

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes August 11, 2020

2296

9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci and Andre Cushing

72°

Commissioner Laura Sanborn participated via phone

Approval of Minutes –

Commissioner Cushing made a motion to approve August 4, 2020 meeting minutes.
Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Public Comment – None

Sheriff's Update –

- Sheriff Troy Morton reported today's jail total population is 165 (130 males, 35 females); 21 boarded in other facilities; 131 in Pre-Trial services.
- Law Enforcement:
 - Commissioner Cushing moved to approve the Towns of Bradley and Greenbush supplemental contracts as presented. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0. Signed.
 - Calls to service are continuing to increase.
 - Two Patrol Deputy Interviews are being held this week; one for the Northern Penobscot Zone and the other for the Town of Milford.
 - Suicides are on the rise. There are still helpful resources available for those who need help. There is an awareness campaign taking place with NAMI.
 - It was reported from Dr. Gordon Smith that it is very discouraging and sad to see that substance abuse overdoses are up 23% this first quarter; they predict that the numbers will increase next quarter. Services are still available for addiction.
- Corrections:
 - Staffing is still an issue. We are short officers. We are forcing overtime in an already difficult job. We need new ways to recruit and retain new officers.
 - The Courts are continuing to expand services. Sheriff is going to have dialog with the Judges over at Penobscot Judicial Center to see if there can be more video arraignments/hearings.
 - Pre-Trial Services has made a proposal for an additional case manager position (\$56K) This position will be used mainly for data entry; but can also fill in as a case manager when needed. The Commissioners were supportive of this idea and feel the sooner someone comes in to fill that spot the better it is to divert people out of the jail.
 - PACE (alternate sentencing) program will be at the end of the month with 27 participants. We will be using a space which is COVID compliant with enough rooms to allow for social distancing.

Sheriff's Update - Continued:

- Lt. Keith Hotaling shared with the Commissioners space concepts on how to better use our existing jail structure particularly when it comes for video arraignments vs transporting inmates to Court.

Two rooms (contact room and video arraignment) on the first floor that are under-utilized.

- Contact Room
 - We are proposing to remove the six tables and construct two rooms in that space. We would remove and replace the ceiling and lighting with acoustical ceiling and lighting. Include steel doors with metal frames; two interior windows. We would move the fire alarm and camera.
- Video Arraignment Room
 - We are proposing that we add another video arraignment room in that space so that it can be used as overflow for video and medical. We would like to move our records from behind the intake counter and put them here. This would remove the congestion in the intake area. We would be replacing wooden with metal shelving. We would need to add an additional networking switch to complete this room.
- Sheriff and Lt. Hotaling feel if this can be accomplished, then we would be able to reallocate positions currently held to include more for data entry.

Commissioner Baldacci added that we need to be more creative and learn how to use what we have more efficiently to be cost effective. Commissioner Baldacci states from what he sees it is an improvement of space and functionality. Right now, dollars are much scarcer and communities are starting to see the effect of COVID and budget cuts. We need to be more realistic of what we can get for value out of our existing building. Make it much more functional.

Sheriff also said he would like local law enforcement Chiefs to talk to the Commissioners about the Jail impact to local law enforcement agencies.

Deeds Update –

- Registrar Susan Bulay reported that her department is up 4% on recording documents and monies from last year. However, she is three and a half weeks behind in work going out.

UT Update -

- Director Shaw Weeks reported that the gravel project bids for the County Road in Greenfield will be opened next Tuesday.
- A picture of the “Welcome to Kingman” sign that has been put up (shared with the Commissioners).
- Commissioner Cushing moved to approve the signage for the “Scenic Byway” in T1R6 Wels. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Motion moved to approve passed 3-0.
- Commissioner Cushing moved to approve the MDOT agreement to remove snow from trail section of the Detective Benjamin Campbell Bridge in the event that local snowmobile clubs are no longer operational. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Motion moved to approve passed 3-0.
- Director Weeks attended a zoning petition meeting last week to discuss some updates on the Wolfden Mt. Chase rezoning petition.
 - Review of the petition will not likely be completed until sometime in late September.
 - Total acreage for rezoning is 528 acres
 - LUPC is requesting review from the Commissioners specifically on police services. Aroostook and Penobscot Sheriff’s Departments, along with State Police Troop F will be involved.
 - Operation of the mine will require 60 full time individuals; 30 workers per shift, two shifts daily
 - Wolfden estimates 7 trucks out of the facility per day – no travel on county-maintained roads
 - They are seeking comments on socioeconomic impacts on this mining project
 - Fire/EMS services contracts are to be provided by Island Falls Ambulance Service & Island Falls Volunteer FD
 - Commissioner Sanborn felt it may be wise to have LUPC representative Peter Pray to come in and provide an update on this project since he’s been working on it.
- A citizen from Millinocket requests signage at South Twin Lake and boat launch area be replaced; upgrade the picnic turnoff to the boat launch, pave launch, roadway and add a parking lot. Further investigation and discussion is necessary

