

# Kennebec County, Maine

## County Commissioner's Meeting Minutes February 7th, 2023



**Present:**

Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, Chair  
 George Jabar, Commissioner  
 Joe Pietroski, Commissioner  
 Ken Mason, Sheriff  
 Tom Doore, Treasurer  
 Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director  
 Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director

Chris Brawn, HR Director  
 Art True, EMA Director  
 Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds  
 Lisa Bryant, Finance Manager  
 Corey Goodchild, Asst. Jail Administrator  
 Kathy Ayers, Register of Probate  
 Karen Trussell, Finance Specialist

KelLee Gray, HR Administrator  
 Cody Brown, Maintenance Supervisor  
 Mike Gagnon, Maintenance Technician  
 Scott Ferguson, County Administrator  
 Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant

**Absent:** Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney Esq., Jason Decker, EMA Deputy Director, Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator, Devon Parsons, IT Director

	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
<b>Call to order</b>	Move into Executive Session in accordance with 1MRSA § 405-6-A to discuss a personnel issue at <b>10:30am</b> .  Executive Session Ended at <b>11:55am</b>  <b>Regular Session began at 12:10pm</b>	
<b>Minutes</b>	A motion was made by <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b> and seconded by <b>George Jabar, Commissioner</b> , to accept the minutes of January 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2023.	Approved 3-0
<b>Human Resources</b>	<p><b><u>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Disability Accommodation Policy was provided for commissioner review to be approved and finalized by June 2023. <b>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director</b>, promised to follow up about the policy with the commissioners closer to June.</li> <li>➤ Overtime for MCJA (Maine Criminal Justice Academy) training is limited and required to be recorded as time and a half. The sheriff's office and finance office have been notified.</li> <li>➤ An MOU between the district attorney's office and the sheriff's office is in the final stages. Scott is reviewing the agreement and will come to the commissioners for approval and signature once his review is completed.</li> <li>➤ Implementation of the time clock system has paused. The Kennebec County Corrections Department has discontinued use of the system temporarily.</li> <li>➤ <b>MCCS Workforce Compact.</b></li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2,615 has been submitted for training reimbursement. <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, requested further information about the training reimbursement program and <b>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director</b>, gave a brief explanation of the program and promised to send further information via e-mail.</li> <li>• The Edmunds, GovTech, Human Resources, &amp; Payroll systems have been implemented. And, because of the implementation, some of the human resources functions that were historically handled in the finance department (such as benefits and time accruals) will now be handled by the human resources department.</li> <li>• The NCEU (National Correctional Employees Union) contract is under review. Some of the main items of concentration are benefits and how to fund the requested salary increases.</li> <li>• When human resources reviewed salaries for the fiscal year budget process, a few administrative items were identified that will be adjusted.</li> <li>• <b>KelLee Gray, Human Resources Administrator</b>, is doing a fantastic job of organizing human resources functions and adapting systems for efficiency and compliance. Her organizational skills and knowledge base have been a welcomed addition to the Human Resources Office.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Treasurer</b></p> <p><b>Finance</b></p>	<p><b><u>Tom Doore, Treasurer:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>General Fund Cash</u> - \$7,700,00 is invested in the insured cash sweep account with Kennebec Savings Bank.</li> <li>➤ <u>Recovery Fund Cash</u>- \$17,500,00 is invested in the insured cash sweep account with Kennebec Savings Bank.</li> <li>➤ <u>Investment Fund</u> - Close of business yesterday \$2,000,000 up \$28,000 since last meeting.</li> <li>➤ There are warrants requiring signatures.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total warrant is \$1,357,956.26.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ \$38,838.00 for Jail Food</li> <li>▪ \$179,015.85 for Correctional Psychiatric Care</li> <li>▪ \$14,308.80 for Greater Augusta Utility District ARPA Grant Funding Distribution</li> <li>▪ \$466,172.37 for Johnson Hall ARPA Grant Funding Distribution</li> <li>▪ \$63,210.00 Maine Municipal Association Workers Compensation</li> <li>▪ \$34,239.86 Maine Natural Gas</li> <li>▪ \$31,336.79 for MaineGeneral Medical Center ARPA Grant Funding Distribution</li> <li>▪ \$49,102.48 for the new Kennebec County Plow Truck</li> <li>▪ \$18,440.44 for Portable Communications Management</li> <li>▪ \$13,548.38 for Wex Gasoline Account</li> <li>▪ \$159,332.93 for the remainder of the warrant expenses.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, asks for clarification about the Jail medical expenses (mental and physical health) and their frequency of incidence. Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, confirmed that the</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Amendment to 401a plan:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The wording on the 401a plan amendment has been altered to read the correct employee contribution for all employees due to specific contractual requirements. <b>George Jabar, Commissioner</b>, made a motion to approve the corrected 401a amendment and <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, seconded the motion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>ARPA Funding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three items on the warrant are allotted for ARPA funding; the second installment to the Johnson Hall renovation, MaineGeneral Medical Center, and the Greater Augusta Utility District. There is \$600,000 left in the ARPA reserve fund.</li> <li>• <b>Devon Parsons, IT Director</b>, sent out an e-mail to all Kennebec County employees informing them of the federal withholding change, attached a copy of a w-4 form, and let them know to talk with their tax advisor if they need to change the withholding tax on their tax documents, which can also be accessed through the new Edmunds Human Resources portal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ The quarterly ARPA fund reporting developed by BerryDunn has been filed with the federal government on schedule.</li> </ul>	<p>APPROVED 3-0</p>
<p><b>Sheriff/Corrections</b></p>	<p><b><u>Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Current jail population is <b>133</b>.</li> <li>➤ The jail elevator will be out of order for 3 weeks. <b>Cody Brown, Maintenance Supervisor</b>, will provide information if needed. This will make it harder to escort people with special accommodations to and from the Kennebec County Courthouse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cody Brown, Maintenance Supervisor</b>, has obtained fire monitoring system maintenance quotes for the jail and explains each of the three companies that have offered quotes and the details of their services and charges to the commissioners.</li> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, asks if Johnson Controls can reevaluate their quote pricing. <b>Cody Brown, Maintenance Supervisor</b>, and <b>Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator</b>, stated that they will speak with Johnson Controls to explore the idea.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cody Brown, Maintenance Supervisor</b>, mentions that the possibility of changing the actual system to see how much it would be to replace has been examined and information will be provided once complete information has been obtained.</li> <li>• <b>Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director</b>, stated that the facilities staff will not need contractor services for the fire monitoring system in every circumstance because they are able to do a majority of repairs from within and suggests that they make a point of that fact when asking for a price reduction from Johnson Controls.</li> <li>• <b>Cody Brown, Maintenance Supervisor</b>, and <b>Mike Gagnon, Maintenance Technician</b>, will be participating in a training program that teaches the technical skills necessary to operate and repair an MTI system, to develop a relationship with the vendor, and to determine if they will be able to repair and operate the fire monitoring system more comprehensively to reduce the responsibility of vendors.</li> <li>• <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, inquired as to the maximum useful life of system and it was stated that a new system would cost approximately one-million dollars. <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, suggests comparing the cost of a new system to the cost of the maintenance and upkeep of the current system. <b>Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director</b>, stated that there were several aspects of the current system that cannot be fixed.</li> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, suggested looking into the history of what has been fixed and at what juncture in order to approximate the value of remaining with the current system compared to the value of replacing the entire system.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Lieutenant Corey Goodchild, Assistant Jail Administrator:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Lieutenant Corey Goodchild, Assistant Jail Administrator</b>, and <b>Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator</b>, request an additional 3-month extension of the employee incentive programs and mention that that the programs promote excellent employee attendance, elevate morale, and promote employee retention.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The commissioners agree with the extension.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ The Jail is developing an MOU to partner with Maine Family Planning for the purpose of helping inmates with access to reproductive healthcare. <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, mentions that he would like to see the MOU for approval.</li> <li>➤ There is a CARA class that is graduating March 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am.</li> </ul>	
District Attorney	<p><b><u>Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not present.</li> </ul>	

