

February 24, 2020

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held February 24, 2020
in the Superior Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher M. Gardner
Commissioner John B. Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Susan Hatton, SCEC
Barry Curtis, Sheriff
Mike Crabtree, Chief Deputy
Rich Rolfe, WCSO
Charles Rudelitch, SCEC
Lynn Dwelley, WNEMA
Robert Simpson, Whiting
Jen Peters, SCEC
Rick Heller, The Quoddy Tides
Marge Peacock, Whiting
Wendell McLaughlin, Whiting
Julie Brown, Lubec
Bob Brown, Lubec**

Executive Department business was called to order at 5:12 p.m.

Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on January 9, 2020. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

The Commissioners were provided written reports from the Emergency Management Agency, Treasurer's Office and Sunrise County Economic Council. The reports were accepted under the gavel. (See attached)

AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

The Commissioners accepted the resignation of Keith Robinson as part-

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time Corrections Officer effective 12/25/19 by consensus and without prejudice.

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By consensus the Commissioners also accepted the resignation of Peter Joyce as part-time Corrections Officer effective 12/31/19 without prejudice.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to hire Seth Milliken as full-time Corrections Officer effective 02/16/20.
(Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)

MOTION Commissioner Cassidy moved to hire Aileen Marsceill as part-time Emergency Communications Specialist effective 02/18/20 not to exceed 30 hours except for training and emergency purposes. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)

MOTION Commissioner Cassidy moved to hire Amanda DeWitt as part-time Emergency Communications Specialist effective 02/18/20 not to exceed 30 hours except for training and emergency purposes. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to hire Patrick McDonald as part-time Emergency Communications Specialist effective 02/18/20 not to exceed 30 hours except for training and emergency purposes. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)

Sheriff Curtis recommended Patrol Deputy James Malloy be promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Sheriff Curtis affirmed the promotion was done through a process and within union contract guidelines. Sheriff Curtis stated the patrol division is fully up to staff now. By consensus, the Commissioners approved the Sheriff's recommendation to promote James Malloy to Sergeant effective 03/01/20.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on County Tax Tabulation

Treasurer Jill Holmes presented the 2020 County Taxes assessed to the municipalities and Unorganized Territories of Washington County. (See attached) The tabulation lists each municipality, their assessed State Valuation and their total tax amount due to the County after the mill rate of 0.00170499100 has been applied. Commissioner Gardner

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stated the top five municipalities with the highest tax valuations are Baileyville, Lubec, Steuben, Milbridge and the Unorganized Territories.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to adopt and sign the County Tax Tabulation for 2020 as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)

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AGENDA ITEM: Boundary Validation

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated an Initial Boundary Validation Program form was received from the United States Department of Commerce. The Initial BVP is an opportunity for the County Commissioners to review and ensure the Census Bureau's boundary data for Washington County is accurate. Maps were provided with the 2020 Initial Boundary Validation Program form. Betsy stated she has reviewed the maps received and confirms the maps correctly reflect the legal boundary for Washington County effective January 1, 2020.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to verify the 2020 Initial Boundary Validation Program form. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

Commissioner Gardner signed the form as Chair of the Board of Commissioners.

Marge Peacock of Whiting brought a concern she has to the Commissioners. Ms. Peacock asked that the Washington County Commissioners consider the consequences and take action in opposition to Governor Janet Mill's proposal for Maine to welcome asylum seekers. Ms. Peacock noted the reason for her concern had to do with the limited resources there are in Washington County. Ms. Peacock listed lack of reliable transportation, lack of appropriate housing, limited job opportunities and the increase in educational needs as some of the concerns in welcoming asylum seekers to Washington County. Commissioner Gardner spoke on behalf of the Board of Commissioners regarding asylum seekers. Commissioner Gardner stated, although Washington County is an ethnically diverse area, the reality is there would need to be a tremendous increase in resources before Washington County could be an area designated for asylum seekers. Commissioner Gardner noted it is not good public policy to congregate people where

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they cannot be given appropriate care. Commissioner Gardner stated the County Commissioners retain legal authority and responsibility to make the determination as to whether Washington County will be a designated area for asylum seekers. Mr. Robert Simpson of Whiting was also in attendance as a concerned citizen. Mr. Simpson thanked Ms. Peacock for bringing up the issue and thanked the Commissioners for their consideration in this matter. Commissioner Crowley stated he was in agreement with Commissioner Gardner's assessment of the

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situation. By consensus, the Commissioners directed County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald to make formal notification on letter head to Governor Mill's office stating the Washington County Board of Commissioners expect to be engaged and included in the decision-making process. Commissioner Gardner asked that he have an opportunity to review the letter drafted before it is sent to Governor Mill's office.

MOTION **Commissioner Crowley moved to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0. It was 5:47 p.m.**

MOTION **The Commissioners declared themselves to have closed the Executive Session. It was 5:54 p.m.**

There was no motion.

ADJOURNMENT
5:54 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.