

April 11, 2019

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held April 11, 2019
in the Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator
Lynn Dwelley, WNEMA
Sharon D. Strout, Deeds
Linda Belfiore, APEX Clean Energy
Paul Williamson, APEX Clean Energy
Karl Pingree, Buildings and Grounds**

Executive Department business was called to order at 4:25 p.m.

Paul Williamson of APEX Clean Energy was present to give an update on the Downeast Wind Project. Mr. Williamson stated the location of the project is in Columbia and Township 18. The project was put on hold for a year due to a moratorium placed on it by Governor LePage. The moratorium has been lifted and work is back in progress to put permits together. Mr. Williamson stated that due to the delay the project evolved, allowing Downeast I and II to be consolidated into one project. One of the benefits of consolidating the two projects is the number of turbines has been reduced from 60 to 47. The turbines are expected to generate up to 194 megawatts.

Mr. Williamson explained APEX is working with DEP and Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to complete field studies during the spring and summer of this year. Mr. Williamson stated that if the preliminary lay-out makes sense and the surveys and field studies are complete by the end of June, the plan is to prepare and submit the Maine Site Law Permit application by September or October.

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Commissioner Gardner expressed concern for the blueberry land and lake owners in the proposed project site area. Mr. Williamson stated APEX will be working through completing host community agreements with

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Washington County and the Town of Columbia with TIF and CBA funds as reimbursement for supporting the wind project.

Commissioner Gardner stated there are still a lot of details to go through before the project can begin. Commissioner Gardner stated the Board of Commissioners will be aware of what the reaction is to the project by Columbia and what the community benefit package will look like. Commissioner Gardner stated that at some point the Board of Commissioners would like to see the outline of the package. Commissioner Gardner pointed out the Board would like to see a little more flexibility on how funds are able to be used in comparison to the current TIF funds. Mr. Williamson stated APEX will continue to work with Columbia through meetings and open communication. Commissioner Crowley inquired if APEX has a full agreement with Schoodic Lake land owners. Mr. Williamson responded that there is no agreement yet, but APEX is working with landowners. It was asked about the access to camps on Schoodic Lake. Mr. Williamson responded APEX has not committed to an agreement yet. Commissioner Gardner noted Schoodic lake is a very populated lake and stated the Board wants to be sure that those impacted the most have had an opportunity to have their concerns addressed. Mr. Williamson stated there definitely will be numerous opportunities for communication with those that have concerns.

Mr. Williamson concluded by reporting that if all milestones are met construction will begin in 2020 and should be complete by 2021.

Mr. Williamson thanked the Commissioners for their time and interest in the APEX Clean Energy wind project.

Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on March 14, 2019. (Cassidy/Crowley, 2-0-1)

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

The Commissioners were provided written reports for April from Emergency Management Agency, Treasurer's Office and SCEC. The reports were accepted under the gavel. (See attached)

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AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to hire Justin Lawson as part-time Corrections Officer effective 03/31/19 not to exceed 30 hours per week except for training and emergency purposes. (Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

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Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe stated Justin is scheduled to attend the Maine Criminal Justice Academy in May.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to terminate Nicholas Libby as full-time Corrections Officer effective 04/08/19. (Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

Jail Administrator Rolfe stated Nick did not satisfactorily complete his six-month introductory period.

AGENDA ITEM: Signature of six-month certificate for Keith Robinson

The six-month certificate was signed as presented.

AGENDA ITEM: Reschedule Tax Abatement Hearing for Legris vs. Town of Lubec

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated the Court has remanded the tax abatement hearing for Legris vs. Town of Lubec back to the County Commissioners. A full hearing is rescheduled for Thursday, July 11th at 3 p.m. to reconsider the abatement request.

Register of Deeds Sharon Strout reported the Deeds Office has just had a complete revamping of their computer system. There are two printers now available if there is any county office in need of a printer.

Commissioner Gardner asked the records to reflect the Washington County Board of Commissioners are not in support of the bill LD 453. This bill proposes to enact measures designed to ensure the integrity and accountability of persons who are elected to public office. Commissioner Gardner stated the purpose would be to give County Commissioners the authority to suspend a Sheriff of acts unbecoming. Commissioner Gardner stated the Sheriff is the highest law enforcement

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officer in the County. Commissioner Gardner does not believe the Commissioners should have say or authority in such matters. By consensus, the Commissioners are comfortable with law as it exists.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to memorialize the Commissioners opposition to the bill for LD 453. (Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

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Also discussed was the Corrections funding bill. Commissioner Gardner asked Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe to expand on the details of said bill. Rich stated the bill would place the \$15.2 million in statute with an additional \$3 million in supplemental funds. Rich stated it does not change the funding formula now used which is based on average daily population. Commissioner Gardner asked if all were in agreement with the \$18.2 million. Rich stated all were in agreement to lift the \$15.2 cap. Commissioner Gardner requested Rich stay involved and updated on this bill. Rich confirmed that he gets daily updates on the bill.

Commissioner Gardner stated the need to advocate and stay engaged in regards to Downeast Correctional Facility. Rich Rolfe noted the State has been looking at properties for an alternative location for a pre-release center; none of which appear to be satisfactory. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated working sessions on the DECF bill have not been scheduled yet. Commissioner Gardner noted the importance of keeping Commissioner Liberty engaged.

ADJOURNMENT
5:05 p.m.

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