

August 8, 2019

**Minutes of the Washington County Commissioners'
Unorganized Territories Regular Meeting
held August 8, 2019
in the Washington County Probate Courtroom
Machias, Maine**

**Attending the meeting were:
Commissioner Christopher Gardner
Commissioner John Crowley, Sr.
Commissioner Vinton Cassidy
Betsy Fitzgerald, County Manager
Carla Manchester, Administrative Assistant
Paula Johnson-Rolfe, WCSO
Rich Rolfe, Jail
Susan Hatton, SCEC
Barry Curtis, Sheriff
Michael Crabtree, Chief Deputy
Jill Holmes, Treasurer
Lynn Dwelley, EMA
Reagan Gardner, Edmunds**

Commissioner Gardner called the meeting of the Unorganized Territories to order at 4:16 p.m.

**Approval of the U.T. meeting minutes of July 18, 2019
(Crowley/Cassidy, 3-0)**

AGENDA ITEM: Monthly Report

Unorganized Territories Supervisor Dean Preston's monthly report was submitted and accepted under the gavel. (See attached).

Dean highlighted several summer highway maintenance projects that are being worked on currently. These projects are on School Street and Lake Road in Lambert Lake Twp., and on Marion Station Road in Marion Twp.

Dean stated he is working with the current contractor for the winter highway maintenance contract #5 for Twp.#8 R3 and R4. If the contract needs to be bid out, Dean plans to have packets prepared and advertise for bids no later than the September Commissioners' meeting.

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Dean presented the Maine Department of Transportation Local Road Assistance Program (LRAP) certification 2019-2020 for the Commissioners' acceptance. Each County must certify that the funds

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will be used "only for Capital improvements of public roads." It is estimated that Washington County will receive one payment of \$75,832.00 by December 1, 2019 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020.

***MOTION* Commissioner Cassidy moved to certify that funds received from the Local Road Assistance Program in the amount of \$75,832.00 for the fiscal year 2019-2020 will be used only for uses as stated above. (Cassidy/Crowley, 3-0.)**

AGENDA ITEM: TIF Committee Update

A report was submitted and is attached.

Ms. Susan Hatton presented a grant repayment to be waived for Leslie Robinson, DBA River Bend Ranch. Ms. Hatton stated that each of the benchmarks for the grant have been met and grant requirements have been satisfied in good faith. The original business plan of boarding horses has been done as well as riding lessons and farm birthday parties. Although Leslie has had to give up boarding horses due to a relocation, the Grant Committee recommends the grant money in the amount of \$10,000.00 not be subject to repayment. By consensus, the Commissioners were in agreement with this recommendation.

Commissioner Gardner stated his opinion that grants need to be reimbursed. Susan stated that in most instances those requesting grant money for a business are doing so because they have no working capital. Commissioner Crowley stated that may be the case, but there should be an agreement for repayment if the business plan is not fulfilled. Commissioner Gardner questioned whether the County should be investing in businesses if they are not able to come up with starting money or able to reimburse funds.

Susan stated the Committee discussed modifications to the TIF grant program. Commissioner Cassidy asked what modifications have been recommended. Susan stated she had planned to present the modifications as an action item further on in her report.

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Commissioner Gardner asked to proceed to that action item.

Ms. Hatton summarized the proposed modifications to the TIF grant program as recommended by the Grant Committee. The modifications are as follows:

- Grants for the EDI grant program be limited to one grant per

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- applicant;
- Grants are not to exceed \$10,000 with a 2-1 match requirement;
 - An applicant is defined as an individual business owner who applies for a grant (If a business has more than one owner, another owner can apply for an additional grant for that business);
 - Grant agreement shall be modified to include a paragraph to address how the recipient plans to repay the grant in the event that the benchmarks are not met within a reasonable length of time. Benchmarks shall be defined as obligations of how the grant money will be spent.

Commissioner Crowley stated he was not sure he agrees with the modification that allows for another owner of a business to be able to apply for additional grant money for the same business. Commissioner Gardner agreed a grant should be specific to a business. The Grant Committee recommended one grant per business and still require a 2-1 match. Commissioner Crowley stated he understands that one might not have working capital but suggested collateralizing grant money. Commissioner Gardner agreed that going forward grants should be collateralized. Commissioner Gardner questioned if the grant agreement has changes that are enforceable. Commissioner Gardner suggested further discussion is needed.

Ms. Hatton presented a grant repayment recommendation for Mike Griffin. The Committee agreed that none of the benchmarks of the grant have been met. The Grant Committee recommends that the grant money in the amount of \$15,000.00 be repaid. Mr. Griffin is meeting with a business counselor at SCEC and on track to pay the loan off by January 2020.

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AGENDA ITEM: Public Comment

Commissioner Gardner has been made aware of an individual that has built a road and boat ramp into the Denny's River. The LUPC has been notified. Commissioner Gardner directed County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald to check out the situation. Commissioner Gardner stated he has pictures available if needed. County Manager Betsy Fitzgerald stated she will look into it.

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ADJOURNMENT

4:34 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carla J.R. Manchester, Admin. Asst.