

# Kennebec County, Maine

## County Commissioner's Meeting

Minutes March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024



**Present:**

Patsy Crockett, Commissioner, Chair  
 Joe Pietroski, Commissioner  
 Chris Brawn, HR Director  
 Tom Doore, Treasurer  
 Ken Mason, Sheriff  
 Al Morin, Chief Deputy  
 Devon Parsons, IT Director

Abigail St. Valle, Register of Probate  
 Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director  
 Audrey Fredericks, Finance Manager  
 Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator  
 Corey Goodchild, Asst. Jail Administrator  
 Chris Read, Lieutenant  
 KelLee Gray, HR Administrator

Scott Ferguson, County Administrator  
 Stephanie Schredder, Executive Assistant  
 Alexander Hamilton, Corporal  
 Blakley Brewer, Corporal  
 Dylan Gagne, Sergeant

**Absent:** George Jabar, Commissioner, Meaghan Maloney, District Attorney, Gail Towns, Deputy Register of Deeds, Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds, Dr. Timothy Pieh, MD-3 Medical Director, Lisa Bryant, Finance Director, Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator, Frank Griffen, Deputy District Attorney Esq.

	Discussion	Action
Call to order	12:01pm	
Minutes	<b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b> , made a motion to approve the minutes of February 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2024, and February 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2024, with one correction and the motion was seconded by <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner</b> , the motion carries.	Approve with corrections 2-0
Promotions	<b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b> , recognized <b>Alexander Hamilton</b> who was promoted to Corporal. He was pinned by <b>Blakley Brewer, Corporal</b> , and <b>Dylan Gagne, Sergeant</b> .	
Human Resources	<b>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director:</b> ➤ 1095c's went out last week as per the ACA requirements. ➤ We are still in open enrollment for Supplemental and Dependent Life Insurance through March 15 <sup>th</sup> . ➤ EMA Director position was offered and accepted. We are still waiting to hear back from her on a start date. ➤ Interviews are going on for Deeds, Finance, and the Jail. ➤ Did a tour of the jail with the budget committee last week. Very enlightening. ➤ Payroll Audit has begun and have been gathering a lot of data for that.	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair</b>, asked who was doing the payroll audit, and <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, stated that BerryDunn had been approved to do the audit and preliminary discussions have begun.</li> <li>• <b>Chris Brawn, Human Resources Director</b>, explained the details of a payroll audit and what is included.</li> <li>➤ <u>Civil audit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scott Ferguson pointed out that the Civil Department is spending more than they are bringing in and there either needs to be more revenue or less cost.</li> <li>• There is a person handling the finances of the Civil Department that should be able to explain the problem to the sheriff.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ The employee handbook and Administrative Regulations rewrite is almost complete. Just waiting on some of the department heads to weigh in on policies that reflect something that sits under their umbrella.</li> <li>➤ Working on gathering a LOT of materials for Peter.</li> <li>➤ The Workforce Compact has been used by 22 employees this year with reimbursement requested of \$6602.50.</li> <li>➤ Personnel issues are never-ending.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Treasurer</b></p> <p><b>Finance</b></p>	<p><b>Tom Doore, Treasurer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ General Fund Cash – \$1,450,874.29 – All invested in the Insured Cash Sweep account with Kennebec Savings Bank</li> <li>➤ Investment Cash - \$16,065,773.98 – All invested in the Intrafi account with Kennebec Savings Bank</li> <li>➤ The total FY24 warrant #41 for 03/05/2024 is 1,143,390.73:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAINEPERS – 109,195.42 – February Contributions</li> <li>• Aramark - \$28,168.10 – Inmate food</li> <li>• Augusta Adult and Community Education \$5,859.61 – January Inmate Education/CARA Film Group</li> <li>• Central Maine Power - \$7,037.34 – Electricity</li> <li>• Childrens Center: Early Nite - \$278,546.00 – ARPA</li> <li>• Consolidated Communications - \$32,610.38 – Telephone Purchases &amp; Invoice</li> <li>• Correctional Psychiatric Services - \$53,174.50 – March MAT Program</li> <li>• Correctional Psychiatric Services - \$45,363.75 – March Mental Health</li> <li>• Correctional Psychiatric Services - \$156,720.00 – March Medical</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maine Municipal Association - \$84,522.40 – Workers Compensation</li> <li>• Maine Natural Gas - \$23,666.51 – Natural Gas</li> <li>• Maine Accessibility Corporation - \$4,435.87 – Chair Lift</li> <li>• MCCA - \$13,738.00 – Membership Dues</li> <li>• Merrill Investigations - \$6,130.63 – Court Security (2 Weeks)</li> <li>• MMEHT - \$185,312.93 Health, Dental, Vision, Life, IPP</li> <li>• RHR Smith &amp; Co - \$16,400.00 – Auditor FY22, FY23, and Single</li> <li>• The VOICES Project - \$17,180.61 – ARPA</li> <li>• Wheeler &amp; Arey, P.A. - \$9,067.50 – Legal Fees</li> </ul> <p>➤ <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, stated that there is a payment of \$250,000 for jail medical and that does not include any true ups.</p> <p>➤ <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, asked to verify when the payments for the Voices project will end and <b>Audrey Fredericks, Finance Manager</b>, promised to check the information and get it back to the Commissioners.</p>	
<p><b>Sheriff</b></p> <p><b>Corrections</b></p>	<p><b>Ken Mason, Sheriff:</b></p> <p>➤ <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, asked the Commissioners to grant permission to the Deputies of Kennebec County to buy back their firearms when they are no longer needed by the County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The transfer of ownership is made by a licensed firearm dealer with no charge for the transfer.</li> <li>• <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, made a motion to approve the sale of County firearms to County Deputies, and <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair</b>, seconded the motion.</li> </ul> <p>➤ <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, asked permission from the Commissioners for a blue pin buyout for a deputy transferring from Gardiner. The Sheriff's Office will be receiving payment from Lewiston for another transfer, and this will help cover the cost of the blue pin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, asked when the new Deputy is hired, if he goes to the Academy or needs additional training and <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, said that he does not need to go to the Academy, but he will have to complete additional training.