

January 9, 2020

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Regular Meeting  
held January 9, 2020  
in the Superior Courtroom  
Machias, Maine**

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**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  
David Bibber, Charlotte  
Bill Jones, Charlotte  
Brenda Jones, Charlotte  
Rich Rolfe, WCSO**

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Executive Department business was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

**Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on December 12, 2019. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly and Quarterly Reports**

The Commissioners was provided a written report from the Treasurer's Office. The report was accepted under the gavel. (See attached)

**AGENDA ITEM: Payroll Change Notices**

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to hire Whitney Bassett as full-time Corrections Officer effective 01/05/20.  
(Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

The Commissioners accepted the resignation of John Peterson as full-time Patrol Deputy effective 01/14/20 by consensus and without prejudice.

7

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to reclassify Alan Stanwood from full-time to part-time Patrol Deputy effective 12/30/19.  
(Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

January 9, 2020

Chief Deputy Michael Crabtree noted the reclassification for Alan Stanwood may be only temporary.

Jail Administrator Rich Rolfe reported Corrections Officer Jeffrey Gray resigned his full-time position effective 12/16/19. Jeffrey has moved back to his home in Colorado. By consensus, the Commissioners accepted Jeffrey's resignation without prejudice.

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

Six-month certificates were signed as presented for EMA Administrative Assistant Christine Day, Patrol Deputy Ashley Seiler and Patrol Deputy William White.

**AGENDA ITEM: Appointment of Commissioners and/or County Manager to Committees and Boards for 2020**

The 2020 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: Tax Abatement Decision for Bibber vs. Town of Charlotte**

**AGENDA ITEM: Tax Abatement Decision for Jones vs. Town of Charlotte**

8

Commissioner Gardner stated tax abatement requests for David Bibber and William and Brenda Jones have been denied. Commissioner Gardner further explained that although the Commissioners must decline the petition, it is the Boards' belief that there are significant irregularities in the valuation of property values. Commissioner Gardner stated the Town of Charlotte did not do a good job with

January 9, 2020

property valuations, but the taxpayers have not met the burden of proving just value. Commissioner Gardner stated that he strongly recommends the taxpayers take their tax abatement requests to the Superior Court. By consensus, the Commissioners will sign the denial once it has been properly drafted. Mr. Jones voiced his frustration in the process and questioned the purpose of the County Commissioners hearing the taxpayers request for abatement. Commissioner Gardner stated there was not enough evidence that the valuation for the properties in question was nothing more than a simple mistake. Commissioner Gardner made a suggestion to the taxpayers before proceeding that they build their case by trying to come up with a solid valuation for their properties that will uphold the burden of proof.

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

Treasurer Jill Holmes provided a history of the overlay and interest charged for interest for the previous three years. (See attached) The Board of Commissioners were in agreement to set both overlay and interest rate on delinquent taxes at the same rate as the previous three 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)**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**6:54 p.m.**

**ATTEST:**

**Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.**