

August 3, 2023

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Special Meeting
held August 3, 2023
in the Washington County Commissioners' Office
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Renée Gray, Deputy County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Lisa Hanscom, EMA
Lynn Dwelley, D.A.'s Office
Susan Sullivan, D.A.'s Office
Tammy Gay, Deeds
Jill C. Holmes, Finance
Rich Rolfe, WCSO
Sheriff Curtis, WCSO
Michael Crabtree, WCSO
Darlene Perry, Probate
DDA Toff Toffolon, D.A.'s Office**

Executive Department business was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM: Building Construction Manager Contract Review

Deputy County Manager Renée Gray stated the Construction Manager contract was forwarded to the county attorney and has been reviewed. Sheridan has also replied to questions from Architect Andy Hyland. Mr. Hyland recommended the Commissioners accept the Construction Manager contract proposal from Sheridan Construction. Commissioner Gardner questioned the 20% mark-up for self-performed additional work. Deputy County Manager Renée Gray stated Sheridan is willing to go with a 10% mark-up. As recommended,

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to accept the proposed contract for Construction Manager with Sheridan Construction as presented. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

Commissioner Gardner noted that, although the Board of Commissioners have accepted the contract with Sheridan Construction, he would like further discussion. He noted the budget must be watched carefully as

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the Safety Building project progresses. It was discussed that the GMP (Guaranteed Maximum Price) noted in the contract is \$5.5 million. Commissioner Gardner pointed out funds are still needed for the renovations of the other buildings that will be utilized when other departments are moved. Commissioner Cassidy asked if there has been any interest earned from the ARPA funds. Treasurer Jill Holmes responded there is approximately \$200,000.00 of interest that has been earned. Chief Deputy Michael Crabtree stated he understood the current estimated construction cost provided by Port City Architecture is \$4,620,000.00 with an additional 7.7% for Design, Engineering and Construction Administration fees performed by PCA. It was noted that contingency funds are built into that figure.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to accept the Architectural and Engineering Services proposal from Port City Architecture in the amount of \$4,620,000 plus 7.7% of the total construction cost. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

Commissioner Gardner stated now that the Board of Commissioners have approved the construction of the Safety Building, accepted the Construction Management Contract and Architectural and Engineering Services proposal, a motion should be made to formally encumber the ARPA funds.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to formally appropriate ARPA funds to construct a Safety Building thus meeting the deadline of obligating funds by December 31, 2024 with the intent of expending said funds by December 31, 2026. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion Regarding Future County Office Locations

Commissioner Gardner stated a timeline is needed for what is to be done before construction of the new Safety Building can begin. The discussion involved the relocation of county office spaces. Commissioner Gardner noted District Attorney Robert Granger and his staff have toured both the County Administrative Offices space and the Talbot Building. D.A. Granger submitted a letter regarding his office space needs for relocation (see attached). DDA Toff Toffolon was present to speak on behalf of D.A. Granger and office staff. D.A. Granger stated the District Attorney's Office can move into the Talbot building with the intentions of building on extra space for storage,

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or they could move into the County Administration Office space with

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these stipulations; they acquire all office space with downstairs storage, and with the doors to the other part of the Courthouse being closed and locked. The D.A. would want to be able to use the doors to access the Judicial side of the Courthouse but have the doors locked so the D.A. Office space is not accessible to the public. Commissioner Gardner stated his recommendation is to move the Administrative Offices to the Talbot Building and move the D.A.'s Office space into the Courthouse. Deputy County Manager Renée Gray submitted a written report regarding the relocation of County Administrative Offices. (See attached) Her recommendation is to leave the Administrative Offices where they currently are and move the D.A.'s Office to the Talbot building. Commissioner Gardner voiced his strong disagreement with this recommendation. There was a brief discussion regarding the current uses of the county administrative offices. The issue of security for both Administrative Offices and District Attorney's Office in either location was also discussed. Commissioner Gardner pointed out the D.A. staff deals with potentially volatile situations with the public. Commissioner Cassidy stated he respects Commissioner Gardner's opinions and reasons to move the D.A.'s Office to the Courthouse, but stated he disagrees with that idea. Commissioner Cassidy supports the recommendation to leave the Administrative Offices in the Courthouse. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated that since there were no responses to the RFP for the work needed to be done at the Talbot Building, she recommends using the Buildings and Grounds staff to do the work in-house. Commissioner Gardner asked if Buildings and Grounds has that time to dedicate to an extra project. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated the Buildings and Grounds staff would make it work. Administrative Assistant Susan Sullivan asked the Commissioners to consider the opinion of those working in the D.A.'s office. She stated the D.A.'s office would not work well in the current Administrative Office space. Commissioner Gardner strongly disagreed but yielded to the Board of Commissioners to move the D.A.'s Office space to the Talbot Building.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to authorize to move the District Attorney's Office from 82 Court Street to the Talbot Building on 24 Center Street. (Cassidy / Crowley, 2-0-1)**

EMA Director Lisa Hanscom stated her preference is to remain in the 28 Center Street Building where the EMA Office currently is located. It

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had been a tentative plan to move EMA to the vacated Sheriff's Office space after the new Safety Building was complete. Ms. Hanscom reported that she has moved some of the EMA operations into the vacant

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office space previously used by the Cooperative Extension. Ms. Hanscom noted there is potential for EMA to receive grant funds for an EMA building; grant funds could not be used on any renovations for the Sheriff's Office building as it is an historical building. Commissioner Gardner argued that the opportunity to delete a building and consolidate office space is going to be missed. Commissioner Gardner voiced his concern that the County will spread out into space that is not necessarily needed and keep items that should be thrown away. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald pointed out there are items such as inactive personnel records that must be kept for 60 years.

Commissioner Gardner asked what funds will need to be allocated to renovate the Talbott Building for it to be a functional space for the D.A.'s Office. Commissioner Gardner recommended authorizing the County Manager to proceed by determining what needs to be done and creating an RFP.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to authorize the County Manager to proceed with determining the renovation needs for the Talbott Building and post a Request for Proposals.
(Cassidy / Crowley, 2-0-1)**

Commissioner Gardner revisited the discussion of the EMA Director occupying the space left vacant by the Cooperative Extension. Commissioner Gardner asked when the decision had been made to make that move. EMA Director Lisa Hanscom stated she asked permission to use that space as she was in need of privacy for meetings. Commissioner Gardner concluded the discussion by stating he is of the opinion that the County has missed the opportunity to relinquish a county building and cut expenses.

ADJOURNMENT

3:55 p.m.

ATTEST: _____

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Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.

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