

January 10, 2019

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held January 10, 2019
in the Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher M. Gardner
Commissioner John B. Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton E. Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administration
Robert Simpson, WCEA, Whiting
Jill Holmes, Finance
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO
Richard Rolfe, Jail
Barry Curtis, Sheriff
Jonathan Curran, WCSO
William White, WCSO
Alan Stanwood, WCSO
Sharon D. Strout, Registry of Deeds
Josh Rolfe, RCC
Dean Preston, U.T.**

Executive Department business was called to order at 4:15 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes for the Public Hearing for the FY 2019
Washington County Budget held on December 13, 2018
(Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

**Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on
December 13, 2018 (Crowley/Cassidy, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

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

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AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

The discharge of John Francis, Jr. as part-time Patrol Deputy was

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accepted by consensus and without prejudice. John's commission expired and was not renewed. The effective date of discharge is 10/09/18.

By consensus, the resignation of Richard Moore, Jr. as part-time Patrol Deputy effective 12/13/18 was accepted without prejudice.

Sheriff Curtis requested Dennis Worcester be re-classified from full-time to part-time Patrol Deputy. Dennis did not successfully complete his training at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. The Commissioners' approved the reclassification by consensus.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to hire Jonathan Curran as full-time Patrol Deputy effective 01/01/19.
(Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to re-classify Alan Stanwood from part-time to full-time Patrol Deputy effective 01/01/19.
(Crowley/Cassidy, 2-0)**

For the purpose of seniority, Alan Stanwood is filling the first position and Jonathan Curran is filling the second position.

It was noted that both Patrol Deputies will be scheduled to attend the Criminal Justice Academy.

Commissioner Gardner pointed out the extended time-frame the Justice Academy now has for training. Commissioner Gardner also asked for some insight on recent issues that have come to light regarding the Justice Academy. Sheriff Curtis stated that it appears the Academy is out of control. Injuries are happening more frequently due to poor training practices. To add to the frustration, the Academy has increased the rate to \$40,000 for the first year. Commissioner Cassidy inquired as to who holds the Academy accountable. Captain Rich Rolfe responded that the Academy has a Board of Trustees.

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Commissioner Gardner stated he had attended a MCCA meeting recently. There are some big issues relating to the Department of Corrections also. One of the concerns has to do with inmate health coverage and the cost involved. After a brief discussion regarding all the concerns the Sheriff stated that he plans to address these problems.

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RCC Director Josh Rolfe recommended reclassification of Corin Dowling from part-time to full-time ECS effective 01/01/19. Corin will be filling the full-time position held by Larry Hayward. Josh noted that Corin filled a full-time position recently for a fellow co-worker during a military deployment.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to re-classify Corin Dowling from part-time to full-time ECS effective 01/01/19.
(Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

Commissioner Gardner asked that the records reflect that Corin is being reinstated to a full-time position.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to hire William White as part-time Patrol Deputy effective 01/01/19 not to exceed 30 hours per week except for training and emergency purposes.
(Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

EMA Director Lynn Dwelley stated part-time EMA Deputy Director William Sternbergh plans to resign from his position. Bill has accepted another job that does not allow the time needed to fulfil the needs in the EMA office. Bill did not give an effective date of his resignation. The Commissioners acknowledged Bill's intention to resign. Lynn will present Bill's official resignation at the February meeting.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to hire Nicholas Libby as full-time Corrections Officer effective 01/20/19.
(Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures of six-month certificate for Lynn Dwelley

The six-month certificate was signed as presented.

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AGENDA ITEM: Appointment of Commissioners and/or County Manager to Committees and Boards for 2018

The Commissioners were presented with a list of all Committee and Board Appointments from 2018. Commissioner Cassidy stated he needs to withdraw from the Board of the Northeast County Workforce Investment Board and requested to be replaced. Commissioner Gardner was nominated to replace Commissioner Cassidy for that Board.

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***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to sustain current Committee and Board Appointments as is except the Northeast County Workforce Investment Board. (Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

The 2019 Committee and Board appointments are as follows:

- Maine County Commissioners Association and Risk Pool Board - Commissioner Gardner
- Sunrise County Economic Council Board Member - Betsy Fitzgerald
- Northeast County Workforce Investment Board - Commissioner Gardner
- Washington County Council of Governments Board of Directors - Betsy Fitzgerald
- WCCOG Brownfield Advisory Committee - Betsy Fitzgerald
- Downeast RC & D - Betsy Fitzgerald

By consensus, the Commissioners authorized Betsy Fitzgerald to be proxy if there is no Commissioner available.

AGENDA ITEM: Set County tax interest rate

Treasurer Jill Holmes presented the history of the interest rate charged on delinquent taxes. Jill's recommendation is to set the interest rate at 5%. This is the interest rate set for the previous three years.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to set the County tax interest rate at 5.00%. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

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AGENDA ITEM: Set overlay amount

Treasurer Jill Holmes provided the history of the overlay set for previous years. The overlay, by law, can not exceed 5%.

Historically, the overlay has been set at .5%. Jill presented the options for the overlay as follows:

- .5% \$31,017.22
- .75% \$46,525.82
- 1.0% \$62,034.43

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to set the County overlay**

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percentage at .5%. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)

AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of Extension Office rent

The decision of the BAC to cut the Extension's third-party request by half has left the Cooperative Extension in a difficult financial position. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald requested the Commissioners consider an option that the County could offer in helping the Extension continue to operate. Betsy suggested the Commissioners give the Extension assistance by forgiving the rent the Extension pays the County for one year. Commissioner Gardner questioned what expense could be removed to balance the absence of the revenue for the rent. Commissioner Gardner asked Treasurer Jill Holmes for her thoughts on the matter. Jill stated her only concern was the 68% increase in the Worker's Compensation rate that came in after the budget was set. Jill noted that the 68% increase represents approximately \$40,000 not included in the budget that was passed.

Commissioner Gardner stated the Board of Commissioners may want to reconsider the overlay amount set. Commissioner Cassidy asked how that would affect the municipalities. Commissioner Gardner also suggested the funds for the other two Governmental Third Parties be cut completely and be allocated to the Extension. Commissioner Gardner asked what was the approved budget for the other two Governmental Third Parties. Treasurer Jill Holmes stated Soil and Water Conservation was allotted \$6,000.00 and Washington County RC & D was allotted \$2,000.00. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald pointed out that all three Third Parties were cut by 50%. Treasurer Jill Holmes

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stated there are funds set aside in the Buildings and Grounds Reserve line. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated she would prefer to use funds from the Buildings and Grounds reserve to cover the Extensions rent for the office space than to cut the small amount budgeted for the other Third Parties.

Commissioner Gardner noted his unease about forgiving the rent money for the Extension. Commissioner Gardner stated the Board of Commissioners left the decision for the budget cuts in the hands of the BAC. Commissioner Gardner stated he would not want it to appear that the Board of Commissioners did not have integrity and hold true to their word.

Commissioner Gardner stated the \$6,000.00 for Soil and Water Conservation and the \$2,000.00 for WC RC & D would make up the amount

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needed to cover the rent amount for the Extension. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reiterated she would rather take funds from the Buildings and Grounds. Commissioner Crowley asked what maintenance projects were needing to be done for the Extension Office space this year. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald responded planned projects such as painting and work in the cellar are projects that can wait. That would save approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000.

Commissioner Gardner made a suggestion that due to extenuating circumstance relating to the unexpected increase in the worker's comp rate and in an effort to help the Extension, funds from the Buildings and Grounds be used to offset the revenue for the rent from the Extension. It is also to be understood that the maintenance projects planned for that building only will be deferred in order to keep the tenant.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to forgive one-year allowance on the Cooperative Extension rent with offsetting expense from the Buildings and Grounds maintenance on said building. (Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

Commissioner Gardner stated this decision was a difficult decision and in no way is to be interpreted as undermining the work of the BAC. Commissioner Cassidy agreed.

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AGENDA ITEM: Reconsideration of RCC SOP's

RCC Director Josh Rolfe stated the RCC SOP's that were approved in the December Commissioner's meeting had not been reviewed or signed by the Sheriff. Josh is asking the Commissioners to consider and pass the revised RCC SOP with the addition of the Sheriff's signature.

Commissioner Gardner asked the Sheriff if he was satisfied and approved of the RCC SOP being presented. Sheriff Curtis acknowledged his satisfaction and approval of the revised SOP.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to ratify the RCC SOP as presented. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

County Manager reminded the Commissioners there are two tax abatements pending. Hill vs. Town of Alexander is scheduled for February 21,

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2019 at 3 p.m. Gray vs. Town of Robbinston is scheduled for March 14,
2019 at 3 p.m.

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald also noted Paul Williamson of Apex
Clean Energy will be present at the February meeting for an update on
the APEX project.

ADJOURNMENT

5:03 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.