

August 11, 2022

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Unorganized Territories Regular Meeting  
Held August 11, 2022  
in the Washington County Probate Courtroom  
Machias, Maine**

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**Attending the meeting were:  
Commissioner Christopher Gardner  
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy  
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager  
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant  
Susan Hatton, SCEC  
Kenneth Holzworth, WCSO  
Joyce Holzworth, Pembroke  
Zena Holzworth, Pembroke  
Galan Williamson, NWDB  
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO  
Tammy C. Gay, Deeds  
Rich Rolfe, WCSO  
Barry Curtis, Sheriff  
Mike Crabtree, Chief Deputy  
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer  
Lisa M. Hanscom, EMA  
Nancy Oden, Jonesboro**

**Commissioner John Crowley, Sr. was not present**

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Commissioner Gardner called the meeting to order at 3:58 p.m.

Commissioner Gardner stated that prior to the 4 p.m. meeting the District II Caucus to elect one member for a three-year term for the Budget Advisory Committee was held. Meghann Dennison was re-elected.

The meeting proceeded with a presentation by Galan Williamson. Mr. Williamson introduced himself as the new Executive Director of Northeastern Workforce Development. The Northeastern Workforce Development Board is a local organization dedicated to bringing together employers and employees in Aroostook, Hancock, Penobscot, Piscataquis and Washington counties to promote a healthy economy in the region. Mr. Williamson gave a brief summary of his work history. He first began working in Washington County in 1997 in Juvenile Probation. Mr. Williamson stated he worked as Regional Correctional

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Administrator in Juvenile Services for 25 years before retiring. There was an opportunity for him to become the new Executive Director of Northeastern Workforce Development when Joanna Russell retired from the position. Mr. Williamson stated his purpose of this presentation is to introduce himself. His purpose is also to report on what the NWD is working on, the future plans and to maintain transparency with the Washington County Board of Commissioners. Mr. Williamson stated he plans to meet with Penobscot County to discuss contract details. Mr. Williamson reported the decrease of federal allocations has impacted NWD. Mr. Williamson stated the decrease of funds has caused NWD to reduce the budget for the administrative support from 32 hours to 10 hours. There have also been reductions to funds for consultation fees. Mr. Williamson stated the legal costs for the Opioid Grant also caused an impact to NWD's funds. Mr. Williamson noted NWD is looking to diversify to impact economic growth. Mr. Williamson reported NWD is collaborating with NACO to help those that have been unemployed on a long-term basis and those impacted by the pandemic. NWD is also working on how to reach and train the offender community. NWD actively supports the regions overall economic development and responds to workforce development. Mr. Williamson listed the four areas NWD plans to focus on for workforce development in order to expand economic opportunities. Those four initiatives are: 1) Green Energy; 2) Health Care; 3) Manufacturing; and 4) Technology. Mr. Williamson noted the NWD board membership is composed of representation from the 5 counties. Representation is a combination of members from business, workforce, and education and training. Of this representation, 51% of members on the Board must be representative of businesses in the local area. Commissioner Gardner asked how many businesses from Washington County are represented on the Board. Mr. Williamson replied there is one business on the Board from Washington County. Mr. Williamson noted it would be ideal to have two businesses from each county. Commissioner Gardner is on the board of NWD. Commissioner Gardner stated he will put some thought into businesses that may participate in membership of the NWD board. Mr. Williamson stated he plans to meet with WCCC to help in setting up training programs. More programs are needed to give workers training in soft and technical skills. Mr. Williamson concluded his presentation by stating Northeastern Workforce Development needs to do a better job with connecting with businesses, and providing training for what employers need in the workforce. Nancy Oden pointed out that there is an abundance of ads for jobs but there are still many people

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not working. You have to have people who want to work. Commissioner Gardner stated that Ms. Oden makes a valid point.

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The regular meeting of the Unorganized Territories proceeded at 4:14 p.m.

**Approval of the U.T. regular meeting minutes of July 14, 2022  
(Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report**

Unorganized Territories Supervisor Dean Preston's monthly report was submitted. (See attached)

In Dean's absence, County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported paving work is continuing on the Nineteen Road. Betsy noted boulders are being crushed to use as material for paving.

Betsy presented an Animal Control Agreement for the Commissioners' approval. The Agreement will provide Town of Cooper with ACO services by the U.T. The term of the agreement is for three years. The compensation is an annual training stipend of \$200 plus a per incident charge of \$20.50 per hour and mileage reimbursement of \$0.44 per mile.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the Animal Control Agreement between Washington County Territories and Town of Cooper as presented.  
(Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0.)**

Commissioner Gardner noted the wage per hour should be reassessed and the mileage reimbursement should be adjusted to be in line with what the county is paying now.

**AGENDA ITEM: TIF Grant Committee Update**

A report was submitted and is attached.

Ms. Hatton presented a grant request by Wireless Partners FN, LLC in the amount of \$442,406.00. The purpose of the grant is to help with the project to construct seven miles of electric transmission lines along Route 9. This is a \$1.8 million project; the grant request is 24% of the total cost. Robert Parsloe, President and CEO of Wireless Partners, presented information in support of the project. Mr.

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Parsloe explained Wireless Partners is the northern New England partner for the ATT/FirstNet Authority.

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**\*MOTION\*** Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the TIF Grant request, #2209-04-CM/NBT/EDI, in the amount of \$442,406.00 as presented. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0.)

Ms. Hatton stated there currently is no grant program for this type of request. The funds for this grant will be taken from three different categories; the County Match, Nature Based Tourism, and Economic Development Implementation. Ms. Hatton stated a new category will be created for future infrastructure projects.

**AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment**

Nancy Oden asked about the progress of the Washington County Website update. Commissioner Gardner stated the website domain has been transferred and the updates and revisions are still in progress.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**4:35 p.m.**

**ATTEST:**

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Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.

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