

April 10, 2014

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting held
April 10, 2014
in the Commissioners' Conference Room
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
Melissa Evans, Perry
Ken Daye, SCEC
Dustin Foss, WC:OC
Joshua Rolfe, RCC
Rich Rolfe, Jail
Darlene Wallace, Deeds
Sharon Strout, Deeds
Steven L. Ramsey, Wesley, WCSO
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer
Judith Alexander, Treasurer's Office
Heron Weston, Unorganized Territory
Tim Cox, Bangor Daily News
Bill Kitchen, Machias Valley News Observer**

Commissioner Vinton Cassidy was absent.

Commissioner Gardner called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM: Impact of Marijuana Outreach

Youth and Community Outreach Coordinator Dustin Foss of Washington County: One Community appealed to the Commissioners to make a resolution to oppose the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana. Dustin explained that an organization called the Marijuana Policy Project has a mission to increase support for legally regulated use of medical and non-medical use of marijuana. MPP's goal is to pass local ballot initiatives in York, Lewiston and South Portland in November 2014. In an effort to create awareness, Dustin provided information concerning the effects of marijuana on the brain; the different forms in which marijuana is being marketed (i.e. edible

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and drinkable products); survey information on high school student marijuana use; and perceptions of marijuana's risk factors. SAM Maine (Smart Approaches to Marijuana) Scott Gagnon will be the guest speaker at the Rotary Meeting in Machias on May 13th.

***MOTION* Commissioner Gardner moved to sign the proclamation presented by WC:OC's Youth and Community Outreach Coordinator Dustin Foss. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0.**

The proclamation signed by County Commissioner Chair Chris Gardner states "that the legalization of the recreational use of marijuana is a poor health and safety policy." Commissioner Gardner stated that just because marijuana is said to be safer than alcohol doesn't make it a good decision.

Adjournment 4:10 p.m.

**Attest: _____
Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.**

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Commissioner Vinton Cassidy was absent.

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

**Approval of the March Regular meeting minutes
(March 20, 2014) (Crowley / Gardner, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

The Commissioners were provided monthly reports in their meeting packets. (See attached)

Register of Deeds Sharon Strout requested the Commissioners to review a notice for the closure and relocation of the Deeds office in preparation for the courthouse renovation project. Commissioner Gardner stated that there had been no final determination by the

Commissioners on said project. He considered the move to be

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preemptive. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated that the bid opening for contractors has been set by the State for April 28th. Commissioner Gardner stated that for the purpose of transparency and a matter of process, the Commissioners need a full briefing by the State. The Commissioners will consider the State's intention and the timeline before making a final decision. It was decided that a Special Meeting date will be set. The date is yet to be determined. By consensus, the Commissioners pre-approved the wording on the notices presented by Sharon Strout.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Six-month Certificate

The six-month certificate for Christopher Donahue was signed.

AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Status Change Notices

MOTION Commissioner Gardner moved to hire Melissa Evans as part-time ECS effective 04/06/14 not to exceed 32 hours per week except for training and emergency purposes. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0.

MOTION Commissioner Gardner moved to hire Betsy Jaegerman as part-time ECS effective 04/06/14 not to exceed 32 hours per week except for training and emergency purposes. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0.

MOTION Commissioner Gardner moved to hire Lisa Yearber as part-time ECS effective 04/06/14 not to exceed 32 hours per week except for training and emergency purposes. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0.

By consensus, the Commissioners accepted the resignation of Daniel Clark as part-time ECS effective 04/10/14.

By consensus, the Commissioners approve Sheriff Smith's recommendation to promote Deputy Gregory Sawyer. Seeing that all union contract requirements are in order, Deputy Sawyer will be promoted to the rank of Corporal within the patrol division.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on letter of support for Down East Correctional Facility.

The Commissioners have actively lobbied to support the continued operation of the Down East Correctional Facility. As a means of

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expressing and memorializing their support, a letter addressed to Governor LePage was drafted by County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald. The letter expounds on the importance of the Down East Correctional Facility, its positive impact on Washington County, and the Commissioners continued support of the DECF.

***MOTION* Commissioner Gardner moved to approve the letter of support for the Down East Correctional Facility. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 2-0.**

The letter was signed as presented.

AGENDA ITEM: Agreement for Down East EMS

During a Commissioners' Meeting held on October 10, 2013, the Commissioners, on behalf and with respect to its Unorganized Territory, voted to authorize and approve a one-third Guaranty of the refinancing of a loan for an existing debt for the Washington County Emergency Medical Services Authority. The Authority provides emergency services to the citizens of Washington County, including but not limited to the Unorganized Territories of Washington County. The other two guarantors are Lubec and Eastport. Treasurer Jill Holmes has reviewed the agreement. The Commissioners signed the agreement as presented. Down East EMS previously agreed to submit financial reports. Treasurer Jill Holmes confirmed that one has been received. Commissioner Gardner requested that the records reflect that there is no impact on regular county taxes.

AGENDA ITEM: Meal Reimbursement Allowance

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented meal reimbursement allowance comparisons for the Commissioners' consideration. It was discussed at the previous Commissioners' meeting that the meal reimbursement allowance had not been increased in quite some time. Betsy accumulated allowances used by other counties, State Government and the Federal Government for both in-state and out-of state expense reimbursement. Some counties use the same rate as Federal and State or what is considered "reasonable expense". Commissioner Gardner inquired as to the amount of out-of-state travel by County employees. Betsy responded that it was minimal. Commissioner Gardner agreed it was time to increase the rate. He would be comfortable with the Tier One level of reimbursement that the Federal/State Government use. Treasurer Jill Holmes noted that the total daily allowance of \$46.00 on tier one should be \$41.00. Tier One meal reimbursement amounts are \$7.00 for

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breakfast; \$11.00 for lunch and \$23.00 for dinner with a total of \$41.00 for the day.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to direct the County Manager to adjust the County policy using the Tier One level with a total daily allowance of \$41.00. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion which passed 2-0.

AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment

Ken Daye announced that Sunrise County Economic Council has hired a new Executive Director. Charles Rudelitch will begin on May 2, 2014 bringing experience and energy to SCEC.

Commissioner Gardner stated that the County is dealing with a situation related to the release of personnel information that arose from a challenge of the upcoming election. The information was posted on the *Bangor Daily News* on-line web-site. Action was taken as soon as it was discovered. *Bangor Daily News* reporter Tim Cox was contacted and the article was immediately removed. The County plans on taking several steps to address this situation; an attempt will be made to reach out to those affected working to help protect them. A determination will be made as to how the information was released, if there was a violation of County policy or if a policy needs to be put in place. Commissioner Gardner apologized on behalf of the County Commissioners and stated that this situation will be rectified.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to go into Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA § 405-A 6 A (3) to discuss a personnel issue. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion which passed 2-0. It was 4:45 p.m.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion which passed 2-0. It was 5:00 p.m.

There were no motions or decisions made after Executive Session.

Adjournment 5:00 p.m.

Attest: _____
Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.