

**Penobscot County Commissioners Meeting Minutes January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 #2123**  
**9:00 AM Commissioner's Peter Baldacci, Tom Davis, and Laura Sanborn. 14°**

**Approval of Minutes-**

- Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the January 10<sup>th</sup> minutes. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

**For the Minutes**

- The County received a check in the amount of \$ 1,249.33 on a Maine Municipal Grant. Commissioner Sanborn voted to accept these funds. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3 – 0.

**Executive Session-** Administrator Bill Collins made a request to go into Executive Session to discuss a contract matter under 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (C) at 9:15 am. The Commissioners, PRCC Director Chad LaBree, Mr. Collins and Ms. Judy Alexander were in attendance. Treasurer Dan Trembler entered at 9:30 am. Executive Session ended at 9:40 am with no votes taken.

**Executive Session-** Administrator Bill Collins made a request to go into Executive Session to discuss a contract matter under 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (C) at 9:42 am. The Commissioners, Attorney's Ed Bearor, Attorney Katie Foster, Mr. Collins, Treasurer Tremble sand Ms. Judy Alexander were in attendance. Executive Session ended at 9:55 am with no votes taken.

**Executive Session-** Administrator Bill Collins made a request to go into Executive Session to discuss a contract matter under 1 MRSA § 405 (6) (C) at 9:56 am. The Commissioners, PRCC Director Chad LaBree, Mr. Collins, Treasurer Tremble and Ms. Judy Alexander were in attendance. Executive Session ended at 10:05 am with no votes taken.

**Unorganized Territory Update-**

- Director Barbara Veilleux presented a request to re-grant a Special Amusement Permit for Saw Mill Grill in T3 Indian Purchase. According to the Sheriff's Office, the business has not had any issues, and Barbara noted that they have recently renewed their liquor license. Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the signing of the permit. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
- Barbara explained she had reached out the Millinocket Public Works Director, Ralph Soucier in regards to forming an agreement for the delivery of the county's estimated waste to PERC after 2018. Their next Council meeting is on February 9<sup>th</sup> and Barbara expects to have an answer by then.
- Barbara presented regional A.C.O. contracts with the towns of Milford, Eddington, Old Town, & Hudson to be presented for signature. The towns are billed pay as you go when services are provided. Barbara has reached out to the Town of Hampden in regards to

**Unorganized Territory Update Continued-**

gaining their business for animal control. They are deciding between what is most cost effective. Signed.

- Barbara wanted to inform the commissioners that there was going to be a public informational meeting for the Maine Paddling & Cycling Trails on February 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6pm.
- George Buswell reports that they have put up extra sand in the Prentiss. They are waiting to see how their levels maintain throughout the winter. A lot of the roads the county maintains have been cleared up but it has taken more salt than typical and the use of graders to strip the ice away.

**Deeds Update--**

- Registrar Susan Bulay noted that she attended a statewide registrar meeting in which she asked other counties what their policy was in regards to allowing members of their staff to notarize documents that have been recorded in their office. Of the 14 present only two (Piscataquis and Sagadahoc) allow their deputies to notarize documents and only when the registrar is present. All the other counties only notarize documents for other departments or general members of the public, which is Penobscot County's current stance. Susan stated that she will keep this current policy in place for our county's office.
- Susan also stated that Nicole Ladner from the Address Confidentiality Program under the Secretary of State was present at the meeting. Nicole expressed her department's wish for confidentiality concerns to cover up all names and addresses that are listed on deeds. Their fear is that individuals that have been effected by domestic abuse will never be able to conceal their whereabouts or locations of property they own. Susan and the committee gave reasons on why registrars cannot conceal identities or addresses on deeds, to which Nicole felt the registrars department was simply unwilling to work with the program and help solve the issue. The Confidentiality Program wishes that if one needed to do a title, lien, or mortgage search that you could contact the registrar's department and if cleared to do so then view the "confidential" deed. Susan and the other registrars made note of her request, however the Commissioners agreed that the registrar's office should not make any changes and continue to list names and addresses on deeds.
- The registrars also discussed in the meeting how the department should work with the Maine Revenue Service in regards to the online filing of deeds and how this would affect transfer tax. The Revenue Service will be implementing a system where attorneys that do over 200 transfers a year will be required to file online. This minimum number will incrementally decrease over 5 years to 10 transfers a year. The registrars noted the trend the service is headed towards is that all attorneys will be required to eventually

**Deeds Update Continued--**

file online, thus the money should then stay at the state level rather than the county still collecting for transfer tax fees. The Commissioners agreed to alert legislators of this.

