

October 23, 2025

Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'  
Special Meeting  
Held October 23, 2025  
in the Washington County Commissioners' Office  
Machias, Maine

---

Attending the meeting were:  
Commissioner David C. Burns  
Commissioner Courtney Hammond  
Commissioner Billy Howard  
Renée Gray, County Manager  
Carla Manchester, Administrative Asst.  
Jeffrey Lovit, Addison  
Dan Daley, Lubec  
Ben Edwards, Machias  
Darlene Perry, Probate  
Tammy Gay, Deeds  
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO  
Paul Sylvain, MVNO  
Heather Green, Deeds  
Wayne Jones, Trescott  
Shasta Rolfe, Machias  
Joshua Rolfe, RCC/WCSO  
Christine Day, Machias  
Lisa M. Hanscom, EMA  
Carlen Jay, Jonesport  
Barry Curtis, Sheriff  
Michael Crabtree, Sheriff  
Matthew Stanhope, Buildings and Grounds

---

Commissioner Burns called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. for a budget work session.

Commissioner Burns immediately adjourned for a Press Conference that was held on the front steps of the Courthouse. Commissioner Burns made an introductory statement for the public and press that were assembled. Commissioner Burns noted that the Washington County Department Heads were present. A number of the BAC members and State Senator Marianne Moore were also present.

Commissioner Burns reviewed the list of "Good Faith Efforts" that were presented at the Public Hearings for the Referendum for the three Districts.

October 23, 2025

Commissioner Burns introduced the Budget Advisory Committee Chair Brian Schuth. Mr. Schuth stated the BAC has spent several weeks discussing the County's financial crisis. Mr. Schuth read the resolution supporting the proposed bond that was passed unanimously by the BAC. The resolution concluded the BAC regrets the need for the bond but cannot see any other responsible solution. (See attached resolution.

BAC Vice Chair Ben Edwards came forward to address questions that have been most frequently asked and to field any questions from the public and press. Several key points given by Mr. Edwards was:

- The County cannot negotiate the payment of the TAN with the bank;
- Defaulting on the TAN does not make the debt disappear;
- The TAN payment must be made within the same year the loan was taken;
- The effect on taxes for individual taxpayers is an average of a 10% increase on the County portion only. Mr. Edwards noted he is presently developing an on-line calculator for taxpayers to use and should be available soon;
- The Bond is the solid measured path forward.

State Senator Marianne Moore gave a statement. Senator Moore listed those she has made contact with to enlist support, help and guidance in what she considers "uncharted territory". She stated she contacted State Auditor Matt Dunlap. She has contacted State Treasurer Joe Perry. Treasurer Perry stated there is no recovery money available. Senator Moore noted Commissioner Burns contacted Governor Mills. The Governor's response to the request for assistance was that she would not want to set a precedent. Senator Moore stated bankruptcy for counties is not allowed in Maine, but noted debt reorganization can be done. She reiterated that the County cannot default. She concluded her message by stating we need to keep our essential services and take care of our citizens.

Commissioner Hammond fielded questions asked by those in attendance.

Q. When did the County know of the shortfall?

A. The auditor informed the Finance Office just before the last BAC Meeting for the FY 2025 budget.

Q. When will the bond be available if it passes?

A. It would be available in two weeks after it passes.

October 23, 2025

- Q. Has there been any implementation of guardrails to ensure this type of financial situation does not happen again?
- A. New polices are being created and put in place by the Provisional Treasurer.
- Q. What is the status of the audits?
- A. The auditor is working diligently. The Commissioners are also looking to incorporate new auditors to assist in the process and bringing the County up-to-date.

The Press Conference concluded at 4:06 p.m. and the workshop of the Commissioners reconvened in the Commissioners' Office.

**\*MOTION\*** Commissioner Howard moved to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Hammond seconded the motion which passed 3-0. It was 4:07 p.m. (Howard / Hammond, 3-0)

**\*MOTION\*** The Commissioners declared themselves to have closed the Executive Session. It was 4:34 p.m. (Hammond / Howard, 3-0)

There were no action or decisions made. Commissioner Burns stated the Board of Commissioners will not make any decisions until after the November 4<sup>th</sup> Referendum vote.

Provisional Treasurer Grace Falzarano provided the Commissioners with a report of Recurring Monthly Expenses for November and December. She also provided a report of the Projected Needs for November and December. With those figures, Grace stated the remaining funds of \$2,887,360.10 are estimated to get the County through February 2026. Grace pointed out the \$2.8 million does not include what is left in the TAN.

It was noted the Opioid Settlement Funds will be coming for years. It was questioned if any positions could be funded out of those funds. Rich Rolfe stated he will check with his counterparts for acceptable uses of the opioid funds. Manager Renée Gray stated she was assured additional money is coming. She noted she needs to get access to the portal. Provisional Treasurer Grace Falzarano stated the opioid funds are not in their own separate account presently; the funds are going into the general fund. Commissioner Howard stated the opioid funds need to be in a separate account.

