

May 9, 2013

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Unorganized Territories Regular Meeting  
held May 9, 2013  
in the Commissioners' Conference Room  
Machias, Maine**

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**Attending the meeting were:**

**Commissioner Vinton E. Cassidy  
Commissioner John B. Crowley, Sr.  
Commissioner Christopher Gardner  
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager  
Carla Manchester, Administration  
Ken Daye, SCEC  
Sharon Strout, Deeds  
Janet Robertson, WC:OC  
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator  
Sharon Mack, Bangor Daily News  
Laura Whelan, Quoddy Tides  
Ted Glessner, Judicial Branch  
Jeff Henthorn, Judicial Branch  
Jill Holmes, Treasurer**

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The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

**AGENDA ITEM: Discussion regarding Court House expansion -  
Ted Glessner & Jeff Henthorn**

Ted Glessner and Jeff Henthorn of the Administrative Offices of the State Judicial Branch were present to ask the Commissioners for final approval of the land lease between the County and the State to be able to move forward with the Court House Renovation / Expansion Project. Mr. Glessner explained that a decision must be made as they had a deadline to prepare for the issuance of the bond. Commissioner Gardner stated that the Board of Commissioners was not comfortable approving the lease until they had an opportunity to be clear on all the details. Commissioner Gardner also reiterated that issue of trust between the State and County was a concern. Commissioner Crowley agreed that he had concerns that would need to be addressed regarding the length of the lease and ownership and responsibility of the new and renovated space. Commissioner Cassidy asked for clarification of

May 9, 2013

the bond process and how they determined the amount of the bond if the exact cost of the project is unknown. Mr. Glessner addressed each of the Commissioners concerns. He explained that the budget for the project has been built with basic known costs with the specifications known at this time. Although this is a work in progress and figures may change slightly, the bond will be for the amount that has been projected then work will need to be done within that budget. In response to Commissioner Crowley's concerns, Mr. Glessner stated that the County would own the property, agreeing to allow the State to build on it. Judge Romei was in attendance and was asked if he would like to express any concerns. He stated that the facility is inadequate as is, being the worst in the State of Maine. He believes that this project is long overdue and the taxpayers of Washington County deserve more. Judge Romei feels that if the County misses this opportunity, it may be a long time before this chance comes around again. Jeff Henthorn stated that he would like to address the concerns of trust. He pointed out that the Judicial Branch is separate from that of the Board of Corrections, and the Judicial Branch of the State has successfully completed several other Court House renovations in the State of Maine. It was decided that an Emergency Meeting should be called to allow for the County Attorney, State Administrators, County Administrators and County Commissioner's to work through the details. With that,

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to call an emergency meeting for the purpose of discussing lease details with the County Attorney. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

The meeting date was set for Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

After some discussion as to the availability of the State Administrators and the County Attorney,

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to allow the County Manager to set the time of the Emergency Meeting after consulting with the County Attorney's availability. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

May 9, 2013

Both Ted Glessner and Jeff Henthorn agreed to be available on Monday for the meeting.

At 2:55 p.m. the meeting proceeded to the Unorganized Territories section of the meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM: Approval of the April UT meeting minutes  
(April 11, 2013)**

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the April UT meeting minutes. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report**

Dean Preston was absent. Commissioner Gardner acknowledged the passing of Dean's father, Calvin Preston. Calvin worked for the County for many years setting a high standard for Dean who has strived to live up to that. Commissioner Gardner noted that Dean has done an exemplary job.

**AGENDA ITEM: TIF Grant Committee Update**

A report was submitted and is attached. There were two action items.

Submitted for consideration was a request for \$1,775.00 from Maine Master Guide, Dave Conley, to expand on Baskahegan Stream Campsites that the TIF program partially funded in 2012. Looking favorably on this request, Commissioner Gardner asked for a motion.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve request for \$1,775.00 for Grant #1304-02-NBT. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

Maine Coast Heritage Trust submitted a request for \$5,100.00 to support and complete the three-year organic blueberry management research project. The Project has gone well, taking less time than anticipated. The Grant Committee recommended a lesser amount of \$4,550.00 to be approved to stay in-line with the 50% precedence that has been set for grant awards.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the request for \$4,550.00 for Grant #1304-03-EDP. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.**

May 9, 2013

Ken Daye reported that the TIF flyer has been completed and sent to the printers.

The Maine Forest Products Council, a group headquartered in Augusta, is working on a two-year moratorium regarding the issuance of TIF's. The State, according to Commissioner Gardner, did not realize how much authority had been left in the hands of the counties. The MFPC, representing large landowners, sees the tax implications associated with the TIF's. Commissioner Gardner went on to say TIF's were valuable tools, that there was no distrust between the counties and this county would continue to have TIF's administered at the local level.

**AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**3:08 p.m.**

**ATTEST:**

**Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.**