

October 12, 2016

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held October 12, 2016
in the Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner John B. Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton E. Cassidy
Commissioner Christopher M. Gardner
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
John Rule, Quoddy Tides, Lubec
Toff Toffolon, Office of the District Attorney
Dean Preston, U.T. Supervisor
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, Sheriff's Office
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator
Josh Rolfe, RCC Supervisor
Eric Sargent, Crimestar Representative
Cat Cannon, MVNO
Barry Curtis, Sheriff
Mike Crabtree, Chief Deputy
Carlene Holmes, Probate
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer**

Executive Department business was called to order at 5:15 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes for the Public Hearing on the 2017 FY Budget
held on September 8, 2016 (Crowley/Cassidy, 2-0-1)**

**Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on
September 8, 2016 (Crowley/Cassidy, 2-0-1)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

The Commissioners were provided a written report from EMA. (See attached)

In the absence of Register of Deeds Sharon Strout, County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented a bid for a preservation project. The request for proposals is to preserve 326 plans from deterioration in the envelopes being used now. One bid of \$36,050.00

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was received from Kofile Preservation Technologies. The funds will be used from the surcharge line. It is the recommendation of Sharon to accept the bid of \$36,050.00 to do this project. The request to accept the bid was tabled for further discussion.

AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

MOTION Commissioner Gardner moved to approve the re-classification of Ryan Murry as full-time Patrol Deputy to part-time Patrol Deputy effective 09/04/16. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0-0.

Chief Deputy Mike Crabtree stated the reason for the re-classification was due Patrol Deputy Murry's incomplete Academy training.

MOTION Commissioner Gardner moved to accept the resignation of Patrick Spencer as full-time Corrections Officer effective 10/11/16. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0-0.

Patrick Spencer's resignation was accepted without comment.

By consensus, the Commissioners approved a wage increase for Wanda Cox, Lynn Dwelley and Elayne Watts all effective 10/09/16. This increase is to equalize their pay as to what it should be per the wage scale.

AGENDA ITEM: Six-month Certificates

Six-month certificates were signed for the following employees:

- Ryan Allen
- John Francis
- Keith Albee
- Alan Stanwood
- Dakota Robinson
- Bryan Albee
- Timothy Mace
- Christopher Simpson
- Matthew Carter
- Ben Robinson

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AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Bank Account Clarification letter

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald and County Treasurer Jill Holmes drafted a letter to clarify the procedures for initiating, accessing and managing accounts belonging to County of Washington. The letter stated any changes should be initiated and/or approved by the County Manager or the County Treasurer. It was duly noted that final approval falls to the Commissioners. The clarification letter also requested that all credit cards held by Washington County personnel have a maximum credit limit of \$2500.00 each. Sheriff Curtis protested that he needed more of a credit line amount available to run his departments. Commissioner Gardner summarized the history of the use of credit cards by the County. He stated that when it became necessary for the County to hold credit cards for the purpose of purchasing on-line, the Commissioners restricted the number of cards to be issued and a maximum credit limit. The Sheriff's office was not issued a credit card at that time. After Sheriff Curtis took office, he requested the Sheriff's Office be approved to hold a credit card to facilitate purchases for his office. Sheriff Curtis has found the \$2500.00 credit limit to be insufficient. Commissioner Gardner inquired what Sheriff Curtis would consider sufficient. Sheriff Curtis requested the Commissioners raise his credit limit to between \$10,000.00 and \$15,000.00. Sheriff Curtis was asked to justify his reason for needing such a sizable balance. Commissioner Gardner pointed out the fact that most every expense is already built within the budget and to allow such a sizable credit limit may allow the budget to be circumvented. Sheriff Curtis explained he has a unique situation where he oversees not just one department but three; the Sheriff's Office, the Jail and the RCC. Captain Rolfe added that on occasion all three departments may need to make purchases using the one card and the \$2500.00 limit is not enough. Captain Rolfe continued by giving an example of one particular month that all three departments needed to make purchases on-line and was not able to because of an insufficient credit limit. Commissioner Gardner conceded that \$2500.00 may not be enough for the three departments combined but \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00 was unnecessary. Sheriff Curtis contended that such a credit limit was necessary. He also stated the Treasurer told him he must be very careful of his spending within his budget lines until anticipated tax money came through. Treasurer Holmes commented that the Sheriff need not feel that this limitation was personal. All departments are held to the \$2500.00 limit. Treasurer Holmes also noted that since the one month referenced that all three departments needed to make purchases,

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there has been no month since then that the Sheriff's Office credit card has reached the \$2500.00 maximum. RCC Supervisor Josh Rolfe suggested a simple solution be that all departments be able to hold a credit card. Commissioner Gardner pointedly stated that would not happen. Commissioner Gardner explained his reasoning by stating department heads carry a great amount of responsibility, but the Commissioners hold the final responsibility of the taxpayer's money. The Commissioners must operate with a level of concern that will not leave the county vulnerable to exposure. Sheriff Curtis contended again that he supervises three of the counties departments that have the biggest budgets based on number of employees and needs of operation. Sheriff Curtis insisted his office must be afforded a higher limit for the effective operation of his departments. Commissioner Gardner agreed the three departments Sheriff Curtis oversees accounts for the largest portion of the budget. It was noted that those "big ticket items" such as insurance, vehicles, electricity, and employees wages are already built into the budget. Commissioner Gardner stated that the Commissioners would consider increasing the credit limit but not to the amount Sheriff Curtis requested. Commissioner Gardner stated the Commissioners intention is not to control departments, but it makes sense to minimize the exposure to the County. Commissioner Cassidy agreed there may be a need to increase the credit limit, but within a reasonable amount. Treasurer Jill Holmes stated her main concern is the effect on cash flow. After some discussion on the County's purchasing policy, purchase order process and the need for the Commissioners to maintain final approval of payments made for purchases, it was proposed a credit limit of \$7500.00 would be a compromise that the Commissioners felt comfortable with and with which the Sheriff could work. Sheriff Curtis accepted the recommendation.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve an increase in the Sheriff's Office credit card limit to \$7500.00. (Cassidy / Crowley 3-0).**

Treasurer Jill Holmes stated that she would very much like to have a better working relationship with the Sheriff's Office.

AGENDA ITEM: Standardize Copier fees in County Offices

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported that it was recently brought to her attention that the Registry of Deeds and the Probate Office

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have been charging \$1.00 for making copies from the records. The Commissioners Office has been collecting \$.50 per copy. Betsy asked the Commissioners to approve the copier fee charge for the Commissioner's Office be increased to \$1.00. By consensus, the Commissioners approved the copier fee charge for all County Offices to be the standard charge of \$1.00 per copied page.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on M.O.U. between Administrative Office of the Courts and Washington County

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented the contract (Memo of Understanding) between the Administrative Office of the Courts and the County of Washington. The contract reflects the responsibility of the operation and costs apportioned to both parties. The contract has been reviewed and vetted and accurately reflects each parties management responsibilities.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to sign the M.O.U. between Administrative Office of the Courts and Washington County as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Sheriff's Department: Eric Sargent / Crimestar

Chief Deputy Mike Crabtree presented a proposal for the Sheriff's Office to enter a contract with Crimestar Corporation for a records management system. Mike gave a brief summary of the records management system the Sheriff's Office has used in the past. He stated the Sheriff's Office had been using Crimestar until 2013 when they switched to Tritech. Mike explained that his limited understanding for the purpose of the switch to Tritech was based on the idea that purportedly the Crimestar system would run out of storage and would possibly have security breach issues. The other driving force was that grant funds would pay for the upfront costs of switching to Tritech. It is the opinion of the current administration that Crimestar is a better program. Contact has been made with the Crimestar representative Eric Sargent to discuss the price and process of switching back to the Crimestar system. The quote from Crimestar was presented and Eric Sargent was available for questions. Mr. Sargent reviewed the quote of \$53,000.00 should the Commissioners accept the contract. The contract amount includes back support fees of \$20,000.00. Mr. Sargent explained that annual support fees are 10% of the purchase price. In order to keep support at a low cost, Crimestar locks out companies that leave. Chief Deputy Mike

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Crabtree noted there would be a cost savings of \$18,000.00 this year if the County switched back to Crimestar. Commissioner Gardner questioned if the back support fees was a type of penalty for taking their business elsewhere. Mr. Sargent explained the intention of the charge was not for the purpose of charging a penalty at all but to equalize the charges for current customers that have stayed with Crimestar throughout development and progress and paid for the support and updates each year. Commissioner Gardner stated the County is still in the negotiation phase of the budget process. He inquired if the County's "out-years" fee could be spread out. Mr. Sargent stated he would be willing to rework the numbers. Commissioner Gardner asked how the switch to a new records management system would affect other local law enforcement agencies. Chief Deputy Crabtree stated all agencies are tied together and others will follow suit. By consensus, the Commissioners agreed it to be sound fiscal policy to pursue the contract offered by Crimestar Corporation, but the County cannot obligate anymore than \$18,056.00 for this year.

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Ballot Question #3

Commissioner Gardner stated that all Commissioners were in agreement that they oppose Question #3 requiring background checks for sales or transfers between non-licensed firearm dealers. Assistant District Attorney Toff Toffolon concurred with the Commissioners stance. Chief Deputy Mike Crabtree stated it is already illegal to sell firearms to prohibited persons. Background checks are obtainable for a fee of \$31.00 giving an avenue to close loopholes.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy made a motion to strongly oppose Question #3 on the ballots on November 8, 2016. (Cassidy / Crowley 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Tax Abatement Reschedule date

The representative for the taxpayer, Mr. Targiss, was unable to attend the tax abatement scheduled for October. By consensus, the Commissioners agreed to reschedule the Tax Abatement for Targiss vs. Town of Lubec for December 8th at 3 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

6:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.