

December 10, 2020

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Regular Meeting  
held December 10, 2020  
in the Superior 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  
Lynn Dwelley, Emergency Management Agency  
Dean Preston, Unorganized Territories  
Jill Holmes, Treasurer**

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

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Executive Department business was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes for the Public Hearing for the F/Y 2021 Budget held on November 12, 2020. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

**Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on November 12, 2020. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Mr. Charles Rudelitch – Working Communities Challenge**

Mr. Charles Rudelitch presented the Working Communities Challenge. This is an economic development plan that allows collaboration with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, the State of Maine, local government and the profit and non-profit sectors to create new opportunities. This regional collaboration will include priority communities in Washington County. Those priority communities are Machias, Calais, the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Indian Township and the Passamaquoddy Tribe at Pleasant Point. The initiative supports local teams working together to improve economic outcomes for all people in Maine's towns, cities and rural communities. Mr. Rudelitch stated thirty-six partners have signed on to this initiative to date including 20 employers and non-profit organizations. Commissioner

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Gardner inquired what participation is being asked of the Commissioners. Commissioner Gardner noted a previous program that the county shared responsibility in as fiscal administrator did not end

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well. Commissioner Gardner inferred the Board of Commissioners would not be comfortable to be in that position again. Mr. Rudelitch responded the Sunrise County Economic Council would be the fiscal administrator. Mr. Rudelitch stated he is asking that the Commissioners participate by offering their support and a commitment of County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald's time. Participation is needed through the two phases of the initiative; the application process is Phase I and the implementation is Phase II. Commissioner Gardner asked Betsy to confirm her agreement to commit some time to the initiative. Betsy agreed that she would be willing to participate. Commissioner Cassidy stated the concept is good but Commissioners should confirm with the County Attorney that the County will not be made fiscally responsible by participating. The Commissioners agreed by consensus to support Mr. Rudelitch's request.

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports**

The Commissioners were provided a written report from EMA and the Treasurer's Office. All reports were accepted under the gavel. (See attached)

**AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices**

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Gardner moved to approve the hire of Carroll Francis, Jr. as part-time Corrections Officer effective 11/29/20. (Gardner / Cassidy, 2-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Signatures of Six-month Certificates**

A six-month certificate for Wayne Robbins was signed as presented.

**AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on 2021 County Budget**

Treasurer Jill Holmes stated that last month BAC Chair Lewis Pinkham returned the budget to the Commissioners for approval. Jill noted the budget was approved with a 0% increase. Jill stated the budget was built with an anticipation of a 10% increase for insurance; there was

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a 0% increase in the insurance premiums. That 10% buffer covered the increase in the worker's comp liability line, and an increase in wages in order to reach an agreement with the union. The Commissioners signed the Budget for F/Y 2021 as it was presented at the November 12<sup>th</sup> Commissioners' meeting.

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**AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Commissioners' Meeting Dates for 2021**

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented the schedule for the Commissioners' meetings for 2021. Betsy stated the meeting for the month of November would need to be rescheduled as the second Thursday of the month falls on Veterans Day. Betsy asked the Commissioners if they would like to reschedule that meeting to the week before or the week after that date. By consensus, the Commissioners agreed to reschedule the November meeting to Thursday, November 4, 2021.

**AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Holiday schedule for 2021**

The holiday schedule for 2021 was accepted as presented. (See attached)

**AGENDA ITEM: Election of 2021 Committee and Board Appointments**

The Commissioners were provided a list of all committee and board appointments for 2020. (See attached list.) By consensus, the committee and board appointments will remain the same for 2021.

**AGENDA ITEM: Status of Union Negotiations**

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported that the three Unions, Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), National Corrections Employees Union (NCEU), and Teamsters Clerical Union have all agreed to a one-year extension with a 2% increase.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Gardner seconded the motion which passed 2-0. It was 4:45 p.m.**

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**\*MOTION\* The Commissioners declared themselves to have closed the Executive Session. It was 4:56 p.m.**

There was no motion.

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**ADJOURNMENT**  
**4:57 p.m.**

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.**