



November 20 meeting begins in Newcastle with the Pledge

The Lincoln County Republican Committee held its monthly meeting on Nov. 20 at the Newcastle fire station. The meeting was very well attended, with many familiar faces and a number of new faces. This is exciting and encouraging for the committee's upcoming caucuses and elections.

The group was joined by knowledgeable and exceptional speakers from the Maine Heritage Policy Center. The Maine Heritage Policy Center aims to represent a conservative view for the taxpayers at the Maine Legislature, and it initiates bills, studies others' bills, and gives testimony on the consequences of bills.

Meeting Summary

Nick Murray, the outreach director, and Jacob Posik, the director of communications, gave a fine presentation titled "The Seven Bites at the Augusta Apple." Attendees were informed of the stages of the process necessary to pass a bill through the Legislature. Murray and Posik pointed out opportunities when citizens can present their views, and perhaps educate and impact elected officials. After all, as the adage goes, making laws is like making sausage — figuring out what goes in is much of the battle. Once citizens know where a particular bill is in the process, they can take specific action to express their views. For example, when a bill is scheduled for a public hearing, people can go to Augusta, give testimony on particular bills, or just show support or disagreement by being present at the public hearing.

Another interesting stage of the process, which people may not be aware of, is once the legislation has passed and is waiting for the governor to sign, they can write or call the governor's office and explain why their suggested action should be taken on the bill.

Attendees also learned how to sign up to track a specific bill and how to obtain a legislative calendar. Members of legislative bodies have met, and there are approximately 500 bills that have been deemed "emergency" for this next session. These bills need people's input. There was a general discussion of when laws take effect, what is going on with the Quebec Hydro corridor and what future benefits it can bring to Maine citizens, and the pitfalls of rank choice voting.

Attendees also heard from Rep. Jeff Hanley, of Pittston, regarding specific upcoming bills, like the 40-cents-per-gallon carbon tax on gasoline proposed by 60-plus Democrats and which some believe will be a terrible burden for rural citizenry.

There was a discussion of Lincoln County town caucuses, which will take place either Feb. 27 or March 6 at Great Bay Community School in Damariscotta. There are step-by-step instruction for carrying out this very important function and there are many helpers who are willing to participate; however, a chairperson is needed to take the reins and make sure this happens. Contact one of the Executive Committee members at their mailbox listed on the soon-to-be-launched new website for the Lincoln County Republican Committee if one can fill this need or help in any way.