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Probate	<p><b><u>Kathy Ayers, Probate Register:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not Present.</li> </ul>	
Information Technology	<p><b><u>Devon Parsons, Information Technology Director:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not Present.</li> </ul>	
Registry of Deeds	<p><b><u>Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The Real Estate Transfer Tax Legislation is expanding the transfer tax exemption to include stepchildren, step grandchildren, and siblings. <b>George Jabar, Commissioner</b>, clarifies what this means.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, asks if there is a fiscal note on the transfer tax legislation in question and <b>Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds</b>, promises to send information to him regarding the legislation for further review.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair</b>, asked if the Maine Register of Deeds Association (MRDA) have expressed any opinions on the transfer tax exemption and <b>Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds</b>, assures the commissioners that the MRDA will remain neutral on the subject.</li> </ul>	
Emergency Management Agency	<p><b><u>Art True, Emergency Management Agency Director:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ There is pending federal approval of funding for repairing damages created by the large storm in December.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EMA received final estimates for damages from landslides in Thurston Park in China and a landslide in Sydney.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Two community roundtables were held with two representatives attending from each city and town to discuss initiatives, communicate, and get feedback on how EMA can improve operations and help communities further.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EMA received a lot of valuable communication and insightful information.</li> <li>• Town representatives stated that they would like to have these meetings quarterly with subject matter concentrations in code enforcement assistance and reinstating the Kennebec Dispatch. <b>Art True, EMA Director</b>, explained the need for a centralized Kennebec County Emergency Dispatch Center.</li> <li>• 17 towns and cities attended both meetings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ There was an overwhelming response and demand for the CPR instructor course scheduled for Feb 17<sup>th</sup> with 52 students enrolled. This will help with future CPR programs that will be instated later.</li> <li>➤ An instructor has been solidified for the advanced EMT courses and program.</li> </ul>	

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<b>Facilities</b>	<p><b><u>Facilities Director Dan Brunelle:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The facilities department is on time and on budget with several projects.</li> <li>➤ A few pipes froze and burst in two of the courthouse offices this morning. The cleanup for the burst is almost complete aside from the issues that Information Technology are currently working to remedy.</li> </ul>	
<b>Administrator</b>	<p><b><u>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Peter Marchesi, Kennebec County Attorney,</b> increased his rates by \$10 an hour.</li> <li>➤ There is a meeting scheduled with NCEU (National Correctional Employees Union) on Friday.</li> <li>➤ LD-1 requests went out last week and we are beginning to get some of the information back from towns.</li> <li>➤ The second portion of the opioid case has not been disclosed.</li> </ul>	
<b>Old Business/ Follow Up Items</b>	<p><b>None.</b></p>	
<b>New Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><u>PSAP (Public Safety Answering Points) &amp; Kennebec County Central Emergency Dispatch</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Somerset County will not renew coverage contracts for emergency dispatch services in Kennebec County. Augusta RCC (Regional Communications Center) is now required to answer all emergency calls and are understaffed. The towns that will be dropped from the service area that Somerset County was covering will now have very limited access to emergency services.</li> <li>• A central county emergency dispatch has been requested by towns and cities within Kennebec County.</li> <li>• More statistical data needs to be produced to technically analyze the need and possible benefits of a central county emergency dispatch.</li> <li>• <b>George Jabar, Commissioner,</b> asked if it would be possible to outsource the excess call volume and <b>Art True, EMA Director,</b> replied by saying that there are not enough consoles or stations available, and there aren't enough dispatchers to fill the ones that are currently available. Staff and resources are limited across the state.</li> <li>• The approximate cost for consoles is \$250,000 for 2 dispatch consoles and the approximate cost to staff those two consoles would be \$750,000 annually.</li> <li>• There is a question of where the available consoles and qualified staff can be found to enact a PSAP program for Kennebec County.</li> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator,</b> suggested leasing space/consoles from the State of Maine and running a county-wide dispatch through their facilities and staff. An MOU would be created for this if the commissioners would approve.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Art True, EMA Director</b>, suggested communicating with each of the towns and presenting them with the cost for the PSAP services. The towns will decide what they are willing to fund and that will determine what direction the county can go with the initiation of a PSAP.</li><li>• The commissioners asked <b>Art True, EMA Director</b>, to compile and provide more information from other counties that are currently participating in a PSAP program, what their experience is, which towns within Kennebec County are willing to participate, and how much this program will cost to operate.</li><li>• Commissioners would like to look at historical conversations on this subject from previous commissioner meetings to compare.</li></ul>	
<b>Public Comments</b>	<b>None currently.</b>	
<b>Adjournment</b>	<b>Regular meeting adjourned at: 1:47pm</b>	Approved 3-0

Respectfully Submitted: Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant