

November 12, 2015

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Public Hearing for F/Y 2016 Budget
held November 12, 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
John Sutherland, Lubec
Lora Whelan, Quoddy Tides / Eastport
Lewis Pinkham, Milbridge
Michael Kilby, Edmunds
Lorraine Robbins, Trescott
Howard Robbins, Trescott
Mike Hinerman, EMA
Heather Lee, Lubec
Sharon D. Strout, Deeds
Barry Curtis, Sheriff
Susan Spencer, D.A.'s Office
Wanda Cox, Baileyville
Jill Holmes, Treasurer
Josh Rolfe, RCC
Richard Rolfe, Jail Administrator**

Commissioner Gardner called the public hearing to order at 4:00 p.m. for the proposed of the Budget Advisory Committee returning the F/Y 2016 County budget to the Commissioners.

Budget Advisory Committee Chairman Lewis Pinkham thanked the Commissioners for their attendance at the Budget Advisory Committee meetings. Mr. Pinkham also thanked the Department heads for their attendance and hard work towards the final budget.

The total proposed budget is for \$5,429,386. This is an increase of 1.4545% from the previous year.

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Commissioner Gardner thanked the BAC members for their efforts. He noted that the increase of 1.45% is not as bad as it could be.

Commissioner Gardner explained that a discussion at a recent BAC in regards to the need for another Sheriff's Deputy on the roster shows the difficulties and perils now facing the Sheriff's Office. A local incident that happened just weeks after the discussion illustrated the concerns as it pertains to law enforcement. Services that are being cut at the town level and the shortage of recruits for State Troopers are putting a heavier burden on the County for law enforcement coverage.

Commissioner Gardner stated there was some discussion in the BAC meetings about needing to meet future budget cuts and office staffing needs by adjusting the hours or days of operation.

Commissioner Cassidy thanked the Budget Advisory Committee and noted that producing a budget with a minimal increase is not easy. A 1.4% increase is reasonable.

Commissioner Crowley thanked the Budget Advisory Committee for their due diligence and Chair Lewis Pinkham for his leadership role in this process.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to ratify the F/Y 2016 County Budget as presented in the amount of \$5,429,386.00. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

There were no comments or statements from the public.

ADJOURNMENT

4:10 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.