

Kennebec County, Maine

County Commissioner's Meeting Minutes September 20th, 2022



Present:

Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, Chair
 Nancy Rines, Commissioner
 George Jabar, Commissioner
 Ken Mason, Sheriff
 Tom Doore, Treasurer
 Art True, EMA Director
 Dan Brunelle, Facilities Manager

DA Meghan Maloney, Esq
 Corey Goodchild, Asst. Jail Administrator
 Cindi Ferguson CPA, Finance Director
 Lisa Bryant, Finance Manager
 Devon Parsons, IT Director
 Diane Wilson, Register of Deeds
 Al Morin, Chief Deputy Sheriff

Bryan Slaney, Captain
 Kurt Karlsson, Programs Coordinator
 Megan Dickey, HR Administrator
 Scott Ferguson, County Administrator
 Stephanie Schredder, EA

Absent: Chris Brawn, HR Director, Jason Decker, EMA Deputy Director, Kathy Ayers, Register of Probate

	Discussion	Action
Call to order	Call to order at 12:07pm	
Minutes	Motion to accept minutes of September 6 th , 2022 as presented by Nancy Rines, Commissioner and Seconded by Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair .	Approved 2-0
Recognitions	None.	
Human Resources	<p>Megan Dickey, HR Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementation of the time clock system is in process. Human Resources will be initiating online training videos for employees in early October and an in-person employee training is scheduled later that month. The official activation date is scheduled after January 1st, 2023, for the Kennebec County Jail, and the other departments will follow. ➤ Through the MCCA Workforce Compact, Kennebec County has been approved for an additional \$1,289 for employee training programs since the last Commissioner's meeting. ➤ The transfer of the 3 employees working for the Maine Prosecutor's Association from County employment to State employment should be finalized by the end of the month. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Human Resources has officially begun the process of implementation of the Edmunds GovTech Human Resources and Payroll system. ➤ The project of scanning archived documentation should be completed by the end of September for the Administrator's Office, Human Resources, and Finance. ➤ MePERs is currently open for enrollment, and Human Resources will be reaching out to those employees that are eligible. ➤ Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director, is in the process of writing, editing, and gathering personnel policies, procedures, and administrative regulations. ➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, asks for the amount of funding allotted to Kennebec County through MCCS. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Megan Dickey, Human Resources Administrator, states that \$1200 per employee has been awarded through December 31st of this year with no cap and thus far, Kennebec County has been approved for over \$11,000 total, and next year the allowable allotment will be \$600 per employee. ○ An additional \$1,800 was approved for several employees to attend a training in a welding program, but after the funding was issued to Kennebec County for this program, it was discovered that the two employees originally intending on the training were going to be unable to take advantage of the it at this point in time due to unforeseen circumstances. The funding was returned to MCCS resulting in a total amount of \$10,204 that the County employees have received for training. This funding will help pay for the Criminal Justice Academy training as well. ○ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, asks if the MCCS funding could be used to pay for a "Black Pin" employee fee (paying out a previous employer for a newly hired Correctional Officer's previous training in another jurisdiction/facility). ○ Megan Dickey, Human Resources Administrator, states that she does not believe that a black-pin buyout would qualify for funding under the MCCS training fund specifications. ○ Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, confirms that the MCCS training funds are for new trainings and cannot be allotted for reimbursement for previous or past trainings. 	
<p>Treasurer</p>	<p>Tom Doore, Treasurer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>General Fund Cash</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$7,017,000 all invested in the Insured Cash Sweep account with Kennebec Savings Bank ➤ <u>Recovery Fund Cash</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$21,570,000 all invested in the Insured Cash Sweep account with Kennebec Savings Bank ○ The first payment to an ARPA grant recipient has been sent to Kennebec Valley Boys & Girls Club- \$653,000. 	

