

## Kennebec County Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

5PM to 7PM in Augusta at Hill House 125 State Street

Members present: Eric Austin, Ray Bates, Jon Beekman, Shawn Dixon, Charlie Hippler, Michael Perkins, Kathryn Mills Woodsum.

Members absent: Lloyd Irland.

Commissioners Present: Patsy Crockett.

1. Meeting was called to order by Kathryn Woodsum at 5:02PM.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Minutes: **Motion** to approve the meeting minutes of March 11, 2026 by Ray, second by Jon. Vote in favor 6/0/1. Mike abstained due to absence.
4. Financial Review
  - a. The revised budget increased \$31,840 due to motions made on 3/11/26. Utilities have not yet been distributed throughout departments but there will be no bottom-line impact when they are completed.
  - b. Audit FY25: There a few management letters included but not of anything substantial. RHR Smith asked for a 65% fee retainer to do the FY26 Audit, which the County declined. An RFP has been made to secure audit services.
  - c. Fund Balance available for FY27 Budget: Reserve Account balances are \$171,473 General Reserve and \$1.7 million Jail Reserve. These are mostly undedicated funds and have historically been used to reduce the budget impact.
  - d. Revenues in FY27 Budget:
    - i. Interest is \$350,000. The daily sweep account yields 3.02% interest, 13-week CD's yield 3.65%. Funds earning interest include \$1.6 million in unspent dedicated ARPA funds, revenues from departments, and the balance of tax payments received from cities and towns.
    - ii. Discussion concerning when taxes are due ensued. 25% of revenues is carried forward to the following fiscal year to cover expenses until revenues are received. Tax bills are due 10/1 (possibly, no one could provide a confirmed date) in full, with 60 days to pay without interest. The Maine law concerning County tax billing, Sec. 1. 30-A MRSA 706, PL 2009, c. 635 1, H.P. 186 - L.D. 286, was distributed by Mike and read by Jon. They are attached to these minutes.
    - iii. **Motion:** The Budget Committee asks the Kennebec County Commissioners to establish payment dates for cities and towns in two payments of half each, due 10/1 and 2/1, made by Jon, seconded by Eric. Discussion ensued centered around the need for cities and towns to receive revenues from property owners, rather than from reserves or tax anticipation

notes, prior to paying County taxes in full. It was noted this has been done in the past. Jon has a chart showing all cities and towns tax payment dates that he will share. **Motion to Amend:** Allow for quarterly payments instead of 2 payments, made by Mike, seconded by Ray. Discussion followed. **Motion to withdraw Amendment** made by Mike, seconded by Ray. Vote in favor of the Motion 7/0.

iv. Discussion about revenue amounts listed by departments. It was determined that several departments did not submit current revenue projections so no changes were made by administration. Two accounts were noted to be far less than the past three years revenues. **Motion:** Move to increase R5077 Special Detail Revenue from \$85,000 to \$125,000, an increase of \$40,000, made by Ray, seconded by Charlie. Vote in Favor 7/0.

v. **Motion:** Move to increase R5079 School Resource Officer Revenue from \$95,000 to \$300,000, an increase of \$205,000, made by Ray, seconded by Mike. Vote in favor 7/0.

e. Line Items from 3/11/26 meeting carryover:

i. **Motion:** Move to increase Administration A001-1022-3100 County Administrator from \$143,016 to \$148,022, an increase of \$5,006, made by Jon, seconded by Kathryn. Discussion that this is an increase in addition to the COLA. Vote not in favor 4/3. Dissenting: Ray, Shawn, Charlie, Mike.

ii. The Sheriff originally asked for an increase in the Overtime budget of \$225,000. Upon request, Sheriff Ken Mason proposed to reduce OT by \$25,000. Chief Chris Read was quoted as saying they could reduce OT by \$200,000. Shawn questioned how the new FMLA might impact OT. Four Patrol Deputies is the minimum number per shift. Supervisors approve OT. Part of the increase is due to being understaffed this year (2 unfilled positions and short 2 shift positions) and part due to the Maine State Police decreasing their coverage times resulting in the County covering 67% up from 50%. It was noted that the current budget includes 2 new Patrol Deputy positions and the department is currently in the process of filling the 2 current unfilled positions. Ken suggested meeting halfway at \$100,000. **Motion:** Move to decrease A001-1075-3606 Sheriff Overtime from \$525,000 to \$425,000, a decrease of \$100,00, made by Mike, seconded by Jon. Vote in favor 7/0.

f. CIP: Capital Investment Plan: A brief review of the workshop held on March 10<sup>th</sup> with the Budget Committee, Finance Director and Maintenance Director was provided by Ray. The result is that there now exists a detailed list of specific capital projects that are needed to maintain and protect the County's assets. A priority list has been made covering 5 years, with more detailed lists for the next 3 years. The most pressing needs are to replace 3 elevators and 3 rooftop A/C units. The plan is to replace one of each over the next three years, with approximate costs of \$115,000 per elevator and \$51,000 per A/C unit. These projects will need to be contracted out. The maintenance department will handle many other projects utilizing the new Journeyman position funded in the

budget to more cost effectively address the project list. The Budget Committee intends to fund \$400,000 annually for Capital Investment Projects. There is already \$180,000 included in the current budget (not including vehicles). **Motion:** Move \$100,000 from A001-1075-3606 Sheriff Overtime to A001-2075-7206 Capital Improvements made by Ray, seconded by Jon. Vote in favor 7/0. **Motion:** Move \$100,000 from R5079 Sheriff School Resource Officer Revenue to A001-2075-7206 Capital Improvements made by Jon, seconded by Ray.

- g. Tax Impacts of FY27 Budget. Upon request, Scott Ferguson revised, printed and shared the updated Tax Distribution Schedule for FY27 including the changes made tonight. The net result is a decrease of .6% in the tax assessment to cities and towns.
2. New Requests from Budget Committee Chair:
  - a. Metric Data Sheets by Department. The Probate, Finance, District Attorney, and Jail departments provided some information that was passed out tonight.
  - b. Vehicle List: County owned with assigned personnel noted. Will be provided by the Sheriff's Office.
  - c. The County Budget is available to the public on the Kennebec County website under Commissioners.
3. Attachments: Maine County Corrections Professional Standards Council Report of 1/15/2026 was passed out.
4. Other:
  - a. District Attorney Maeghan Maloney read a statement that she sent via email to the Budget Committee. This addressed a motion from our last meeting to fund the Domestic Violence Investigators A001-1015-3000. This cannot be done directly by funding but will be considered by the FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) Union who will reopen negotiations to discuss the issue. The DA requests we leave the funds in the budget. There was no action taken and the funds remain in the budget.
  - b. Kathryn asked who plans to attend the Public Hearing in Waterville. Jon, Shawn, Charlie and Kathryn plan to attend. This is being held at the City Hall Annex on 46 Front Street.
5. Motion to adjourn at 7:08 made by Ray, seconded by Jon. Vote in favor 7/0.

Respectfully submitted by Kathryn Mills Woodsum.

Approved 4-1-26.