

December 12, 2024

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Regular Meeting  
held December 12, 2024  
in the Probate Courtroom  
Machias, Maine**

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**Attending the meeting were:  
Commissioner Christopher Gardner  
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy  
Renée Gray, County Manager  
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant  
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO  
Barry Curtis, Sheriff  
Joshua Rolfe, RCC / WCSO  
Mike Crabtree, Chief Deputy  
Commissioner Elect David Burns, Whiting  
Anne Cassidy, Calais  
Susan Sullivan, D.A.'s Office  
Tammy Gay, Deeds  
Heather Green, Deeds  
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer  
Darlene Perry, Probate**

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

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Executive Department business was called to order at 4:27 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on November 12, 2024. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on 2025 County Budget**

The Commissioners were presented with the final county budget for FY 2025. Commissioner Gardner stated it bares repeating that this was the most difficult budget he has ever worked on with a final increase of 21.96%. Commissioner Gardner lamented on the fact that more needed services will continue to increase the budget. Commissioner Cassidy noted he hopes the County can correct the auditing issue that compounded the increase in the budget.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the final budget for FY 2025 as presented. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

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The Commissioners signed the County Budget.

Commissioner Gardner inquired about setting the overlay. Treasurer Jill Holmes stated the overlay and interest rate is set after the new year. Commissioner Gardner stated, for a point of reference for the new Board of Commissioners, that historically the Commissioners have always set the overlay amount at the lowest percentage of 0.5%.

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports**

Written reports were submitted by the Treasurer's Office and Emergency Management Agency. (See attached)

**AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices**

By consensus, the Commissioners signify and recognize the reclassification of Aiden Francis from part-time to full-time Corrections Officer effective 12/29/24.

**AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Six-month Certificate**

None.

**AGENDA ITEM: Discussion on Commissioners' Meeting Dates for 2025**

Commissioner Gardner stated that the general rule is that the Commissioners' meeting dates are always set for the second Thursday of every month with a start time of 4 p.m. By consensus, the first meeting in January was set for Thursday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. The remainder of the meetings for the year will be left for the incoming Board of Commissioners to set.

**AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Holiday schedule for 2025**

By consensus, the Commissioners approved the holiday schedule for 2025 as presented. (See attached) Commissioner Gardner noted the County follows the State of Maine holiday schedule.

**AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Teamsters Union Contract**

The Commissioners were presented with the Teamsters Union Local 340 Clerical Contract. There was no discussion.

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**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the Teamsters Clerical Union contract as presented. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

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**AGENDA ITEM: Award Audit Bid**

Treasurer Jill Holmes presented a summary of the auditing services bid opening. (See attached) Jill noted that after publishing the RFP in the local newspapers, only one bid was received. Treasurer Jill Holmes recommended the Auditing Services be awarded to Stephen T. Hopkins, CPA, PC. Commissioner Gardner noted the bid amount is market driven and reasonable.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to award the Auditing Services bid to Stephen T. Hopkins, CPA, PC as recommended. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: County Manager's Report**

County Manager Renée Gray submitted a written report. (See attached)

Renée reported the roof repair has been completed on the Sheriff's Office, Courthouse and Jail.

Renée informed the Commissioners of an alarm panel failure in the Courthouse. She stated the card has already been replaced. Renée explained the system is needing to be upgraded. A quote was requested from Johnson Controls Fire Protection for a panel upgrade. Johnson provided a quote to furnish, install and commission a 4100ES Fire Alarm Panel upgrade for \$16,482.00. This upgrade will replace the obsolete Simplex 4100U; the new system will communicate with the other systems already in place and will buy the County time until it can be replaced with a new system. Renée stated the cost will come from reserve funds.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to accept the quote from Johnson Controls Fire Protection to upgrade the fire alarm panel at the Courthouse for an amount of \$16,482.00 (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Commissioner Issues and Comments**

Commissioner Gardner stated the MCCA County Risk Pool is facing difficulties. Commissioner Gardner noted that counties grouped

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together many years ago to be able to afford insurance. The risk pool has been paying small claims while larger claims are going to re-insurance. Deductibles will be increased to help keep rates down. Commissioner Gardner noted this is a hot-button issue and is not settled yet. He suggested managing risk at the County level.

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Commissioner Cassidy thanked everyone for the recognition given to him for his years as County Commissioner. It was very much appreciated. Commissioner Gardner echoed Commissioner Cassidy's sentiments.

**\*MOTION\*** Commissioner Gardner moved to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 2-0. It was 4:49 p.m.

**\*MOTION\*** The Commissioners declared themselves to have closed the Executive Session. It was 5:20 p.m.  
(Gardner / Cassidy, 3-0)

**\*MOTION\*** Commissioner Cassidy moved to change county policy in regards to vacation accruals and carry-over in respect to salaried-exempt employees only.

- There will be a one-time adjustment for accrual rates for salaried-exempt employees with 25 years or more to earn a maximum accrual of 20 hours per month.
- Salaried-exempt employees may carry-over up to 240 hours annually. Upon termination, salaried-exempt employees will be paid out a maximum of 272 hours of earned time.

There was no action taken on the Personnel Issue pursuant to Title 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (D).

ADJOURNMENT

5:22 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.

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