

May 27, 2026

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Workshop Meeting
held May 27, 2026
in the Washington County Commissioners' Office
Machias, Maine**

Attending the meeting were:

**Commissioner David Burns
Commissioner Billy Howard
Commissioner Courtney Hammond
Renée Gray, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Lisa M. Hanscom, EMA
David J. Brock, Lubec
Nick Landrum, The Computer Guy
Christine Day, EMA
Leigh MacKeen, Whitneyville
Grace Falzarano, Finance
Megan Huffman, Finance
Jenny Windsor, Finance
Sondra Small, Finance
Heron Weston, UT Supervisor
Tammy Gay, Deeds**

Work session was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Commissioner Burns.

MOTION **Commissioner Howard moved to enter into executive
session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (D)
(Howard / Hammond, 3-0)**

Executive session was entered at 9:03 a.m.

MOTION **Commissioner Burns moved to exit executive session
(Burns / Howard, 3-0)**

Executive session was exited at 10:17 a.m.

No action taken as a result of executive session.

A recess was held, work session reconvened at 10:40 a.m.

Commissioner Burns opened the meeting with a brief description of the County's current financial situation. The original 2026 Tax

May 27, 2026

74

Anticipation Note (TAN) request for Machias Savings Bank was for \$7,000,000. Due to bond counsel's recommendation, only \$4,027,000 was approved. The County has enough funding to get through 2 months of operations with the existing TAN.

Commissioner Hammond recognized the County fulfilled the bank's requirements with hiring a new finance director and the 2023 Audit will be complete.

***MOTION* Commissioner Hammond moved to pursue additional TAN funds (Hammond / Burns, 3-0)**

New Bond Counsel

Commissioner Burns continued the financial discussion with the County's need to choose new bond counsel, as the previous one had retired and is no longer offering services to Washington County. Three proposals were requested for bond counsel services, Piere Atwood submitted a proposal. No time frame, minimum fee \$5,000, maximum fee \$10,000.

***MOTION* Commissioner Hammond moved to engage Pierce Atwood to provide bond counsel for Washington County (Hammond / Burns, 3-0)**

Discussion: Within a month, need another discussion. Once the timeline is known for the TAN, should layoffs be needed. Next Commissioner meeting will be June 11th.

Spending Freeze

There are already spending guidelines, but must consider freeze on any unnecessary spending. Provisional Treasurer, Grace Falzarano, suggested all travel/training freeze and to participate via zoom when able. County Manager Renee Gray announced that workforce development training reimbursement is now available for 50% reimbursement through the community college system.

Grace also asked if employees can delay requesting cashing out of paid time off reimbursement.

Credit Card Use

Five credit cards within the County. Finance, Admin, RCC, Jail, and

May 27, 2026

Sheriff.

75

Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe on zoom stated he has to use the credit card to purchase meds for the jail. Credit cards are used only for emergencies.

Finance credit card is being used for software. Admin credit card is used for Perch electric payments. Perch has not been charging late Fees when the County has been behind, they also only accept credit Card payments. Sheriff's office uses the credit card for office Supplies on Amazon and discounted rates. Discussion about a recent credit card purchase of a mini-fridge on the Sheriff's credit card, Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe informed the Commissioners it was for evidence storage.

Commissioner Burns suggested Admin and Finance issue a memo to department heads regarding the use of credit cards for necessities only.

Job Descriptions:

Clerk Secretary of Probate
Probate register is statute, no job description provided.

Unorganized Territories supervisor

RCC positions

Sheriff's department

The District Attorney's job descriptions that were approved, were not updated.

The Unorganized Territories job descriptions for ACO and Shellfish Warden, still need updating. Heron will work on and have ready for the next meeting.

Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe stated he is still working on a few job descriptions for the jail.

County Policies

The Commissioners discussed reviewing the policies that are not within Personnel policy manual.

MOTION **Commissioner Hammond moved to table the policies until**

May 27, 2026

they can be reviewed. (Hammond / Burns, 3-0)

76

Sheriff's budget

Commissioner Burns opened the discussion with Sheriff Curtis and Chief Deputy Crabtree regarding the County financial situation. The Commissioners are concerned about the use of overtime. Chief Deputy explained they are running a minimum of 4 slots. If it is known a local police department is out of service, WCSO will run 5 slots. When there are deputies out for various reasons such as military leave, or light duty requirements, it doesn't take much to throw the system off, requiring overtime use. The staff are recruiting part-time deputies so to help offset overtime.

Additional discussion regarding scheduling ensued, possibly reverting back to the old schedule? Chief Deputy Crabtree explained it would not help the situation with the minimum 4-hour callout rule. The Commissioners remain concerned. Commissioner Howard preferred the old schedule. Deputies established in a community has benefits.

Chief Deputy Crabtree said that situation occurs more now with the new schedule. The Sheriff's department plans to meet with each town to explain how services are distributed.

Commissioner Howard explained there will be some very difficult decisions within a month, due to the financial situation. Commissioner Burns asked if all positions within the Sheriff's office were being utilized, to curb overtime use? Chief and Sheriff both responded in the affirmative. They also said they are doing all they can to continue providing adequate services to the people of Washington County.

Letters to the municipalities

Commissioner Burns stated that he was not in favor of sending letters to the municipalities to pay their county taxes early, to help improve the county cashflow situation. Each town knows the situation the County is in financially. Commissioner Howard agreed with Commissioner Burns, and Commissioner Hammond said he would continue to reach out to the municipalities in his district.

-No action

Continued discussion on "where do the funds" go when towns do pay their county taxes early? Commissioner Howard wants the funds to go directly to the TAN. Commissioner Hammond states the additional funds come in, it's used for cashflow. Provisional Treasurer Falzarano also explained the TAN is not a line of credit. County Manager Gray

May 27, 2026

explained the same process could be utilized as it is now with each

77

financial report. Grace updated the Commissioners that bond counsel is pursuing the additional TAN. County Manager Gray also clarified this is not an "over budget" issue, this is a cashflow issue.

MOTION Commissioner Howard moved to approve the job descriptions for Probate; Sheriff's office; RCC and to postpone the Unorganized Territories positions until next meeting (Howard / Hammond, 3-0)

MOTION Commissioner Hammond moved to table the policies (Hammond / Burns, 3-0)

Out of State Travel policy

Commissioner Burns asked the County Manager and Provisional Treasurer to draft an Out of State Travel Policy.

MOTION Commissioner Burns moved there be no out of state travel until there is a policy in place (Burns / Howard, 3-0)

Follow-up comment from Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe there are occasions when training is necessary and at times, they are out of state. EMA Lisa also commented that she has to attend an EMA conference which is held in New Hampshire.

ADJOURNMENT

12:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

Renée Gray, County Manager

May 27, 2026