

March 10, 2022

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Unorganized Territories Regular Meeting  
Held March 10, 2022  
in the Washington County 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  
Nancy Oden, Jonesboro  
Rick Heller, Machiasport  
Renee Gray, Addison  
Jack Hunkler, Cherryfield  
Miles Villalobos, Whiting/Pleasant Point EMS  
Dean Preston, U.T.  
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO  
Rich Rolfe, Jail Administrator  
Barry Curtis, Sheriff  
Dennis Perry, RCC  
Susan Hatton, SCEC  
Charles Rudelitch, SCEC  
Lisa Hanscom, EMA  
Tammy Gay, Deeds  
Darlene Perry, Probate  
Carlene M. Holmes, Probate  
Josh Rolfe, RCC**

---

Commissioner Gardner called the meeting to order at 4 p.m.

The meeting began with a presentation on Washington County Emergency Medical Services. The purpose of the presentation was to inform the Commissioners of the current concerns related to the Emergency Medical Services in Washington County and to garner support for the Rural EMS reform initiative. Service Chief of Moosebec EMS and Lubec Town Administrator, Renee Gray, stated monthly meetings have been held to address the need to increase EMS workforce in Washington County. These monthly meetings stemmed from the Emergency Meeting of the Commissioners held October 20, 2021. The October meeting had been

March 10, 2022

22

held in response to concerns the vaccine mandate was impacting an already dwindling workforce in the EMS field. Renee stated there is still a shortage of workforce in the EMS field that needs to be addressed. Renee stated the mission of Washington County EMS Training Program was to increase the workforce through Education as Phase 1. Collaborating with Axiom Education & Training Center and United Training Center, education and training will be provided to Washington County residents. A letter of support from Jane Blackwood, Executive Director of Axiom, was presented. Miles Villalobos of Pleasant Point EMS and a nationally certified instructor spoke on the concern of the workforce shortage in the EMS field. Miles stated an education plan is needed. Miles requested the Board of Commissioners' support. Miles asked the Commissioners to consider the approval of \$50,000.00 as seed money. Miles explained the funds would help cover tuition costs, testing costs and to coordinate the EMS training program. Miles suggested ARPA funds could be used for this purpose. Miles also stated \$50,000.00 would be an annual request to continue the training and educational program.

Commissioner Cassidy asked if Community Colleges could lend resources rather than using government funds. Miles stated those resources are not available to them. Commissioner Gardner stated he was glad the Emergency Meeting of the Commissioners had promoted more meetings. Commissioner Gardner noted Commissioner Cassidy's question was a wise one; shouldn't education be a Community College issue? Miles stated EMT classes were in need of different support. Commissioner Cassidy stated his intentions of finding out more information about Community College resources. Renee stated EMS is at the mercy of Community Colleges. Renee noted there is an urgent need now and EMS does not have time to wait for help.

Jake Hunkler spoke on behalf of Jane Blackwood from Axiom. Jake stated Axiom agreed to support this program because there is a need for educational support to increase the passing rate of students entering the program. Miles noted a workforce development program and advanced EMT classes would create sustainability. Commissioner Cassidy stated there is a shortage everywhere in the medical field. Commissioner Cassidy noted the Board would like to help the cause but more information is needed. Commissioner Gardner agreed that the program is worthy of making an investment, but more of the framework is needed to make a commitment. Commissioner Gardner stated the need has been established; how to fund this program will need to be

March 10, 2022

determined. Commissioner Gardner suggested funding should be discussed by the Budget Advisory Committee. Commissioner Gardner

23

noted BAC input is the best way to pool community resources. Commissioner Gardner requested more information be given to the Board of Commissioners before the next meeting. This will enable each Commissioner to review the information individually then collectively reconvene to discuss the next steps. In conclusion, Commissioner Gardner noted this type of service is no longer supported by volunteers; this work must be a job and a career.

The regular meeting of the Unorganized Territories proceeded at 4:40 p.m.

**Approval of the U.T. regular meeting minutes of February 10, 2022  
(Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0-0)**

**AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report**

Unorganized Territories Supervisor Dean Preston's monthly report was submitted. (See attached)

Dean reported the U.T. Shellfish Warden has submitted his resignation. Dean stated he will be advertising, interviewing and selecting a new hire immediately.

Dean presented an Animal Control Agreement for the Commissioners' approval. The Agreement will provide Grand Lake Stream Plantation with ACO services by the U.T. The term of the agreement is for three years. The compensation is an annual training stipend of \$200 plus a per incident charge of \$22.00 per hour and mileage reimbursement of \$0.585 per mile.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the Animal Control Agreement between Washington County Territories and Grand Lake Stream Plantation as presented.  
(Cassidy / Crowley, 3-0.)**

Commissioner Gardner inquired about long-term contracts the U.T. is under and the financial concerns with the rise in inflation. Dean stated the U.T. is not in bad shape, but the increase in fuel prices faced by the contractors is concerning.

March 10, 2022

It was noted that LD 2011 has been introduced in the legislature to allow the annexation of 10,000 acres of U.T. to Columbia Falls. All 10,000 acres is property of one land owner. Commissioner Gardner

24

stated the Maine Revenue Service has no issues with the bill. A Public Hearing will be scheduled. Josh Rolfe questioned the purpose of the request to annex this property to Columbia Falls. Commissioner Gardner stated it was his understanding that it is to keep the Veterans Park all together. Commissioner Gardner recommended the Board of Commissioners support LD 2011.

**\*MOTION\* Commissioner Crowley moved to vote in support of LD 2011.  
(Crowley / Cassidy, 3-0.)**

Commissioner Crowley stated he would like to be involved with any further discussions of this project moving forward.

**AGENDA ITEM: TIF Grant Committee Update**

A report was submitted and is attached.

Ms. Hatton stated there were no action items.

Ms. Hatton gave a brief update on a loan for Nickey Dubey, dba Ben's Dive Shack. Ms. Hatton stated the loan closing will be next week. The loan was given conditional approval by the Commissioners pending the TIF Loan Committee's recommendation of the loan.

**AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment**

Nancy Oden offered suggestions to the Commissioners for the use of ARPA funds. All suggestions were noted.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**4:35 p.m.**

**ATTEST:**

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

March 10, 2022

25