

Kennebec County, Maine

County Commissioner's Meeting

Minutes February 13th, 2024



Present:

Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, Chair
 George Jabar, Commissioner
 Joe Pietroski, Commissioner
 Chris Brawn, HR Director
 Tom Doore, Treasurer
 Lisa Bryant, Finance Director
 Ken Mason, Sheriff

Al Morin, Chief Deputy
 Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney
 Frank Griffen, Deputy District Attorney Esq.
 Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator
 Devon Parsons, IT Director
 Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator
 Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds

Abigail St. Valle, Register of Probate
 Corey Goodchild, Asst. Jail Administrator
 Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director
 Scott Ferguson, County Administrator
 Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant

Absent: Gail Towns, Deputy Register of Deeds, Dr. Timothy Pieh, MD-3 Medical Director

	Discussion	Action
Call to Order: Pre-Session	11:01am	
Minutes	Joe Pietroski, Commissioner , made a motion to approve the minutes of January 17 th , 2024, with one correction and the motion was seconded by George Jabar, Commissioner , the motion carries.	Approved 3-0
Promotions	William Johnson Jr was promoted to Sergeant.	
Department Budget Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The FY25 budget currently stands at a 22% increase. ➤ Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, asked Kennebec County Department Heads to tell the Commissioners where they can cut funding in their FY25 budgets. ➤ George Jabar, Commissioner confirmed that the Kennebec County FY25 Budget Committee would like the Departments to make some budget cuts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an increase in health insurance costs which total approximately \$500,000. • Worker compensation costs are up by \$31,000 and cannot be adjusted. • Maine Paid Family Medical Leave Act legislation requires increased costs as well. • The Maine State Legislature is not willing to help fund mandated jail programs. • Unfunded mandates must be explained to the budget committee and the Commissioners would like to give suggestions as to how we can help offset the required raises in the budget. 	

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	<p>➤ Abigail St. Valle, Register of Probate, asked if the Commissioners were looking for a base increase and Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair, stated that the Commissioners would like to cut the increase from 22% to 16%.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, stated that the towns within Kennebec County do not use the same mill rate as the county, which is predetermined by the State of Maine. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Towns and State of Maine are not in sync with their valuations. The State updates every year and some Towns have not been reevaluated for a decade or more. ○ There has been a 19% increase in the mill rate from last year to this year. <p>➤ The Administration Department agreed to two budget cuts.</p> <p>➤ A 2% reduction was reached this morning before the Commissioner meeting.</p> <p>➤ Abigail St. Valle, Register of Probate, asked how much one percentage was worth and Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, stated that one percent in the budget is worth \$180,000.</p> <p>➤ A 2% reduction was reached this morning before the Commissioner meeting.</p> <p>➤ Matt Boucher, Register of Deeds, stated that he will go through the budget and cut back on some random expenditures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, asked if there were any other funding that can be utilized to fund the MD3 program and Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director, stated that there were not any Homeland Security Grants or MEMA/FEMA grants that were available to help fund the MD3 program. <p><u>District Attorney</u></p> <p>➤ Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney, suggests possibly replacing the security company at the courthouse with a Sheriff's Deputy to cut costs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Jabar, Commissioner, stated that the union representatives need to bargain for employee raises that belong to the union and that the Commissioners and Budget Committee cannot make any determinations about union pay. • Maeghan Maloney, District Attorney, asked for a separate salary fund in which she could take from to fund the raises once the contract has been negotiated. • Ken Mason, Sheriff, agreed to produce a cost estimate to place a deputy at the courthouse in place of the security vendor. 	

