

January 14, 2021

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held January 14, 2021
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
Lynn Dwelley, EMA
Jill Holmes, Treasurer
Dean Preston, Unorganized Territories Supervisor
Rich Rolfe, WCSO**

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

Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on December 10, 2020. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0-1)

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports

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

Commissioner Gardner asked EMA Director Lynn Dwelley for the status of COVID vaccinations. Lynn stated Phase 1A has been completed. Phase 1A included the vaccinations for Washington County EMS Ambulance and members of fire departments. Lynn reported that Washington County received 100 doses of the COVID vaccine. Three vaccination clinics were conducted. Washington County has 159 licensed EMS clinicians; 73 chose to receive the vaccination. Commissioner Gardner stated he had heard that ambulance drivers were not included in those designated to get the vaccine. Lynn explained that the guideline does not include ambulance drivers because drivers in other counties are not as hands-on. Lynn stated discretion can be used and some drivers have received the vaccination. Dean Preston asked if there were any concerns with people opting-out of getting the vaccine. Lynn stated that there are some that have opted-out due to their age, pre-existing conditions or concerns about reactions to the vaccination. Lynn noted that if the person does have the opportunity to get the vaccination but opts-out,

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they must sign a certificate stating that they have opted-out. Lynn also stated that anyone that has opted-out can change their mind and will be provided the vaccination.

AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices

The Commissioners accepted the resignation of Mariah Mace as part-time ECS effective 01/04/21 by consensus and without prejudice.

AGENDA ITEM: Set Overlay and County tax interest rate, Treasurer Jill Holmes

Treasurer Jill Holmes provided the Commissioners with a history of the overlay and the percentage charged for interest on delinquent taxes for the previous three years. Commissioner Gardner noted that the overlay has been set at .5% the past three years and the interest rate for delinquent taxes has been set at 5.00% the past three years. Commissioner Gardner asked Jill if she recommended making a change to what the overlay and interest rate has been set at or continue with the same percentages. Treasurer Jill Holmes responded that she recommends the Commissioners set the overlay and interest rate at the same rate as the previous few years.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to set the overlay at .5%. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

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

AGENDA ITEM: Accept Audit Proposal from Stephen T. Hopkins, CPA

Treasurer Jill Holmes stated she was happy to recommend Stephen Hopkins, CPA of Scarborough to the Commissioners for the County and U.T. audit work. Jill noted the quote for the charge to complete the audit is higher than what has been charged in previous years. Jill stated the audit work will cover both 2019 and 2020. Mr. Hopkins is scheduled to be at the County on-site to do the field work the first week in April. Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe voiced his concern about not having a completed audit for his upcoming Jail inspection. Jill stated that Requests for Proposals were published several times with no results. Mr. Hopkins submitted a proposal after both the County Manager and the Treasurer actively continued to seek an auditor that would perform audit services for the County. Commissioner Gardner asked if there are funds in the budget to cover the cost. Jill confirmed that there are enough funds to cover the proposal.

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MOTION Commissioner Cassidy moved to accept the audit proposal to cover 2019 and 2020 as so presented and recommended by the County Treasurer. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)

AGENDA ITEM: Ratify County Manager's signature on FOP contract

Commissioner Gardner stated that due to deadline constraints the County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald had been authorized by the Commissioners to work with the Fraternal Order of Police to come to an agreement for the FOP contract. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated an agreement was made with the FOP to extend the current contract for one year with no step increases for 2021 and a 2% increase based on 2020 wages.

MOTION Commissioner Cassidy moved to accept and ratify the County Managers signature on the one-year contract for the Fraternal Order of Police. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)

Commissioner Gardner requested that the record reflect that he has been nominated for several boards and will serve as:

- Treasurer for the Maine Municipal Association Risk Pool;
- County Representative for the County and Municipal Detention Facility Advisory Committee; and
- Member of the By-Laws Committee for Maine County Commissioners Association

ADJOURNMENT

4:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.