- A complaint from a citizen who visited the registrar's office was received and has been addressed. Commissioner Davis suggested that since workers are still being paid for hours that the office opens late, if workers arrive early, they should still be expected to offer help to any customers needing assistance. Commissioner Baldacci agreed.
- Susan noted that the revenues from recordings were the highest for the month of January since 2007.

**Facilities Update-**

- Terry Sullivan addressed the recent issue with a major leak at the Post Office from the mixed rain/sleet storm from earlier in the week. Terry explained most of the drains were frozen and ice build ups did not allow the water on the roof to drain properly. Ditches were chiseled through the ice and the drains were thawed so water can begin flowing off of the roof. Terry further explained how even during the summer the drains on multiple building are improperly placed so that rain won't even drain then. In addition there are fixtures on the roof protruding that are no longer serving any purpose. Roof Systems wants to do an exploratory exam of the roof.
- Commissioner Baldacci suggested Roof Systems find a way to temporarily fix the roof until spring when a more permanent fix could be determined. Commissioner Davis added that the exploratory exam should be postponed until spring. Then the Commissioners should examine the costs of completely replacing the current roof as well eliminating unneeded protrusions. Commissioner Baldacci would like to explore all options and quotes in regards to replacing or roofing over current roof as well as looking into the placement or replacement of drains in the spring.

**Administrative Update-**

- Payroll warrant approved for 1/27/17 for \$205,622.66
- Payroll warrant approved for 2/3/17 for \$222,784.77
- Accounts Payable warrant for 2016 approved for \$7,054.74
- Accounts Payable warrant for 1/27/17 approved for \$287,592.52
- Accounts Payable warrant for 2/3/17 approved for \$388,620.31
- The Unorganized Territory Warrant approved for: \$19,781.22
- Payroll change notice signed for: Tyler Thompson Hired, Kelley Fennelly Position Ended.
- Compensation notice signed for: None.

**Jail Supplemental Budget Request-**

- Judy Alexander, Lt. Keith Hotaling, Captain Rick Clukey, and Bill Collins have been working on a supplemental funding request to be delivered to Rosemary Kulow, Executive Director of MCCA to present to State Criminal Justice and Appropriations Committees. Judy explained the process in arriving at a funding deficit request of \$471,000 for our 2016-17 Jail budget. This is comprised of an original budget deficit of \$253,577, additional expense of \$72,660 in boarding costs, \$24,763 in additional medical costs, and \$120,000 in costs associated with paying training/overtime as a result of a depleted working staff at the jail. Commissioner Baldacci asked if the additional funds included the 3% Jail Cap the county can raise. Bill explained the 3 % was already included in the original \$253,577 budget deficit. Rick and Keith each agreed with the total requested. Yes, Keith explained that Judy and he took different approaches to their figures. He believed that since Judy derived her figure from a projection based on the last couple months of boarding costs at Cumberland County, that her amount was a better number to project for the remainder of the year.

**Administrative Update Continued-**

- Rick explained that the county is averaging 25-30 boards a day that they are paying for. We don't expect that will drop in the near future. Sherriff Troy Morton who joined by phone explained that the average of boards has dramatically increased. The Jails that the county used to board at for free have recently been full. Thus the county has been forced to pay boarding costs such as Cumberland County that charge a fee per inmate. Commissioner Baldacci hoped that the State Appropriations will shift money allocation to the jails that have to pay boards from the ones that don't.
- Commissioner Baldacci wanted to be sure we have an accurate figure to go before Appropriations. In other words exactly what we need to amend our budget.
- Sherriff Morton explained our county jail is consistently housing 190+ inmates compared to 170 last year. This increase has led to more medical, food, transportation, boarding and staffing needs. He stated he was very comfortable with this budget request and was thankful for the work of the group.
- Commissioner Baldacci asked if the group could come up with bullet points that summarizes all the key issues so he and other Commissioners can effectively communicate the changes to the Legislature from previous budget years.
- Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to approve the supplemental budget increase request of \$471,000. Commissioner Davis seconded the motion. Vote to approve pass the supplemental request, 3-0.

**Sheriff's Department Update-**

- Sheriff Morton reports that the jail is still overcrowded with the count at 192 today.
- He expounded upon how other jails that the county used to be able to board inmates for free or reduced boarding fees, have been completely full. Recently an inmate was able to barricade himself in a jail cell due to the number of extra bunk beds that we've been forced to house in each cell. A special response team had to be called upon to open up the door. He reiterated the amount extra stress and pressure the population has placed on the jail staff.
- Sheriff Morton explained how frustrated he's been with the court's handling of stay of executions that have a pending drug charge. He explained it is a great expense for the department to ship these stay of executions inmates down to Somerset County to be scanned and then housed separately in already full jails. He worries that his concerns are going on deaf ears. He hopes that stay of executions for individuals with serious drug charges will be rectified soon.
- Sheriff Morton is currently attending a crisis/stress management course attended by members of 13 of Maine's counties. The course is going very well.
- Sheriff Morton was recently elected as the Vice President of the Maine Sheriff's Association. He will be transitioning out of as the representative to MCCA. Sheriff Scott Kane is replacing Sheriff Morton in this position.
- The Sheriff also expressed his logistical concern over the recent legalization of Marijuana in regards to employee policy. He would like to meet at some point with the Commissioners to further discuss this topic. He has received some information from the Attorney General's office on this matter.
- The Sheriff will be in Washington D.C. at the National Sherriff's Legislative meeting speaking on the Stepping Up program for small/medium sized jail facilities. He explained that out of the six phases of the Step up program, our jail has completed three and is progressing very well toward the other three steps.

**District Attorney Update –**

- Christine Higgins introduced Jessica Guy, who is the new clerical specialist for Newport Court. Christine then reported that the department was happy that they are now completely staffed.
- Bill then also introduced an additional new hire, Tyler Thompson, who will be an Administrative Assistant for the Commissioner's and Treasury Department.
- Bill stated the county received our Liability Insurance invoice from the risk pool. The assessment for the upcoming year was \$230,564.85. The Jail's portion of the assessment is \$141,627.

**Administrative Update Continued –**

- Bill reminded the board that there will be a tax abatement hearing from the Town of Kenduskeag and is waiting to hear back on a hearing date. Commissioner Davis stated that he knows the property in question and feels it is not necessary to visit.
- Bill mentioned the owner of a property on Millinocket Lake wishes to appeal. He hopes to do both hearings on February 21<sup>st</sup>. He is waiting to hear back from all parties involved to confirm.
- Bill then brought up the matter that there had been a number of emergency meetings in regards to the Workforce Investment Board.  
Commissioner Davis responded that there hadn't been a final decision made on a matter before the Board. He was concerned with the fact that some coastal counties had not followed through with their current contracts. Commissioner Davis also assured the Commissioners that there would be no financial obligation falling back on Penobscot County.
- The annual Groundhog party will be held on the third floor at 11:30 am.

**Public Comment**---None.

**Executive Session**- Administrator Bill Collins made a request to go into Executive Session to discuss a contract matter at 11:00 am. The Commissioners, Treasurer Dan Tremble and Mr. Collins, were in attendance. Executive Session ended at 11:30 am with no votes taken.

**Meeting Adjourned**- The meeting was adjourned at 11:31 am with no further business on the agenda.

**Certified By:**

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Penobscot Count Administrator  
William Collins

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter K. Baldacci, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura J. Sanborn, Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_/s/\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas J. Davis, Jr., Commissioner