October 23, 2025

Commissioner Burns stated there is a meeting tomorrow with Sue Lessard to guide the Finance Office with setting safeguards.

ECS Carlen Jay asked if the referendum does not pass, how soon will employees expect positions to be cut and a plan rolled out. Commissioner Burns did not have an exact timeframe but stated the Commissioners will be holding executive sessions and working through the process. He stated the BAC will be dealing with the same issues. Carlen stated there should have been a spokesperson responding to social media. Commissioner Burns pointed out it would have been too expensive to hire a spokesperson, and noted the Commissioners tried to dispel any misinformation. Carlen voiced her concern that the scrutiny will continue. Commissioner Burns stated he would encourage all employees to notify the County Manager of any misinformation being shared on social media so that it can be dealt with.

**ADJOURNMENT**

4:58 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

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

## For Immediate Release

The Washington County Budget Committee has spent several weeks discussing the County's financial crisis. While the Committee is profoundly disturbed by the chain of events that has rendered the County unable to fulfill an almost \$8 million debt commitment, it is also deeply concerned about the effects of failing pay off that debt. After passing many hours learning the details of County government and the implications of the current financial crisis, the Washington County Budget Committee unanimously passed the following resolution:

The Budget Committee votes to support the proposed bond as recently amended by the commissioners for up to \$8 million, that money to be used exclusively to retire the existing TAN.

The bond offers the only responsible method for addressing the County's financial crisis. It will allow the County to avoid default on the TAN, it will give municipalities flexibility in how address the financial challenges posed by this crisis, and it will buy the County time to pursue any alternative methods it may discover for resolving the crisis.

If the bond does not pass, the Committee's ability to do their work on the 2026 County budget will be severely compromised, as the County will be in the unprecedented position of running out of money to provide County services unless some other mechanism is found to raise the \$8 million needed by the end of 2025 to set aside the current tax anticipation note. Most of the County's services are related to public safety: about three quarters of County expenses go to maintaining the jail, 911 dispatch, emergency management, and the Sheriff's office. The Committee regrets the need for the bond but cannot see any other responsible solution.

Brian Schuth

Washington County Budget Advisory Committee  
Board Chair

October 21, 2025



## Recurring Monthly Expenses for Nov Dec

### County of Washington Monthly Payments 2025

Aflac	\$	478.92	M
AT&T (611)	\$	2,200.55	M
AT&T (625/602)	\$	170.25	M
Axiom	\$	534.95	M
Bebus, Paige	\$	231.13	AV/M
Canon Financial Services	\$	315.75	M
Cardmember Services (SO)	\$	1,500.00	AV/M
Cardmember Services (Admin)	\$	3,540.75	M
Charter Communications	\$	284.94	M
Colonial Life	\$	80.50	M
Comdata	\$	846.08	AV/M
Computer Guy, LLC	\$	500.00	M
Consolidated Comm.	\$	2,096.10	M
Consolidated Comm. (607)	\$	67.00	M
Dead River	\$	6,731.58	AV/M
Deeds, Registry of	\$	334.80	AV/M
Diamond Drugs, Inc.	\$	2,548.47	AV/M
Dorsey, Dennis	\$	10,769.20	M
Downeast Comm. Hosp.	\$	1,283.67	AV/M
Eastern Maine Elec.	\$	535.85	AV/M
Firstlight Fiber	\$	63.20	M
FOP Sheriff Union	\$	1,283.50	M
Hannaford CC	\$	66.97	AV/M
Howard Enterprises	\$	4,200.00	M
Info Quick Solutions	\$	3,600.00	M
Leighton, Janelle	\$	436.50	AV
LD 1021	\$	96.45	AV/M
Machias Valley News	\$	622.79	AV/M
Maine Dept. of Labor	\$	692.68	M
Maine Municipal	\$	195,000.00	AV/M
MainePERS	\$	95,000.00	AV/M
Maine Turnpike Auth.	\$	15.74	AV/M
McKesson Medical	\$	726.33	AV/M
Modern Pest Services	\$	131.00	M
NCEU Union Dues	\$	1,976.00	M
NCEU Health/Welfare	\$	3,477.17	AV/M
OIT A/P	\$	76.41	M
PCT Communications	\$	3,600.00	M
Perkins, Alison	\$	1,583.44	AV/M
Pine State Elevator	\$	251.01	M
Regional MC Lubec	\$	2,186.56	AV/M
Relx Inc. LexisNexis	\$	262.50	M
Roberts, Kimberly	\$	4,282.54	AV/M

*M=Monthly  
AV=Monthly Average  
(based on 10 months)*

#### Added Expenses

Border Electric	\$	37,900.00
DOJ Grant	\$	23,000.00
Motorolla	\$	34,510.99
	\$	<u>95,410.99</u>

#### Quarterly

Bebus, Paige	\$	150.00
Campbell, Melissa	\$	150.00
Cox, Wanda	\$	150.00
Cushing, Crystal	\$	150.00
Pitney Bowes	\$	189.30
Sunrise County Econ. Cou	\$	6,000.00
Sullivan, Susan	\$	150.00
Toffolon, Toff	\$	150.00
Worster, Rachel	\$	150.00
	\$	<u>7,239.30</u>

#### Third Party Requests

Orono Fire	\$	5,000.00
Next Step	\$	1,500.00
	\$	<u>6,500.00</u>
	\$	<u><u>109,150.29</u></u>

## Recurring Monthly Expenses for Nov Dec

Sunrise Opport.	\$	1,415.81	AV/M
Sysco	\$	12,518.67	AV
Teamsters	\$	309.00	M
Toffolon, Toff	\$	131.80	AV/M
Transamerica	\$	145.18	M
U.S. Bank (602)	\$	189.74	M
U.S. Bank (699)	\$	86.42	M
Verizon Wireless	\$	240.07	M
Versant	\$	12,956.04	M
WEX	\$	9,000.00	AV/M

<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b>\$</b>	<b><u>391,674.01</u></b>	
		<i>x 2 months</i>	
	<b>\$</b>	<b><u>783,348.02</u></b>	

		\$ 783,348.02	
		\$ 109,150.29	
		<b><u>\$ 892,498.31</u></b>	

---

<b><u>Registry of Deeds</u></b>	<b>\$</b>	<b><u>201,180.00</u></b>	
---------------------------------	-----------	--------------------------	--

This is the surcharge that the General Fund owes to the Deeds surcharge account as of 10/20/25.

Projected Needs for Nov-Dec 2025

<u>Accounts Payable</u>		<u>Payroll 2025</u>	
#	Warrant Total	Ck Date	Warrant Total
1	\$ 142,149.90	3-Jan	\$ 261,100.99
2	\$ 268,495.19	17-Jan	\$ 255,050.32
3	\$ 1,443,834.79	31-Jan	\$ 265,407.28
4	\$ 71,534.90	14-Feb	\$ 249,829.41
5	\$ 22,000.00	28-Feb	\$ 259,689.30
6	\$ 1,341,976.20	28-Feb	\$ 75,753.40 (Payout)
7	\$ 293,604.57	14-Mar	\$ 241,413.76
8	\$ 1,175,567.94	28-Mar	\$ 251,100.50
9	\$ 190,574.83	11-Apr	\$ 246,069.99
10	\$ 299,641.70	25-Apr	\$ 240,382.37
11	\$ 469,087.12	9-May	\$ 242,232.40
12	\$ 388,311.94	23-May	\$ 245,424.61
13	\$ 208,130.83	6-Jun	\$ 242,361.00
14	\$ 277,582.86	20-Jun	\$ 262,795.17
15	\$ 394,527.85	3-Jul	\$ 246,789.12
16	\$ 257,837.36	18-Jul	\$ 266,157.18
17	\$ 165,851.84	1-Aug	\$ 256,335.22
18	\$ 336,934.40	15-Aug	\$ 264,222.21
19	\$ 187,485.03	29-Aug	\$ 270,606.81
20	\$ 772,988.39	12-Sep	\$ 245,123.73
21	\$ 56,716.80	26-Sep	\$ 289,376.87
22	\$ 206,914.95	10-Oct	\$ 246,001.29
		24-Oct	\$ 256,892.39
	<b>\$ 8,971,749.39</b>		<b>\$ 5,680,115.32</b>
	<i>Divided by 22</i>		<i>Divided by 23</i>
	<b>\$ 407,806.79</b>		<b>\$ 246,961.54</b>
	<i>x 5 AP Warrants</i>		<i>x 4 payrolls</i>
	<b>\$ 2,039,033.95</b>		<b>\$ 987,846.14</b>

*Anticipated Need through 12/31/25*

**\$ 3,026,880.09**

Cash on Hand 10/17/2025	4,757,783.19
Remaining Funds due from Towns as of 10/17	<u>1,156,457.00</u>
Sub total cash	5,914,240.19
Less Anticipated needs through 12/31	3,026,880.09
Estimated remaining cash 12/31	2,887,360.10
Estimate per month using 2025 Actual	
Warrants per month	\$ 407,806.79
Payroll per month	\$ 246,961.54
Estimated total funds per month	\$ 654,768.33

Using estimated remaining cash 12/31 and estimated expenses with no emergency repairs, it appears we would have enough for January and February 2026. Please keep in mind, the 2025 Budget is not accurate and we are already finding line items that are budgeted under actual expenses.