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	<p><u>Sheriff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Chris Read, Lieutenant, stated that the Sheriff's Office requested raises for several administrative personnel.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• George Jabar, Commissioner, suggested discussion of the details of the raises for executive session.• Rural patrol coverage by the State of Maine is lessening in Kennebec County and the need for more Sheriff's deputies has increased to make up for the lack of coverage.• The Sheriff's Office agreed to reduce FY25 funding from several areas of their departmental budget. <p><u>Jail</u></p> <p>Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ The NCEU would like to negotiate an increase in pay of 7% for FY25.➤ Several budget cuts were discussed.➤ Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator, stated that the Jail had a staffing analysis done and it was assessed that the Jail needed 63 staff to be at maximum and are currently at 52 and fully operational. Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, asked Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator, to share this information with the Budget Committee.➤ The medical budget (MAT-Medically Assisted Treatment) was underfunded by 1 million in the FY24 budget.➤ Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, stated that there were several unfunded mandates from the state.➤ Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail administrator, is currently looking into leasing vehicles for use or possible purchase of used vehicles to reduce costs for the Jail.➤ Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator, suggested several areas where the Jail could reduce costs in FY25 to help lower the budget increase. <p><u>Finance:</u></p> <p>Lisa Bryant, Finance Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ There will be cuts to the salaries and software lines to reduce the budget increase for FY25.	

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	<p><u>MD3:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ George Jabar, Commissioner, asked EMA to please have Dr. Timothy Pieh, MD-3 Medical Director, come to present the MD3 program to explain the purpose and function of the program to the budget committee. <p><u>Treasurer</u></p> <p>Tom Doore, Kennebec County Treasurer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A Deputy Treasurer will be starting soon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, asked about compensation for the Deputy Treasurer, and Tom Doore, County Treasurer, stated that statute says there should be compensation but this can be discussed further with the Commissioners and Scott Ferguson, County Administrator. <p><u>Administration</u></p> <p>Scott Ferguson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Human Resources position will be held from FY25 budget until December 2024. ➤ Finance position has been cut from FY25. 	
<p>Call to Order: Regular Session</p>	<p>Regular Session Begins at 12:36pm</p>	
<p>Human Resources</p>	<p><u>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Workforce Development Update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 wrap-up: 105 students, 23 different courses attended, \$15,273.25 refund requested and approved, \$ Received \$10,819.20, • Remaining due is either classes attended in November or December of 2023 and payment * will be coming or it is the 20% being held until enough attendees respond to the class survey. • 2024 Program: Begins 1/1/2024, 50% reimbursement of approved courses (30% paid upon course completion with the addition 20% paid after surveys have been completed.) • \$4,996.50 refund requested. • Personnel Policies are almost complete. We have a final run-through with the consultant next week and then I will forward them to you all for review. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will soon be rolling out Supplemental and Dependent Life insurance through the trust. It is already part of our current package with the trust. There is no cost to the County, and it is 100% employee paid benefit. April start date. • EMA Director Interviews were last week, and we have narrowed them down to three candidates. I am still working on scheduling a date for the candidates to meet with the commissioners. 	
<p>Treasurer</p> <p>Finance</p>	<p>Tom Doore, Treasurer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General Fund Cash – \$3,904,205.98 ➤ \$17,000,000 is invested in KSB Intrafi account. The account earned \$71,634.16 interest and had a balance of \$17,071,634.16 on 1/31/2024. That interest was transferred to the General Fund on 2/21/2024. ➤ The Investment Fund balance at the close of business yesterday was \$2,070,706, which was no change since last meeting. ➤ There are warrants requiring signatures for significant Payments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restitution Warrant FY24DA#12 for \$12,035.52 • Payroll Warrant #37 • Payroll Warrant #37B <p>Finance:</p> <p>Lisa Bryant, Finance Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Audry Fredericks, Finance Manager, will be taking a grant writing program so she will be a certified grant writer. ➤ Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, suggested that the opportunity be given to other departments within Kennebec County. 	
<p>Sheriff</p> <p>Corrections</p>	<p>Ken Mason, Sheriff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Illegal marijuana operations are being targeted. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICE is working with local law enforcement. ➤ There is a new deputy. <p>Captain Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Population in the Jail is 134. ➤ The Jail staff were able to get cleaning and maintenance done while the population was lower in previous months. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There is a CARA graduation on February 26th at 10am. There will be seven people graduating. 	
District Attorney	<p><u>DA's Office:</u></p> <p>Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There are trial cases for illegal marijuana operation busts. ➤ A new employee started. 	
Probate	<p><u>Probate:</u></p> <p>Abigail St. Valle, Probate Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A clerk has put in their notice and the Probate office has already hired a new paralegal and she starts tomorrow. ➤ The new deputy is doing a great job-taken on minor guardianships. ➤ Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, would like the departments to tell the Kennebec County Budget Committee the duties and functions of their departments. ➤ Tomorrow is a full court day and two trials at the end of the day. 	
Information Technology	<p><u>Information Technology:</u></p> <p>Devon Parsons, IT Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The new phone system is doing well. ➤ Fax system is being worked on this week. ➤ The phone recorder is online for the Jail and the Sheriff's Office. ➤ Burts Security is here today to install secure entry devices for 3rd floor of Hill House. ➤ Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, asked what the plan will be for people wanting to enter through the front door of Hill House, and Devon Parsons, IT Director, stated that a Ring camera will be installed out front and phone numbers to various departments will be posted for people to call for entry and escorting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director, stated that there will be a key for access to every floor for the elevator. 	
Registry of Deeds	<p><u>Register of Deeds:</u></p> <p>Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revenues are down \$8,000 compared to last year. ➤ Illegal marijuana operations are eating up properties and destroying properties will. This is hurting the housing market. ➤ <u>Tax Portal Letter:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need signed-in packet and purple folder for commissioners to sign. • The Commissioners agreed to sign. 	
Emergency Management Agency	<p><u>Emergency Management Agency:</u> Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Director Interviews went well. ➤ There is CPR equipment leftover from the discontinued ARPA EMT Training Program that the EMA department would like to distribute among Kennebec County EMA, Augusta Fire Department, and other venues offering CPR classes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • George Jabar, Commissioner, asked Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director, to produce a letter for the transfer of EMA equipment for the Commissioners to review. • Audrey Fredericks, Finance Manager, mentioned the guidelines for reallocation of equipment given by BerryDunn for ARPA programs. • Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director, suggested giving some of the equipment to the CPR Coordinator for the Jail. • Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, stated that there will need to be an MOU created for equipment transfers. ➤ There will be a town officials meeting in EMA on February 15th at 9am. 	
Facilities	<p><u>Facilities Maintenance:</u> Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Facilities started doing county vehicle inspections. ➤ The incident on the third floor of Hill House took Augusta Police Department 22 minutes to respond. This was an event with a violent individual. ➤ Target Electric will be working on the Probate court system through the Spring. 	
Administrator	<p>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Kennebec County Budget process has been time consuming. ➤ Cooperative extension signed the lease agreement for the third floor of Hill House. ➤ Ema interviews took place last week. 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One of the District Attorney employees spent time in Lewiston to support families in the Lewiston community. ➤ DA, Facilities, and County Administrator met to talk about the non-compliance list sent by the Judiciary for section of the courthouse that they had renovated. ➤ Consolidated communications is giving free service until July. ➤ Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, will be going to Unity Plantation because of trash pickup issues. ➤ Longroad Energy has promised not to speed or litter on Palmer Road in Unity Plantation. 	
Old Business/ Follow Up Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ County Vehicle Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting for legal input before approval. 	
New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tuition Reimbursement Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed and approved for designated individual stated on the forms. ➤ Window Replacement Contract : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, motions to approve, and George Jabar, Commissioner, second the motion. ➤ BerryDunn Scope of Work Agreement for Payroll Audit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, had questions regarding the Scope of Work for BerryDunn and Scott Ferguson, County Commissioner, promised to send any questions to BerryDunn for the Commissioners. • Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, made a motion to approve, and George Jabar, Commissioner, seconded the motion. 	<p>Approved 3-0</p> <p>Approved 3-0</p>
Public Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ None. 	
Adjournment	<p>There was a motion by George Jabar, Commissioner Chair, to move to Executive Session to discuss personnel issues pursuant to 1MRSA § 405-6-E. Joe Pietroski, Commissioner, seconds the motion.</p> <p>Declaration to end Executive Session at 2:38 pm</p>	Approved 3-0

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	Motion by Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair to adjourn regular session at 2:38pm, and George Jabar, Commissioner , seconded the motion.	Approved 3-0

Respectfully Submitted: **Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant**