

May 12, 2016

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Unorganized Territories Meeting  
held May 12, 2016  
in the Commissioners' Conference Room  
Machias, Maine**

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**Attending the meeting were:  
Commissioner Christopher Gardner  
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.  
Commissioner Vinton E. Cassidy  
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager  
Carla Manchester, Administration  
Susan Hatton, SCEC  
Mike Crabtree, Chief Deputy  
Josh Rolfe, RCC  
M.F. Hinerman, EMA  
Cat Cannon, MVNO**

**Susan Corbett, Axiom Education and Training  
Jim Robinson, Edmunds Twp.  
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer  
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator  
Sharon Strout, Deeds**

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The meeting for Unorganized Territories business was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald announced that Chief Deputy Crabtree requested an opportunity to make a brief presentation. Chief Crabtree explained that in May of 1980 Commissioner Crowley, then serving as a Deputy for the Washington County Sheriff's Office, was awarded the Silver Star for Bravery. The award was given to Deputy John Crowley "for conspicuous heroism in which this law enforcement officer at perilous risk of his own life, performed his duty in such a manner as to reflect courage, dedication and initiative native to the professional law enforcement officer". Chief Crabtree presented Commissioner Crowley with a lapel service bar pin. Commissioner Crowley was congratulated for this very illustrious award.

**Approval of the U.T. meeting minutes of March 10, 2016 (Tabled)  
(Gardner / Crowley, 2-0-1)**

**Approval of the U.T. meeting minutes of April 14, 2016  
(Cassidy / Crowley, 2-0-1)**

May 12, 2016

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report**

Interim Unorganized Territories Supervisor Heron Weston submitted a monthly report. (See attached)

Unorganized Territories Supervisor Dean Preston is scheduled to return from his leave of absence on Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be a transition period for the remainder of June. Dean will be officially back as of July 1, 2016.

During the annual Shellfish Meeting held in May the following major topics were discussed:

- The Conservation event was scheduled for May 28<sup>th</sup>;
- Date was set for sale of licenses. Resident license sales have been set for May 28<sup>th</sup> and the date for the non-residents lottery was set for May 30<sup>th</sup>. Three non-resident licenses will be offered this season based on the number of residents from the previous year that bought licenses.
- An addition to the fees schedule was made, adding Junior and Senior Commercial license. No fee will be charged.
- Clarification of section of ordinance related to harvesting clams from beaches off State Park property.

Commissioner Crowley inquired what the time frame is for harvesting an area after wild seed clams have been transplanted. Heron responded that it is at least two to three years before that area is ready to harvest.

Heron reported spring repairs to U.T. roads have begun and the work done last year has held up well.

Heron stated that the U.T. Office has been contacted about opening the Wilcox Road in Trescott to ATV access allowing for a connection between off-road trails running from Cutler into Whiting, through Trescott, and then into Lubec. Commissioner Gardner stated that he has received calls in regards to the request. Heron reported that some sections of the trail will need to be rehabilitated and approval will be needed from surrounding towns before a formal request is presented for a final approval.

It was reported that the Cathance Lake Dry Hydrant project that began in early 2014 has now been completed. Ultimately the construction

May 12, 2016

took one week to complete; the delay has been due to many bureaucratic hurdles.

As a point of interest, Heron reported that debris from an abandoned property resulted in a \$500.00 disposal fee at the Marion Transfer Station. Heron reported that these events occur on an average of once every two years. Commissioner Crowley inquired about what kind of debris needed disposal of. Heron replied it was mostly demo debris but included some household items.

Cemetery maintenance has begun. The summer crews have been mowing and placing flags on the Veterans' markers in preparation for Memorial Day.

Heron Weston asked the Commissioners for their input in regards to testing the newly installed Cathance Dry Hydrant. Commissioner Gardner stated that Heron should do what makes him comfortable with the operation of the hydrant. Heron stated that he would like to do a test. The Commissioners agreed that it would be wise to run a test and be sure the dry hydrant runs properly before it is needed for emergency purposes.