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<p>Finance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Investment Fund</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Close of business yesterday \$1,978,000 down \$29,000 since last meeting. ➤ This month we have received municipal tax payments totaling \$1.6 million. Total received to date is about \$6,000,000. Sidney and Vassalboro payments were received since the last Commissioner's meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, asks which municipalities have not yet paid their tax bills and ○ Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, informs the Commissioners that the municipalities with outstanding tax bills are Augusta, Belgrade, Albion, China, Farmingdale, Fayette, Manchester, Monmouth, Readfield, Rome, Waterville, Wayne, and West Gardiner. ○ Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, clarifies that the Unorganized Territory of Unity, pays their municipal taxes quarterly through the State of Maine. All municipalities have a due date of September 1st to pay their taxes but past that date, they have 60 days without interest. So, October 30th is the deadline to pay municipal taxes before interest starts to accrue. ➤ There are 3 warrants requiring signatures. ➤ The total warrant is \$926,785. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$55,399 for the Jail Water Softener. ○ \$13,763 in Capital Improvement. ○ \$153,159 ARPA Grant award for Boys and Girls Club of Kennebec County expansion. ○ \$48,982 Homeland Security truck for EMA. ○ \$3,291 Jail food. ○ \$21,547 Maine Pretrial services. ○ \$16,919 Jail cleaning supplies. ○ \$107,725 for other remaining various County expenditures. <p>Cynthia Ferguson, CPA, Finance Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The first opioid settlement payment will be \$70,000 to Kennebec County. ➤ Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, is currently researching the terms and guidelines of spending the awarded funds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asks how many years in succession that the County will be awarded a settlement. ○ Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, informs the Commissioners that she does not have an answer to that questions yet but is aware that she will be in contact with a representative with the State of Maine that can help explain the awards and answer questions about the settlement processes. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ BerryDunn has submitted 4 requests for the release of funds for 2 approved ARPA Grantee organizations and will be submitted for funds in the next warrant. The organizations that will be receiving funding are the Boys and Girls Club of Kennebec Valley for premium pay and The Children's Center to cover the unemployment costs during Covid, operational expenses, and premium pay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asks if this will be the final funding released to the Children's Center or if they have any additional projects that have been approved and not yet funded. ○ Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, responds by informing the Commissioner's that this is not the Children's Center's final grant award and from what she understands, the County is giving the Children's Center 4 payments of \$179,000 on a quarterly basis towards their operations. ➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, asks if the audit engagement letters have been signed. ➤ Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, confirms that they have been signed. 	
Sheriff/Corrections	<p>Ken Mason, Sheriff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A forfeiture request is presented of 9 handguns from the arrest of a perpetrator and asks the Commissioners to sign the request and so that it can be sent to the Attorney General to authorize the transfer of ownership of the confiscated handguns to the Sheriff's Department. ➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, asks where the profit from the handguns goes in the County budget. ➤ Ken Mason, Sheriff, states that there will be no profit to add the budget. The Sheriff's Office confiscates the guns and puts them out for bid to a licensed FFL (Federal Firearms License) dealer who will make a bid to purchase the firearms and reimburse the Department so they can use the funding to purchase new weapons for Sheriff's Office Staff and Deputies. ➤ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asks if there are ever circumstances in which they dispose of weapons ➤ Ken Mason, Sheriff, states that if a weapon is used for suicide, it is deemed non-functional, or if there is a surrender with a request to destroy the gun. ➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, motions to approve and sign the forfeiture request for the confiscation of 9 handguns. ➤ George Jabar, Commissioner, seconds the motion. ➤ MSA (Maine Sheriff's Association) is awarding the Presidential Citation Award to Sergeant Bajpai for hard work and dedication within the Jail. <p>Lieutenant Corey Goodchild, Assistant Jail Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Total population with the Jail is 151. 	Approved 3-0

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Requests to continue the sick-time incentive program which ends this month. The Jail saw a significant fiscal benefit to enacting the incentive program and they would like to ask the Commissioners to approve the continuation of the program for an additional 3 months. ➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, moves to approve the continuation of the sick-time incentive program for Jail Staff for an additional 3 months. ➤ George Jabar, Commissioner, seconds the motion to approve. ➤ Covid restrictions have been eased and lifted for inmate activities and Jail operations. Examples include more time outdoors for the inmates, more court proceedings inside the jail, and the CARA program has been renewed. All new activities in the Jail have overextended current staff and the Jail would like to request the approval from the Commissioners to hire 3 more staff to help with the new activities and programs. ➤ Ken Mason, Sheriff, mentions that there is money assigned in the budget to hire the 3 additional staff needed. ➤ George Jabar, Commissioner, makes a motion to approve hiring 3 additional staff for the Jail and ➤ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, Seconds the motion. 	<p>Approved 3-0</p> <p>Approve 3-0</p>
District Attorney	<p>Maeghan Maloney Esq. DA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney, states that she is on the Governor's council to study the way that sexual assault is handled in the National Guard and that she has a meeting scheduled with the council starting at 1pm, so she is thankful to the Commissioners for prioritizing her report first so that she can make it to the council meeting on time. ➤ Office is fully staffed. ➤ There is a Grand Jury on Thursday and a murder trial happening at the Capital Judicial Center has prevented County court cases from having jury trials this week. There will be 2 jury trials towards the end of the month. The District Attorney's office is hoping to receive more jury trial days next month. ➤ The District Attorney's Office and the Probate Court are looking forward to the TRC security consultation assessment day scheduled in October. 	
Probate	Kathy Ayers, Register: Not present.	
Information Technology	<p>Devon Parsons, IT Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ IT is processing and servicing upgrades, updates, and service calls as they arise. ➤ IT is working with Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director, to see what Crane can coordinate for an A/C unit for the server room. 	

