

September 10, 2014

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners
Public Hearing on the F/Y 2015 Budget
held September 10, 2014
in the Commissioners Conference Room
Machias, Maine**

Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher M. Gardner
Commissioner John B. Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton E. Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
Lewis Pinkham, Milbridge
Lynn Alley, Downeast Institute
Jane Hinson, Downeast Institute
Skip Colson, Alexander
Jean Savard, Washington County Firefighters' Association
Ken Daye, SCEC
Ashley Cox, Edmunds
Brandon Cox, Edmunds
Meghan Dennison, Machias
Dean Preston, U.T.
Matt Lewis, MSF
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer
Judith A. Alexander, Treasurer's Office
Larry Post, City of Eastport
Rick Bronson, Town of Baileyville
Susan Corbett, Axiom Technologies
M.F. Hinerman, EMA
Sharon D. Strout, Deeds
Darlene Wallace, Deeds
Leigh MacKeen, Machias
Lisa M. Hanscom, Roque Bluffs

Commissioner Gardner called the Public Hearing to order at 3:58 p.m. on the proposed F/Y 2015 County Budget.

Commissioner Gardner gave the floor to County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald. Betsy listed the 2015 Budget Advisory Committee members (see attached list). Betsy announced that Senator David Burns was re-elected as the Legislative Delegate by his peers.

September 10, 2014

Commissioner Gardner stated that the Department Heads have produced a beginning point for the budget; not the final budget. The Commissioners defer greatly to the Budget Committee and the tax-paying public. He anticipates that the Budget Committee will have an equally important and difficult job to come up with the final budget as in the past. Once the budget has been passed by the BAC it will be presented back to the Commissioners. The Commissioners may decline the proposed budget at that time, however he does not anticipate that will be the case. Deferring to his fellow Commissioners, Commissioner Crowley thanked the BAC and the Department Heads for their contribution to the process. Commissioner Cassidy voiced his appreciation for the interest members of the BAC have taken to be part of the process.

Commissioner Gardner stated that the BAC will meet after the third party presentations.

Jean Savard, representing the Washington County Firefighters Association, asked the Commissioners for their continued support. The WCFA is asking for \$6500.00 funding for the F/Y 2015. This is the same amount of funding as the previous year. Commissioner Gardner commented that the Firefighters Association is a worth-while endeavor. WCFA depends greatly on volunteers and is worthy of getting the support needed to train the volunteers to do the job they do.

Next, Lynn Alley of the Downeast Institute thanked the Commissioners for their support in the past and asked that their funding remain at \$5,000.00. Commissioner Gardner stated that Dr. Brian Beal is renowned and respected for his expertise in this field. Commissioner Gardner expressed his hope of acquiring a higher concentration of Marine Science at the UMM campus with the support of Governor LePage.

Next Step asked for an increase in funding from \$800.00 to \$850.00. There was no representative available from Next Step. Commissioner Gardner spoke in support of the organization. He stated that they have explained their mission well in the past. He asked that their request be given the same consideration as in past years.

There were no comments or statements from the public.

September 10, 2014

The Budget Committee members and County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald adjourned to elect a chair and establish dates and times of their next meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

4:10 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.