

October 13, 2022

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Unorganized Territories Regular Meeting
Held October 13, 2022
in the Washington County Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO
Diane P. Griffith
Susan Hatton, SCEC
Lisa M. Hanscom, EMA
Tammy C. Gay, Deeds
Carlene Holmes, Probate
Joshua Rolfe, WCSO
Regina Grabrovac, Healthy Acadia
Michael Crabtree, Chief Deputy**

Commissioner John Crowley, Sr. was not present

Commissioner Gardner called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Regina Grabrovac of Healthy Acadia was present to give an update on the Downeast Restorative Harvest Project. The Downeast Restorative Harvest Project is a jail-community garden initiated by Healthy Acadia and a collaboration with Washington County Jail and other community partners. A written report is attached. Ms. Grabrovac summarized the efforts done to date. She reported there have been enough funds raised to launch the project and sustain it for the first four years. Ms. Grabrovac stated all soil tests have been completed, the parcel of land has been mowed, and a permit to build a driveway has been secured. Ms. Grabrovac noted that water and electricity access has also been discussed. Ms. Grabrovac stated the Downeast Restorative Harvest Advisory Council has been launched to engage community members and partners in this project. Ms. Grabrovac reports there is much interest and excitement with more ideas to expand this project. Ms. Grabrovac explained that in order to be eligible for federal, state, local government and private grantor and donor funding, they need to make a long-term commitment to the project. Ms. Grabrovac stated Healthy Acadia is requesting the Board of Commissioners to enter into a long-term lease agreement.

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The long-term agreement would ideally be a 20-year lease. Commissioner Gardner asked what is the composition of the advisory council. Ms. Grabrovac stated 25 people attended the first meeting and included representatives from Community Caring Collaborative, SCEC and Maine Department of Corrections. Commissioner Gardner inquired what party would have the lease agreement with Washington County. Ms. Grabrovac responded the lease would be with Healthy Acadia. The Board of Commissioners acknowledged the need for a long-term commitment but was not prepared to make a final decision. Chief Deputy Crabtree stated it would be hard to foresee certain circumstances that would cause the County to need use of the land. Commissioner Gardner noted that 20 years is a long period of time and the board will need time to consider the request. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald suggested the advisory council meet with a representative of the landowner. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald also recommended a proposal for the lease agreement be for a ten-year period with a review for a possible continuation of the agreement at that time. By consensus, the Commissioners requested Healthy Acadia to prepared a lease proposal that meets the needs of all parties to further the project and includes an emergency clause bar that has provisions to terminate the lease if necessary. Commissioner Gardner stated the purpose of the emergency clause is to ensure the County is not locked into a long-term agreement. Commissioner Gardner added there should be certain reasonable bench markers to hold Healthy Acadia accountable. Ms. Grabrovac agreed to rework the terms of the agreement. Ms. Grabrovac stated that, regardless of the long-term agreement, Healthy Acadia is still committed to continuing to build the garden project with the Jail, Maine Department of Corrections and other community partners at the site that works best for all.

The regular meeting of the Unorganized Territories proceeded at 4:11 p.m.

**Approval of the U.T. regular meeting minutes of September 8, 2022.
(Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report

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

In Dean's absence, County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald highlighted some items on Dean's report.

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Dean has continued to work on a discontinuance of a small piece of previous ROW on US Route 1. Commissioner Gardner stated he would like more information; he is not in favor of giving up this piece of land.

Dean reported local residents are interested in speaking on the status of the unmaintained portion of the Haycock Harbor Road in Trescott Twp.

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented several action items. The first agreement is for animal control services provided by Washington County Territories to the Town of Vanceboro. The agreement is for a three-year term with an annual training stipend of \$200 plus \$22.00 per hour per incident and mileage reimbursement of \$0.585 per mile.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the Animal Control Agreement between Washington County U.T. and Town of Vanceboro as presented. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

The second agreement is for animal control services provided by Washington County Territories to the Town of Cooper. The agreement is for a three-year term with an annual training stipend of \$200 plus \$24.00 per hour per incident and mileage reimbursement of \$0.585 per mile.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the Animal Control Agreement between Washington County U.T. and Town of Cooper as presented. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

Commissioner Gardner noted the difference in the hourly rate for the two agreements.

County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald presented the Local Road Assistance Program (LRAP) Certification for FY 2023. To be eligible to receive the funds, each County must certify that the funds will be used only for Capital improvement of public County roads. It is estimated that Washington County will receive \$89,848.00 in funding.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to certify that all funds from the Local Road Assistance Program will be used only for Capital improvement of public County Roads. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

The LRAP Certification was signed as presented.

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County Manager presented contract #11 for snow removal services. The contractor is Jerry Wood & Son, LLC to serve Marion Twp. The term of the contract is for October 15, 2022 through May 15, 2026 with an annual compensation of \$6,000.00 annually

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to approve the snow removal contract #11 as presented. (Cassidy / Gardner, 2-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: TIF Grant Committee Update

A report was submitted and is attached.

There were no action items.

AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment

Diane Griffith stated she has paid taxes in the Unorganized Territories for many years. Ms. Griffith stated her concerns about the use of the Haycock Harbor Road. Ms. Griffith stated some community members, such as the fishermen and herself, have maintained the Haycock Harbor Road. Ms. Griffith noted investments have been made to what they believed was an abandoned road. Commissioner Gardner stated the Board of Commissioners will need to learn more. Commissioner Gardner noted investments may have been made, but that does not supersede a public interest in the road. Commissioner Gardner concluded the Board of Commissioners will represent the overall public and maintain public ways.

ADJOURNMENT

4:20 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.