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Registry of Deeds	<p>Diane Wilson, Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 25th anniversary with registry of deeds. ➤ The budget and revenue figures will be available to the Commissioners next meeting. 	
EMA	<p>Art True, EMA Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FEMA has approved the Kennebec County Hazard Mitigation Plan which is active from September 2022 through September 2027. EMA has been working on this plan for 2 years. ➤ Meeting with EMS, EMA, and Fire agencies in the next week to identify current issues. There might be new legislation being made soon that EMA would like to be prepared to receive and act upon. ➤ Meeting on Thursday with the Iron Man Committee agencies to discuss, identify, and remedy inefficiencies from the previous Iron Man event in Augusta this Summer, to prepare for the next Iron Man event. ➤ Art True, EMA Director, requests that the Commissioners accept a donation to EMA of an old fire utility vehicle to strip of valuable parts and then take to salvage. ➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, makes a motion to accept the donation. ➤ George Jabar, Commissioner, seconds the motion. ➤ Jason Decker, Assistant EMA Director, will be leading the search in collaboration with Human Resources to fill the part-time position that he once held before he was appointed as Assistant EMA Director. 	Approved 3-0
Facilities	<p>Facilities Director Brunelle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facilities is currently in the process of repairing the largest chimney on the Hill House roof that had trees growing out of it and the project should be completed by the beginning of next week. ➤ The waste oil furnace is currently being installed. ➤ Facilities is continuing to repair County vehicles in-house as needed. Doing the repairs in-house helps save funding for the County and is overall more efficient. ➤ Facilities is repairing a leaky ceiling at the Deeds building and waiting for a roofing estimate to repair the leak and skylights that are creating leaks as well. ➤ Facilities will be repairing the potholes in parking lot with trustees and painting the front door of the Hill House. ➤ Facilities found a way to structurally alleviate the flooding in the Hill House basement when there is a heavy rain and will be initiating the repairs soon. 	

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<p>Administrator</p>	<p>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Attended the NESGFOA (New England States Government Finance Officers Association) Conference last week with Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director. Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, shared presentations from the conference with County Department Heads and the Commissioners to give them an idea as to how the Finance department operates and what they consider when making decisions and enforcing lawful policy and documentation. ➤ The County is in the process of reviewing the CPS (Correctional Psychiatric Services) contract and the ENSO, LLC. contract with the County's designated Lawyer/Advisor. ➤ There will be a meeting soon to review and evaluate medical proposals submitted in response to the Jail medical RFP (Request for Proposal) to evaluate those-peter has been looking at them to compare. ➤ Sent an invitation to all Kennebec County Departments to meet with Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, as an open forum to share their thoughts, concerns, and/or ideas. Deeds was the only department that responded and scheduled a meeting. ➤ Review for the Jail labor contract is in process. The current labor contract expires in December: Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, has been working in collaboration with Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, and the Jail management team to discuss the details of the agreement to be presented to the Union Representatives. ➤ Regarding the upcoming Budget Committee assembly, District 1 does not have any vacancies, District 2 has 1 vacancy for an elected official, District 3 1 vacancy for an elected official and 1 vacancy for an appointed official. ➤ The County is waiting to hear from Pike Industries as to when Reynolds Road will be finished. 	
<p>Old Business/ Follow Up Items</p>	<p>ARPA Update: Zeb Letourneau, BerryDunn Consulting Manager, and Steve Whitney, BerryDunn Senior Manager Consultant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The ARPA application originally presented by ARRC was formed by a joint venture between 3 entities: MPRN (Maine Prisoner Reentry Network), YPR (Young People in Recovery), and MRAP (Maine Recovery Advocacy Project). It is now understood that the collaborative venture under AARC has dissolved, and that could have a material impact on whether ARRC is able to accomplish the deliverables previously promised to Kennebec County within the designated timeline. ➤ BerryDunn recommend that Kennebec County reject ARRC's original application and request that ARRC submit a new application with revised deliverables and how they will accomplish said deliverables under ARRCs new organizational structure. 	

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- BerryDunn also recommends that the County vote to open recovery initiative applications for ARPA funds to give a chance to other organizations who had previously submitted applications or who would like to apply now have the chance to be evaluated.
- **Nancy Rines, Commissioner**, asks if the new grant applications are required to be within the recovery sector.
- **Steve Whitney, Senior Manager Consultant**, clarifies that the new applicants will not be required to reside within the recovery sector, but that it seemed as though the County wanted to designate the funds in support of a recovery program. BerryDunn will draft a notice of available funding for approval by the Commissioners.

Official General ARPA Grant Agreement Update:

- Formally executed 22 grant agreements, 2 grant agreements awaiting Commissioner signature, and 7 projects in development.
- BerryDunn and the Kennebec County Finance Department are working together to review and approve reimbursement requests to Grantees. \$1.3 million in warrant requests have successfully been submitted for approved Grantee projects.
- BerryDunn would like to formally invite the Commissioners to the site visit for the Boy's and Girl's Club of Kennebec Valley on October 12th.

North River Lockwood Loan Type Change:

- As discussed in the previous Commissioner's meeting on September 6th. On July 27th, the treasury gave new guidance regarding affordable housing projects under ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) stating that loans will now be an acceptable form of funding, and previous to that date, projects and Grantees were only able to apply for and be awarded grants.
- North River Company (The developer of the Lockwood Mill project) requested that the County change it's funding from a \$1 million grant to a \$1 million, no-interest 30-year loan. The North River Company requests that the loan be structured as a balloon payment. A grant would be taxed and would greatly reduce the net funding they would have for their project (approximately \$666,000 out of \$1 million). Kennebec County would then be able to gain a return of \$1 million dollars at the end of the balloon loan term in 2055 as opposed to not receiving anything back with the original grant agreement.
- **Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair**, asks if there are any further steps or monitoring that need to take place with the Kennebec County Finance Department once the loan has been awarded.
- **Steve Whitney, Senior Manager Consultant**, assures the Commissioners that there will not be any additional tracking or work for the Finance Department.
- **Nancy Rines, Commissioner**, asks when the loan funding will take place.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Zeb Letourneau, Consulting Manager, confirms January of 2023. The loan will be due and paid in full to Kennebec County in January 2055. Diane Townsend, Executive Director at Waterville Housing Authority, is in attendance and will act as an information source for questions and inquiries regarding affordable housing.➤ Diane Townsend, Executive Director at Waterville Housing Authority, confirms the technical details of the previously stated loan structure and states that this sort of loan structure for a development such as the Lockwood project, is very common in affordable housing. <p>Waterville Manor Gardens Project Change Request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The original application stated that Waterville Manor Gardens would be adding 33 affordable housing units to the City of Waterville and the ARPA guidance requires that all affordable housing projects must include 20-year covenant. The County requested that the Waterville Manor Gardens provide covenants for all 33 of their units and that was countered with a proposition from WMG to provide affordable housing covenants for the number of units that the County's ARPA funding would finance, which would be approximately 3 units. The cost of the total project is \$4.6 million, and the ARPA grant given to Waterville Manor Gardens is \$337,000 which is approximately 7.3% of the project total cost. Waterville Gardens also requested to change the affordable housing covenant from an income limit of 65% AMI (Area Median Income) to an income limit of 80% AMI.➤ George Jabar, Commissioner, asks Diane Townsend, Executive Director at Waterville Housing Authority, if the remainder of the 30 units in the Waterville Manor Gardens project would be priced at market value.➤ Diane Townsend, Executive Director, explained the process in which HUD decides the pricing requirements for affordable housing units based on the number of bedrooms per unit.➤ Zeb Letourneau, BerryDunn Consulting Manager, informs the Commissioners that Waterville Manor Gardens intends to prioritize applications from senior citizens for the 3 units funded by the County ARPA funds.➤ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asks about the Kennebec Journal article that reported there were only going to be 23 units built for this project and to please explain the inconsistent information.➤ Zeb Letourneau, Consulting Manager, explains that the number was incorrect and BerryDunn would get an official letter written to the County from Waterville Manor Gardens to confirm that fact.➤ Nancy Rines, Commissioner, motions to approve the 3-unit covenant at 80% AMI for Waterville Manor Gardens, and George Jabar, Commissioner, and Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, unanimously approve the motion.	Tabled
New Business	➤ Diane Townsend, Executive Director, Waterville Housing Authority- See ARPA Update.	Approved 3-0

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Sheriff/Attorney General: Forfeiture Requests: Seized Asset Possession – See Sheriff's report.➤ Unity UT – Animal Control Agreement – Signed.	
Miscellaneous	Nothing currently.	
Public Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Bruce Nunn, Executive Director of Maine Prisoner Reentry Network which oversees the Augusta Recovery and Reentry Center, Brandon Coby, Director of Operations at Augusta Reentry and Recovery Center, and Ryan Gary, Affiliate with Young People for Recovery, came to speak to Commissioners regarding the ARRC ARPA Grant Award and Agreement.	
Adjournment	Adjourned at 2:28pm	
Executive Session	None.	

Respectfully Submitted: Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant