

Kennebec County, Maine

County Commissioner's Meeting Minutes September 19th, 2023



Present:

Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, Chair
George Jabar, Commissioner
Joe Pietroski, Commissioner
Tom Doore, Treasurer
Chris Brawn, HR Director

Ken Mason, Sheriff
Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney, Esq
Al Morin, Deputy Sheriff
Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator
Devon Parsons, IT Director

Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds
Scott Ferguson, County Administrator
Lisa Bryant, Finance Manager
Audrey Fredericks, Finance Specialist
Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant

Absent: John Brenenstuhl, EMA Director, Laura Johnson, Deputy Probate Register, Gail Towns, Deputy Register of Deeds, Corey Goodchild, Asst. Jail Administrator, Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator, Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director. Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director, Jason Decker, Deputy EMA Director, Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director

	Discussion	Action
Call to order	11:05pm	
Minutes	➤ Tabled for revision.	TABLED
Human Resources	<p><u>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I have been working on having an in-person training on Sexual Harassment prevention and ethics. I have gathered quotes and selected a vendor. Next, I will work with Finance using the procurement process to make that happen this fall. ➤ Working on getting quotes for a rewrite of the employee handbook. ➤ Workforce Compact: Requested \$11,561, Refunded \$8,463, Employees 40-additional in-house training tbd. ➤ Still waiting on the MOU to correct the language and administrative process around sick time in the NCEU contract due to the contradiction of Maines Earned Paid Leave law. Once he has signed, I will present that to the Commissioners to sign as well. ➤ There is still no update from the FOP legal representation regarding the definition of a day. ➤ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, mentioned that there was a speaker at a session during the MCCA (Maine County Commissioners Association) convention, named Betsy Oulton, Human Resources Consultant, who provided a very good presentation. And Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director, stated that the County will be using her services at some point. 	
Treasurer	<p><u>Treasurer</u> Tom Doore, Treasurer:</p>	

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Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Municipal taxes that have been paid since the last meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Albion • China • Mount Vernon • Pittson • Rome • Waterville • Wayne • Totaling 3,000,000 ➤ General Fund Cash - \$6,195,000 ➤ ARPA - Of the \$14,060,000 remaining, \$10,000,000 is invested in Insured CDs placed with various banks through Kennebec Savings Bank, and the balance is invested in the Insured Cash Sweep account with Kennebec Savings Bank. ➤ Investment Fund - Close of business yesterday \$2,014,000 which is down \$6,000 since the last meeting. ➤ There are warrants requiring signatures. ➤ Following are major expenditures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aramark - \$39,000 which is food for the inmates. • Correctional Psychiatric Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ \$53,200 for Medically Assisted Treatment ○ \$45,400 for inmate mental health. ○ \$156,700 for inmate medical • Dell Marketing - \$9,000 for a laptop computer • Greater Augusta Utility District - \$8,000 for water and sewer • Maine Pretrial Services - \$22,200 for their monthly contracted fee • Wex Bank - \$16,500 for gasoline • ARPA City of Gardiner - \$98,060.14 for a communications upgrade • ARPA Kennebec Valley Council of Governments - \$31,816.68 for solid waste initiative • ARPA MaineGeneral Medical Center - \$7,447.22 for harm reduction • ARPA MaineGeneral Medical Center - \$423,103 for the women's initiative 	

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	<p>Finance: Cynthia Ferguson, Finance Director: ➤ Not present.</p>	
Sheriff/Corrections	<p>Ken Mason, Kennebec County Sherriff: ➤ <u>MDEA service contract:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There isn't a designated line for the commissioners to sign this contract. • \$134,081-30 reimbursement for a year. • Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asked if Peter Marchesi, Kennebec County Legal Counsel, has had a chance to review the document, and Ken Mason, Sheriff, stated that Cindi Ferguson, Finance Director, had sent the contract to legal council yesterday. • Geroge Jabar, Commissioner, stressed that it is important for liability reasons to have Peter Marchesi, Kennebec County Counsel, to review contracts prior to them being approved and signed. • Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, asked if there were five of these contracts through the State of Maine? Ken Mason, Sheriff, responded by saying that there are a total of seven contracts through the State of Maine, and they involve the MDEA (Maine Drug Enforcement Administration), FDEA (Federal Drug Enforcement Administration) , and MRS (Maine Revenue Service). • Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, mentioned that he noticed that the contract stated that the benefits for the individual covered in this contract might be different than the typical benefits given to a County employee. Ken Mason, Sheriff, and Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, clarified that they are paid at a higher rate of which coincides with the rate of benefit contribution which isn't any different than it would be for any other employee. • Geroge Jabar, Commissioner, made a motion for Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, to sign the MDEA service contract, and Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, seconds the motion. <p>Jail Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator: ➤ There are 147 inside the jail. ➤ The jail has 5 newly hired employees that will begin class on October 2nd at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy and potentially 2 more that will be starting as well.</p>	Approved 3-0

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The DOC (Department of Corrections) inspection at the Jail is next Wednesday and Thursday. An update will be provided for Commissioners once the inspection is completed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, asked if there are any comparison of costs compared to other County Jails and the State of Maine, and Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator, stated that the Kennebec County Jail offers full services to inmates and comparatively has higher costs but that is because the Jail is meeting State requirements and providing a full scale of services compared to other institutions. • Ken Mason, Sheriff, stated that the MSA meeting at the MCCA convention had a good discussion on this subject. • Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, mentioned that she received a video from William King, York County Sheriff, and offered a copy to Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator. ➤ Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, stated that Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, received compliments on his work and knowledge from other municipalities at the MCCA convention. 	
District Attorney	<p>DA's Office: Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The DA Office clerical staff are in the final year of their current contract. There is concern that anyone who is at step 16 will not be getting enough of a wage increase each year to retain the employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney, stated that up to step 15, employees receive a 2.5% increase in wages and at step 16, they receive a 1.5% wage increase yearly and she requested a yearly increase of 1% to those employees that are step 16. But then, Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, responded to the request by stating that the employees in question that were step 16 were actually being awarded a 2% increase per year and not 1.5% according to the payroll records and the union contract and that the current active union contract had been finalized late into FY23. An explanation of longevity versus COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) was given and Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, stated that the Commissioners making any sort of decision today would be considered Direct Dealing, which is prohibited for union contract negotiations. • George Jabar, Commissioner, Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, and Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, stated that the union contract needs to be followed by law and any proposed changes are to be brought to the union representative. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney, stated that she would talk with the union representative about adding longevity pay for employees to the next union contract when back in negotiations. 	
Probate	<p><u>Probate:</u> Abigail St. Valle, Probate Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revenue for Probate Court is \$23,806. ➤ Switching subscription that is used for law research from Westlaw to Lexis Nexis and will save the County \$552 a year. ➤ Job descriptions are being rewritten to make it easier to cross-train employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator Ferguson requested that HR be included in the process. ➤ There is one open position that has yet to be filled. ➤ There is a plan to rearrange the Probate courtroom so that it is safer for Elizabeth Mitchell, Probate Judge. ➤ ARPA funding was approved for the AV system in the court. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, stated that the Commissioners need to sign the purchase order for the AV system in order to approve and ARPA expenditure. • George Jabar, Commissioner, made a motion to pay for an AV system update for the Probate court with ARPA funding pending approval from BerryDunn, and Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, seconds the motion. 	Approved 3-0
Information Technology	<p><u>Information Technology:</u> Devon Parsons, IT Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consolidated Communications is installing circuits across Kennebec County buildings and will be finishing Hill House today. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of the phone numbers or extensions will have to change. Some numbers will be eliminated if not in use. ➤ Burt's Security will be finishing their projects at Hill House on Thursday and Friday. ➤ There has been a lot of collaboration with Facilities for all the projects that are currently under way. ➤ The Courthouse is in the process of communications outlet installation. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, mentioned that she spoke with a representative from Consolidated Communications at the MCCA convention and hear that they enjoy working with Devon Parsons, IT Director. 	
Registry of Deeds	<p>Register of Deeds: Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Deeds parking lot has been newly paved. • On target for financials. • The housing market is slowing down. • There was one town that dropped off 140 liens today. • Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asked if Deeds was down on staff, and Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds, stated that he is at full staff with no openings. • The Registry of Deeds is currently going through files dating back to the 1990's to reconcile and proofread all information to ensure accuracy and, in turn, guarantee searchability when needed. 	
Emergency Management Agency	<p>Emergency Management Agency: Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not Present. 	
Facilities	<p>Facilities Maintenance: Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not Present. 	
Administrator	<p>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There have been several discussions to coordinate the MD3 program with Doctor Tim Pieh. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that the State of Maine will not cover the MD3 program for liability insurance, so there will be an additional \$7,500 a year needed to run the program. • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, suggested that Dr. Pieh come talk to the Commissioners about the cost difference from the original estimation for a program scope change. ➤ The repaving of the Hill House parking lot will happen at the end of the. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Judiciary has been notified about the timing and locations of the paving project so that they can plan accordingly. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The back deck being built on Hill House is almost complete. ➤ Met with Shay Freeman, District Attorney Administrator, Jeremy Gray, Director of Court Facilities, and Amy Quinlan, State Court Administrator, on Monday to discuss an MOU between two entities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, and Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant, visited the court later that afternoon to survey the space. • There are varying opinions on how to use the space. • The State Judiciary Court will send an MOU to the County once it has been drafted. ➤ The Unorganized Territory of Unity Plantation is processing updated contracts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Management • Animal Control • Snowplow services • Fire Safety • Alec Reynolds, Reynolds Concrete Owner, called to update the service contract that will go up by \$1,000 for the year in the Unorganized Territory. • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, Curious to see what will happen with Longroad energy because the State of Maine will be giving them a tax exemption, and that could mean a big boost of revenue to that area. ➤ Ken Mason, Sheriff, has vehicle policy and the policy will also be sent to Peter Marchesi, Kennebec County Legal Counsel, and the Commissioners will await his analysis before further discussion. ➤ The Spirit of America award certificates have been signed by the Commissioners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merrill's Security was made aware of the ceremony and will be stationed at the entrance to the courthouse, which will be held after hours in Courtroom 7 at 6pm on September 28th. ➤ Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, asked about the subject of the mail distribution in the County that had been mentioned in a report to the Commissioners, and Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, suggested that it would be more efficient for Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant, to pick up the mail so that the administrative offices would receive mail in a timelier manner. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matt Boucher, Register of Deeds, informed the Commissioners that if the Registry of Deeds received their mail in an actual mailbox, the mail would not arrive until 1pm in the 	

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	<p>afternoon which would significantly delay the time-sensitive process of request processing. He expressed concern about the timeliness of the mail for Deeds, if there should be an extra process added or if the department received their mail on site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was determined that Ken Mason, Kennebec County Sheriff, was not present to discuss the matter, so the conversation would be postponed until the next Commissioners meeting and will be added to the agenda. • Incoming mail will get a date stamp in the Administration office from this day forward. <p>➤ There will be an auction for the Children's Center at the Governor Hill Mansion on Friday, September 22nd. Tickets are \$30.00.</p> <p>➤ Tom Doore, Treasurer, spoke in appreciation for Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director, and his team when he witnessed them move a building next to the garage in preparation for the repaving of the Hill House parking lot. They did an exemplary job moving the building. Tom Doore, Treasurer, has moved several buildings, and he knows what a wonderful job he did when moving the structure.</p> <p>➤ Abigail St. Valle, Register of Probate, mentioned that Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director, helped her move and situate a large conference table in Probate in the span of only one day and that she is appreciative.</p>	
Old Business/ Follow Up Items		
Commissioner Comments	None.	
Public Comments	None.	
Adjournment	<p>A motion was made by Geroqe Jabar, Commissioner, to adjourn and seconded by Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, at 12:12pm</p> <p>Regular meeting adjourned at 12:12pm</p>	Approved 3-0

Respectfully Submitted: Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant