

January 14, 2016

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held January 14, 2016
in the Commissioners' Conference Room
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
Lora Whelan, Quoddy Tides, Eastport
Barry Curtis, Sheriff
Michael Crabtree, Chief Deputy
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator
Sharon D. Strout, Deeds
Jill Holmes, Treasurer
Sondra Small, Finance Clerk
Lyman Holmes, Probate
Carlene Holmes, Probate
Michael Hinerman, EMA
Joshua Rolfe, RCC**

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

**Approval of the Regular Commissioners' meeting minutes held on
December 2, 2015 (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

**Approval of the Special Commissioners meeting minutes held on December
16, 2015 (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

The Commissioners were provided reports in their meeting packets.

Register of Deeds Sharon Strout stated that she requested bids for a preservation project. The project will entail all the steps necessary to prevent any further deterioration of 130 maps and plans. Two bids for were received. Kolfile Preservation submitted a bid of

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\$11,332.50 and Xerox Government Systems, LLC submitted a bid of \$23,400.00. Sharon explained that Xerox's bid included more work in the project than was requested. She has dealt with Kofile Preservation before and is happy with their work. With the recommendation of Register of Deeds Sharon Strout,

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to accept the bid from Kofile Preservation in the amount of \$11,332.50 for the Registry of Deeds preservation project. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

Sharon noted that the project will be paid for with surcharge account funds.

Sharon asked the Commissioners if she will need to put another bid out for more preservation work once this project is done or will she be able to use the same vendor. Commissioner Gardner stated that if a vendor is needed for another project that was not specified in this current bid, another request for bids will be needed.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Six-month Certificates

Six-month certificates for Lynn Dwelley, Susan Bolles and Abby Hoke were signed as presented.

AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

The Commissioners unanimously accepted the resignation of Tom Fredette as U.T. ACO/Shellfish Warden effective 1/14/16. U.T. Supervisor Heron Weston stated that Tom has taken a new job.

U.T. Supervisor Heron Weston recommended Ben Robinson to fill the position of U.T. ACO/Shellfish Warden. Heron explained that Ben has been filling in for that position since Tom Fredette has been unavailable. Commissioner Gardner asked if there had been a hiring process. Heron replied that there had been no application or hiring process. Commissioner Gardner stated that the U.T. office must go through the hiring process. Commissioner Gardner also suggested that it would be advantageous for candidates to have some law enforcement background. The Commissioners unanimously tabled the recommendation to hire Ben Robinson until the proper hiring process was complete. Until the ACO/Shellfish Warden position is filled Ben can work as an outside contractor to cover the duties.

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The Commissioners unanimously accepted the resignation of Amy Premier as full-time Jail Cook effective 12/31/15. It was decided that the details of Amy's resignation would be discussed during the executive session.

By consensus and without prejudice, the resignation of Blaine Silk as full-time Patrol Deputy was accepted effective 01/02/16. Chief Deputy Michael Crabtree stated that Deputy Silk has been hired by the State Police. Chief Crabtree noted that the County can expect a full reimbursement of \$30,000.00 from the state for Deputy Silk's Academy training costs. By consensus, the Commissioners authorized County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald to work with the Sheriff's Office to receive the reimbursement. The Commissioners wished Deputy Silk good luck. Treasurer Jill Holmes recommended that once the reimbursement is received from the state, it should be put in the reserve account for future training purposes. By consensus, the Commissioners directed the reimbursement funds to be put in the training reserve account.

Treasurer Jill Holmes introduced Sondra Small as the candidate to fill the position of full-time finance clerk effective 01/05/16. Treasurer Holmes stated that there had been a hiring process. After interviews were done, it was a unanimous decision to recommend Sondra for the position.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to hire Sondra Small as full-time Finance Clerk effective 01/05/16. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

AGENDA ITEM: Appointment of Commissioners and/or County Manager to Committees and Boards for 2016

The Commissioners were provided with a list of committees and boards on which the Commissioners and the County Manager sit. Commissioner Gardner listed the 2015 Committee and Board appointments 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 (formally known as Aroostook/Washington County Workforce Investment Board, Commissioner Cassidy

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- Washington County Council of Government Board of Directors, Betsy Fitzgerald
- WCCOG Brownfield Advisory Committee, Betsy Fitzgerald
- Downeast RC&D, Betsy Fitzgerald

MOTION **Commissioner Crowley moved to leave the appointments for each board the same for 2016. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

By consensus, County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald will serve as a proxy in the absence of any of the Commissioners.

AGENDA ITEM: Discussion-Probate Courtroom

Probate Judge Lyman Holmes stated that he was very pleased to know that Probate Court will be taking over the old district courtroom space for probate court business. Lyman noted that it will be very beneficial to have a courtroom for hearings since there are more requirements to have hearings recorded than there have been in the past. He said he understands that the Commissioners are planning to hold their monthly meetings in this space as well, and as part of the renovation plans, the old superior courtroom bench will be used to replace the bench that is presently in the district courtroom. Lyman expressed his concern in regards to changing the present bench with the superior court bench. Lyman stated that the present set-up accommodates the needs of the Probate Office just as it is. Commissioner Gardner stated that Lyman's point is well taken. A courtroom space for the Probate Office has been long needed. With the renovations to the Court house, the Commissioners have had to utilize the space available for what is needed to conduct business. The Commissioners agreed that they would like to find a solution that incorporates the superior court bench that has been a fixture in the courthouse since 1855 while accommodating the needs of both the Commissioners' Office and the Probate Office. The Commissioners are open to new ideas and have instructed County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald to work with Judge Holmes to work out a reasonable set-up.

AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Teamsters Union Local 340 Collective Bargaining Agreement

The County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented the Teamsters Union Local 340 Collective Bargaining Agreement representing the Clerical Unit. Betsy reported that there were only a few changes to the

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contract. The new wage schedule reflects step increases only for 2016 and a two percent increase for 2017. Treasurer Jill Holmes asked if the contract was for two years only. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald confirmed that it was a two year contract.

MOTION **Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the Clerical Union contract with Teamsters Union Local 340 as presented. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

AGENDA ITEM: Set overlay percentage amount

Treasurer Jill Holmes provided the Commissioners with history of the previous three years overlay and percentages of interest charged. The purpose of the overlay is a percentage added to the municipal taxes to compensate for potential unpaid taxes. She provided the following options for the overlay percentage; .5% - \$27,146.93; .75% - \$40,720.39; 1% - \$54,293.86.

MOTION **Commissioner Cassidy moved to set the overlay percentage amount at .5%. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

AGENDA ITEM: Set County tax interest rate

Treasurer Jill Holmes reported that the county tax interest rate has been set at 5% for the past three years. Commissioner Gardner stated that 5% was a reasonable percent to charge.

MOTION **Commissioner Cassidy moved to set the County tax interest rate at 5%. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0.**

AGENDA ITEM: Update on Court House Project

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported that the Court House project is nearly complete. A punch list was compiled. There are some flooring issues to deal with; four windows that will still need to be installed on the third floor; and Hanscom Construction will have some ground work to do in the spring.

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald asked the Commissioners if it would be reasonable to approach Ganneston Construction for a cost to replace the district court bench with the 1855 superior court bench without

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going out to bid. Commissioner Gardner stated that if Ganneston Contruction could offer a fair and equitable price to do the renovations it would be acceptable due to their expertise and familiarity with the material.

Commissioner Gardner asked about the Sally port. There had been concerns about accessibility and snow removal issues. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported that there had been no issues of which she was aware. There has not been a significant amount of snow yet this winter. If there is any amount of snow, the plan is to plow out from the Sally port.

MOTION Commissioner Crowley moved to go into Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA § 405 6 (A) (3) to discuss personnel issues. Commissioner Cassidy seconded the motion which passed 3-0. It was 4:52 p.m.

MOTION Commissioner Cassidy moved to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Crowley seconded the motion which passed 3-0. It was 5:27 p.m.

No motions or decisions were made.

ADJOURNMENT

5:27 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.