Commissioner Gardner stated that for the purpose of transparency he wanted to report that he has reached out to U.T. Office as a parent and citizen; not as a Commissioner. Commissioner Gardner has requested that the U.T. help in covering a portion of the cost of replacing the fence around the Edmunds Little League diamond. Commissioner Gardner explained that he is a coach of one of the Little League teams. The fence around this diamond has been in disrepair for many years and is now a safety issue. It will cost \$12,000.00 to replace the fence. The Edmunds school has committed to paying half, leaving a need of \$6000.00. Donations of \$3,000.00 have been received thus far. The U.T. budget has funds in the amount of \$5,000.00 originally appropriated for the repair of the Dennysville Tennis Court. It does not look like the repairs to the Dennysville Tennis Court will happen as it would have been a shared cost with the Town of Dennysville; a cost that Dennysville could not agree. Heron and Dean Preston are both in agreement that the funds needed to help in the cost of replacing the fence around the ball diamond will be included in the budget that will become effective July 1, 2016. The

May 12, 2016

U.T. Office plans to partner with the Edmunds school to replace the fence and make repairs to the parking lot and roadside.

**AGENDA ITEM: TIF Grant Committee Update**

Program Manager Susan Hatton submitted a report. (See attached)

Ms. Hatton introduced Susan Corbett of Axiom Education and Training Center. Axiom Education and Training Center has applied for a TIF Grant. The requested amount of \$10,000.00 is to provide funding for Adult Education/Workforce Development for residents of the Unorganized Territories. AETC was established in July 2014 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Funding for adult education services consists of local contribution from AOS 96 towns, voted into the town budget. Other towns have provided support as expansion continues. The Maine Department of Education provides approximately a fifty percent match to programs based on local contributions. Axiom provides overhead expense and support for the adult education program. Commissioner Gardner asked what TIF fund would fund the grant. Susan Hatton replied that the funds would come from the County Match category. Commissioner Gardner also questioned whether this request should be part of the budget process stating that if it was considered a worthy cause to fund it may become a yearly request. Susan Hatton explained that AETC is working on a potential model for the program to be self-sustaining as it continues to grow. AETC has provided training to over 3,500 residents and over 350 businesses and has established itself as a nationally recognized Digital Literacy and Digital Inclusion expert. Commissioner Gardner acknowledged appreciation for the program's goals, but noted the layout of the unorganized territories should be considered. Axiom Education & Training Center is located in Machias. Is this a central location justifying U.T. TIF funds to be used? Consideration needs to be given to the fact that AETC is an educational program, and should TIF funds be applied to educational needs; should this be a function of municipal government. Susan Hatton stated that she will review the TIF Guidance Policy. Commissioner Gardner recommended the request be tabled allowing time for both the Program Manager Susan Hatton and the Commissioners to have an opportunity to review of the policy.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to table the grant request by Axiom Education & Training Center for further review. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

May 12, 2016

A request for a TIF loan in the amount of \$45,000.00 was presented for James Robinson, Dennys River Tractor Services. Mr. Robinson operates a seasonal mowing business. He was awarded a TIF grant in 2014. Mr. Robinson has recently received a four-year bid to mow 280 miles of state roads. The State of Maine has changed their regulations with regard to mowing the sides of the road. To be compliant with the new rules Mr. Robinson would use the funds to replace his aging tractor, purchase a new mower and purchase signs. He would be trading in the old tractor. Commissioner Gardner inquired who would hold the 1<sup>st</sup> security interest on the tractor. Ms. Hatton responded that the County would. The Loan Committee unanimously recommends approval of the loan.

**\*MOTION\*** Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the loan request for \$45,000.00, Loan #JR-TIF-04-28-16, to James Robinson of Dennys River Tractor Services. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0.

An update on Cobscook Bay Company was provided and is attached.

**AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

4:36 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

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Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.