HR Update –

- Director Erika Honey requested permission to outsource to Betsy Oulton (HR Consultant) documentation to produce an Employee Handbook for the County. This will include union contracts, policies and procedures for the County.

HR Update – Continued:

Commissioner Cushing made a motion to approve allotting monies to produce a Penobscot County Employee Handbook with total estimated hours 36-47 and cost ranging from \$2,880-\$3,760. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

- Director Honey reported on COVID related issues within the County:
 - Most all departments have returned to full staffing in their offices. The DA's office is staggering some of their staff
 - We will see how our staff is impacted once schools starts in the fall; we may need to be flexible
 - We are still monitoring travelling for employees
 - We are airing on the side of caution if employees feel they have been exposed and keeping them out of work
 - There have been no employees that have tested positive at this time
- Grievance hearings have been reset to September 22nd.
- Director Honey will be meeting with the Sheriff's Office on staffing needs. We're not unique as the staffing shortage is a nationwide problem.
- Captain Clukey, Lt. Hardwick and I are actively participating in the PREA grant. One of the facets of this is delving into the culture assessment of other areas, not just wages and benefits.
- Director Honey will be participating in interviews with PRCC this week.
- We re-opened our search for the Director of Facilities. It will close August 21.
- There will be training for Supervisors at the end of September. It will talk about the disciplinary process include laws, probationary periods and investigations.

Administration Update –

- Administrator Collins reported on the MACCAM meeting last Friday. MSA also participated in their meeting. The purpose was to discuss LD 973 bill that is before legislature; this bill will be discussed tomorrow with MCCA. The latest graph from the criminal justice/appropriations committee had been reviewed. The working committee has been working with Maine Municipal Association; MACCAM voted to approve what has been presented. The Sheriff's department has not voted at this time.
- Administrator Collins presented the letter to go out to the tax abatement participants from last week for signature. Signed.

Administration Update – Continued:

- There will be a MCCA zoom meeting tomorrow
- Correspondence has been forwarded to you on the latest Opioid lawsuit
- Mike Michaud plans to come before you next week
- Tomorrow marks the second anniversary of Commissioner Davis' passing
- RCM is meeting with PRCC staff today
- Last week there was an issue with the northern microwave; last night there was an issue with an antenna in the southern area.
- Payroll Change Notices signed for: Ryan Buck – Hired full time; Gerald Carstensen and Benjamin Brown – Payroll Changes
- Payroll Warrant to be approved for August 7, 2020: \$ 241,445.21
- Accts Payable Warrant to be approved for August 7, 2020: \$ 10,744.65
- Accts Payable Warrant to be approved for August 11, 2020: \$ 149,384.34
- UT Warrant to be approved for: NONE
- UT TIF Warrant to be approved: NONE

Executive Session---Commissioner Cushing made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:10 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Collins, Register Susan Bulay and Director Honey. Session ended at 10:25 a.m. No votes taken.

Executive Session---Commissioner Cushing made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:26 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Collins, DA Marianne Lynch, Office Manager Kristine Higgins, Bangor Police Chief Mark Hathaway, Deputy Chief David Bushey and Director Honey. All left the room at 10:44 am with the exception of Erika Honey and Bill Collins. Executive Session ended at 10:58 a.m. No votes taken.

Meeting Adjourned-

Commissioner Sanborn moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:59 a.m. with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0

Certified By:

Administrator, William Collins

Peter K. Baldacci, Chairman

Laura J. Sanborn, Commissioner

Andre E. Cushing, III, Commissioner