

July 14, 2022

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Regular Meeting
held July 14, 2022
in the Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, Sheriff's Office
Michael Crabtree, Chief Deputy
Joshua Rolfe, RCC
Nancy Oden, Jonesboro
Elizabeth Powers, Jonesboro
Jill C. Holmes, Treasurer
Tammy C. Gay, Deeds
Lisa M. Hanscom, EMA**

Executive Department business was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

Approval of the minutes for the Regular Commissioners' meeting held on June 9, 2022. (Cassidy / Crowley, 2-0-1)

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.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Six-month Certificate

The Commissioners signed six-month certificates for Tyler Look, Whitney Bassett and Meghann Hill as presented.

AGENDA ITEM: Carry Over

Treasurer Jill Holmes presented 2021 proposed carry over lines for the Commissioners review and approval (see attached). Jill noted some of the larger proposed carry over figures are in the 7000 accounts. Jill explained that the 7000 accounts are specifically used to reserve funds for specific items. Commissioner Gardner asked why the Building

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Improvement line had such a large amount. Jill responded there are projects not yet completed that will come from the Building Improvement line. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated one such project is the work that still needs to be done at the 24 Center Street Talbot building. Commissioner Gardner stated he had anticipated that ARPA funds would be used for that project. Betsy noted the County is trying not to use all the ARPA funds; there is a significant list of projects still needing to be done. Jill pointed out the fuel expense line should be carried over as not all the fuel bills have been paid yet. Jill also noted the balances are effective as of the end of 2021; some lines such as the Contingency line have expenses that have already occurred that will be deducted for 2022. Commissioner Gardner asked if audit expenses came out of the professional services line. Jill responded that the audit expense comes out of the Accounting/Auditing line. Commissioner Gardner suggested the proposed list of carry over be accepted as presented with the total carry over amount of \$1,301,360.58.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the 2021 Carry Over lines as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Sheriff's Bonds

District Attorney Matthew Foster presented the necessary documents to confirm that the member coverage of the Maine County Commissioners Association self-funded risk management pool provides sufficient coverage to the Sheriff, Chief Deputy and the Sheriff's deputies. Commissioner Gardner stated this is a legal requirement done annually to bond their performance.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to approve the Sheriff's bond, the Chief Deputy's bond and the Sheriff's deputies' bonds as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Approval of Caucus Schedule

The Commissioners were provided a schedule for the annual caucuses to elect members to the fiscal year 2023 Washington County Budget Advisory Committee. Commissioner Gardner reviewed the schedule for each district. The schedule is attached. Commissioner Gardner noted a Budget Advisory Committee member must be an elected municipal officer or their designee. Each district is needing to elect one

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member for a three-year term.

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***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the caucus schedule as presented. (Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0)**

Commissioner Gardner asked if the budget process has begun. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated budget discussions will begin in August. Betsy noted the paperwork would be going out to the department heads soon. Treasurer Jill Holmes added the paperwork would be distributed on Friday, July 15th.

AGENDA ITEM: Signatures on Sheriff's Contract with Town of Jonesport

Chief Deputy Michael Crabtree presented an M.O.U. between Washington County Sheriff's Office and the Town of Jonesport for the Sheriff's Office to provide special services. The contract amount is not to exceed \$27,000.00 for the period beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 1, 2023. Commissioner Gardner pointed out Jonesport is paying above and beyond for extra law enforcement coverage.

***MOTION* Commissioner Crowley moved to sign the M.O.U. between Washington County Sheriff's office and the Town of Jonesport as presented. (Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Building Committee Update

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald reported that she met with the architect from Port City Architecture today. Betsy stated the Architect and the Building Committee had an extensive conversation and spent a considerable amount of time discussing the needs of the County. The Architect had some thoughts about how the building might be utilized and suggested the safety building be built on the current location of the District Attorney's office building. Commissioner Gardner asked if the architect made any indication of what the price is for the plans discussed. Commissioner Gardner noted concerns due to inflation and wanting assurance that there will be enough funds for the project. Betsy stated they did discuss funds and she informed the architect that the County is not interested in going out to bond for additional funds. The architect asked what funds are available. Betsy stated she gave him a figure of \$5,500,000.00. The architect stated he could bring a design to bear for a safety building with that amount based on the input given to him by the Building Committee.

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Paula Johnson-Rolfe asked Betsy if the architect had commented on the condition of the Sheriff's Office. Betsy responded that the architect did not mention the condition of the present Sheriff's Office. Paula stated the architect told her the Sheriff's Office building was not in good shape and that it is unsafe.

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Commissioner Gardner stated the County may have to take the funds that are available to renovate the Sheriff's Office and make it safe. Commissioner Gardner pondered what can be done with the current Sheriff's building. Commissioner Gardner noted it is on the Historical Register. Rich Rolfe stated the Building Committee may have some solutions. Nancy Oden asked what is the purpose of the new safety building that is being discussed. Commissioner Gardner stated the new safety building would enable the County to eliminate some of the older buildings currently being used by several departments and to bring the Sheriff's Office and the Regional Communications Center under one roof. Commissioner Gardner asked when the proposal was expected back. Betsy stated the architect did not give a timeframe but she will follow-up as soon as possible.

AGENDA ITEM: Commissioner's Issues

Commissioner Gardner stated he received the news that the Cooperative Extension is moving to a new space and will no longer be renting 28 Center Street from the County. Betsy stated this was discussed several months ago. Commissioner Gardner asked if there has been any discussion with the Extension regarding when they will be completely moved; how much longer can the County expect the monthly rent payment; and does the Extension still plan on requesting as much third-party funds as they have in the past. Betsy stated the most recent report she received from the Extension is that they plan to be out by August 4th. Commissioner Gardner asked if there is a plan for the office space at Center Street. Betsy suggested an advertisement be placed to rent out the vacated space. Commissioner Gardner stated that may be problematic since the County is currently trying to reconfigure work space for several departments.

Commissioner Gardner stated he recently had an interview on the radio regarding the current situation with State Police coverage. Commissioner Gardner noted the issue is due to a shortage of law enforcement personnel.

ADJOURNMENT

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4:16 p.m.

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