

December 2, 2015

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Unorganized Territories Regular Meeting
held December 2, 2015
in the Commissioners' Conference Room
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator
Susan Hatton, SCEC
Lora Whelan, Quoddy Tides
Johanna Billings, Bangor Daily News
Mariah Garnett, D.A.'s Office
Susan Spencer, D.A.'s Office
M.F. Hinerman, EMA
Barry Curtis, Sheriff's Office
Josh Rolfe, RCC
Jill Holmes, Treasurer**

The meeting for Unorganized Territories business was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

**Approval of the November U.T. meeting minutes of November 12, 2015
(Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report

Unorganized Territories Supervisor Heron Weston provided his monthly written report. (See attached)

Heron reported that highway maintenance projects have been completed on the Nineteen Road, Crows Neck Road and Timber Cove Road.

Heron noted that approximately 400 tons of salt has been delivered to contractors throughout the Unorganized Territories.

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Heron reported that the U.T. office has been working successfully with the Maine Forest Service to clarify jurisdiction/coverage responsibilities for fire protection. Commissioner Gardner noted that it had been brought to his attention that Jeff Currier of the Maine Forest Service had had concerns about fire protection jurisdictions. Commissioner Gardner was glad to see clarification on this.

Heron reported that bid packets for the Cathance Dry Hydrant project has been sent to local contractors. There will be an on-site meeting for contractors. An acceptance of a winning bid by the end of December is anticipated.

Heron presented the 2016/17 U.T. budget draft for the Commissioners' review. The budget is also being reviewed by the state auditor's office. It had been important for Dean Preston to be involved in the process of creating the F/Y 2016/17 budget. Coordinating this from out-of-state caused a delay in the final budget draft. A public hearing will need to be scheduled for official approval before the state's January 1st deadline. By consensus, the Commissioner's set a hearing date for Wednesday, December 16th at 4 p.m.

In reviewing the budget draft Commissioner Gardner inquired about the budget line for extra-curricular facility improvement as it relates to the much needed improvements to the tennis court in Dennysville. Heron noted that Dean had already made an assessment that \$5,000.00 would be needed to be included in that budget line. Dean did suggest that Heron contact Baileyville for an estimate of a price needed for improvements. Baileyville has four tennis courts that they maintain. An estimated cost is still needed for the purpose of having hard numbers to include in the extra-curricular facility improvement budget line. This budget draft does not yet reflect the funds needed to fix the tennis court in Dennysville. Commissioner Gardner suggested that Dennysville be included in the plans for the improvements. Commissioner Crowley inquired about the need for a contractual agreement with Dennysville. Commissioner Gardner agreed further discussions would be needed for a contractual agreement with Dennysville. Heron suggested that grants may be available for this project. Commissioner Gardner also suggested that TIF funds may be allocated in the scope of outdoor recreation.

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Heron reported that a survey of the moorings at the Edmunds boat launch was completed on November 17th, then again on December 1st. At the time of the field survey there were 28 moorings; a diverse mooring field with approximately fifty percent of the moorings being owned by non-residents. Five new moorings have been set since the Harbor Moratorium was placed; two from Machiasport/Machias, 2 from Jonesport and 1 from Trescott. Heron requested guidance as to how to proceed. Commissioner Gardner advised Heron to reach out to the owners of the new moorings and ask them to provide proof that their mooring was set before the moratorium was placed and, if it was not, tell them it must be removed. Commissioner Gardner inquired as to what recourse the County has if the moorings have been placed after the moratorium. Commissioner Gardner stated that Heron should consult with the District Attorney. As appointed Harbor Master, Heron has the authority to request that a mooring be moved. If the owner of the mooring refuses to move the mooring, it is considered a Class E offense. Commissioner Gardner noted that it is not unreasonable to think that the mooring may have been there when the field survey was done and it was missing its buoy. The first course of action is to ask for a reasonable explanation. An assumption should not be made that a violation has occurred but with a moratorium in place, the questions should be asked. Commissioner Crowley stated that a dragging fleet changes as the season continues. Commissioner Gardner noted that it is important to act quickly on the five questionable moorings and to hold people accountable. It was reiterated that the moratorium was set for the purpose of allowing enough time for a Harbor Ordinance to be written. Heron reported that he has spoken with residents about a Harbor Ordinance and they are all on board. He has also been collecting data from other areas that will assist him in melding the Harbor Ordinance with state requirements. Commissioner Gardner recommended that a public notice be placed to solicit harbor committee members then select the members from those interested parties. Commissioner Gardner also recommended that fisherman should be recruited as they are the experts of the industry and should have input. Heron agreed that recruitment of local fisherman would give the opportunity for residents to have input. Commissioner Gardner suggested there be three residents from Edmunds and three from Trescott.

AGENDA ITEM: TIF Grant Committee Update

A report was submitted and is attached.

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Program Manager Susan Hatton provided an historical view of fund allocations and awards with recommendations for 2015 allocation fund amounts. The 2015 allocation recommendations presented for the Commissioners consideration are as follows:

- Capital Projects/Economic Development Implementation: 5% - \$60,835
- Economic Development Planning: 0% - \$0
- Nature-Based Tourism: 5% - \$15,209
- Revolving Loan Program: 55% - \$167,295
- County Match: 5% - \$15,209
- Administration: 15% - \$45,626

Commissioner Gardner questioned the recommended allocation of \$1,265.00 to be moved into the administration line. He expressed that the funds should go into the program instead of into running the program. By consensus, the Commissioners agreed to move the \$1,265.00 back into the general loan fund.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the recommended allocations for the 2015 UT TIF fund as presented including the change discussed. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

Susan Hatton reported that the TIF Grant Committee has also recommended a change to lower the maximum grant award from \$15,000.00 to \$10,000.00 and require a 2-1 match in the EDI grant line.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the recommendation to lower the maximum grant award from \$15,000.00 to \$10,000.00 and require a 2-1 match in the EDI grant line. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

Susan Hatton gave an update on the Tide Mill Creamery stating Tide Mill Creamery has developed a strategy change for the business and has chosen to respectfully decline the loan modification granted to them. Their intention is to re-apply for this modification at a later date. By consensus, the Commissioners agreed to allow Tide Mill

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Creamery to stay on the current terms. Treasurer Jill Holmes stated she had a check in her office for Tide Mill Creamery and inquired if it should be voided. Susan confirmed that it should. (See attached letter submitted by Tide Mill Creamery.)

AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment

None.

ADJOURNMENT

4:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.