennial conference by a majority of members present.

Section B. Duties.

1. *Chair:* Represent MAIN in the media and before the Legislature and other public events. Facilitate Monthly meetings. Along with other officers, make decisions for MAIN in between meetings when necessary.
2. *Two vice-chairs:* Represent MAIN in the media and before the Legislature and other public events when Chair designates. Along with other officers, make decisions for MAIN in between meetings when necessary. Help support Regional MAIN groups. Seek candidates for broad geographic representation.
3. *Secretary:* Take notes at monthly meetings and submit for posting on MAIN website and to the email network. Oversee communications with allied groups.
4. *Treasurer:* Maintain the banking account. Pay bills. Help develop a yearly budget and fundraising plan. Give quarterly reports.
5. *Membership Chair:* Communicate with members. Foster relationship with member organizations. Encourage contacts to be members.

Section C. Resignation/Removal/Vacancy.

1. Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the president or secretary.
2. Any officer may be removed at a special meeting called expressly for that purpose by 2/3rds of the members present. No officer shall be removed except for just and sufficient cause.
3. If an office becomes vacant, a majority of those present at a members meeting may choose a successor who shall hold office until the next scheduled election.

## **Article VIII. Committees.**

Committees shall be formed as needed to carry out the purposes of the organization.

## **Article IX. Amendments to the by-laws**

1. These bylaws can be amended at the biennial conference of the members by 2/3 vote of members present. At least 20 days notice must be given prior to the conference of the proposed changes.
2. Any member in good standing may initiate an amendment or repeal.