</li> </ul> <p>➤ <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, made a motion to accept the blue pin buyout and <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner</b>, seconded the motion.</p>	<p>Approved 2-0</p> <p>Approved 2-0</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, stated that <b>Peter Marchesi, Kennebec County Lawyer</b>, had sent an email response to <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, on <b>February 25<sup>th</sup></b> in regards to the Stone Garden Grant review.</li> <li>➤ <u>Civil Audit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, stated that \$45,000 is too expensive for an audit by BerryDunn for the Civil Department.</li> <li>• <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, wanted to know what the revenues and expenditures were for the Civil Department.</li> <li>• <b>Audrey Fredericks, Finance Manager</b>, pointed out that check amounts for revenue in the Civil Department vary and are not all above \$90, and <b>Al Morin, Chief Deputy</b>, stated that he would send a fee list to the Commissioners and the Finance Department to review.</li> <li>• <b>BerryDunn</b> has been asked to go back and rework the paperwork for the Civil Department audit.</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Corey Goodchild, Assistant Jail Administrator:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The population inside the Jail is 135 total.</li> <li>➤ The Jail received 3 boarders from the Oxford County Jail. Oxford County will be paying Kennebec County for their care while they upgrade their Jail facility.</li> <li>➤ <u>Jail Kitchen RFP (Request for Proposal):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 RFPs were submitted.</li> <li>• A contract with one of the vendors will be submitted once negotiations have been finalized.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <u>Mental Health Jail Contract (Expiring in April):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 3-month extension was requested.</li> <li>• Added 8 hours per week of the Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner to proposed contract.</li> <li>• The new price point is \$635,000 for FY25 at a 3% increase for the next two years.</li> <li>• <b>Corey Goodchild, Assistant Jail Administrator</b>, will return for approval of the final draft of contract from the County Administrator and the Commissioners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <u>Jail Medical Contract:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expires on December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.</li> <li>• The Jail would like to match up the terms of all three contracts: Medical, Mental Health, and Kitchen.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Al Morin, Chief Deputy</b>, stated that he was looking into alternative treatments for addiction in the Jails and would report back to the Commissioners later.</li> </ul>	
<b>District Attorney</b>	<p><b>DA's Office:</b>  <b>Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator</b>, and <b>Diana Murphy, Restitution Clerk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ January and February restitution report was given to the Commissioners.</li> <li>➤ \$30,000 in restitution was collected and \$9,000 in supervision fees was collected.</li> <li>➤ There is a new program that MRS is using, that garnishes the wages or accounts of the individuals who were guilty.</li> <li>➤ <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, asked why the year-to-year revenue was so different, and <b>Diana Murphy, Restitution Clerk</b>, stated that the programs aren't in sync and MRS is trying to catch up on garnishing. MRS garnishes their taxes.</li> <li>➤ <u>Forfeitures:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over \$50,000 was collected in criminal forfeitures.</li> <li>• <b>Shay Freeman, DA Office Administrator</b>, instructed on how forfeitures work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, asked if there was a forfeiture line in the budget, and <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, stated that forfeitures were covered in revenue projections.</li> </ul>	
<b>Probate</b>	<p><b>Probate:</b>  <b>Abigail St. Valle, Probate Register:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Talazen Smith, Paralegal</b>, has just started with the Probate Court and <b>Abigail, St. Valle, Probate Register</b>, introduced her to the Commissioners.</li> <li>➤ Probate Court is fully staffed.</li> <li>➤ <b>Talazen Smith, Paralegal</b>, is organizing cases.</li> <li>➤ <u>AV update in court:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vendor has been contacted to schedule the installation but <b>Abigail St. Valle, Register of Probate, Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director</b>, and <b>Devon Parsons, IT Director</b>, have not received any return phone calls to schedule.</li> <li>• <b>Devon Parsons, IT Director</b>, mentioned that the cost would be \$3,500 and that he would reach out to the vendor again to check in about scheduling.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Office supply line for the FY25 budget has changed from \$7,000 last year to \$5,000 this year.</li> <li>➤ January revenues were \$25,000.</li> </ul>	

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Information Technology	<p><b>Information Technology:</b></p> <p><b>Devon Parsons, IT Director:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Phone system conversion is almost done.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are still some numbers that need to be moved from one platform to another.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Fax system conversion is all done.</li> <li>➤ Jail maintenance with Siemens for HVAC control system is happening.</li> <li>➤ A RING system will be installed on the Hill House entrance.</li> <li>➤ <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, asked for the retention on the security system of the jail, and <b>Devon Parsons, IT Director</b>, stated that the term is 1 year.</li> </ul>	
Registry of Deeds	<p><b>Register of Deeds:</b></p> <p><b>Matthew Boucher, Register of Deeds:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Not present.</li> </ul>	
Emergency Management Agency	<p><b>Emergency Management Agency:</b></p> <p><b>Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A new EMA Director was selected after interviewing and she will start in 2-4 weeks.</li> <li>➤ ZOLL defibrillator MOU:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The MOU will be given to <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, electronically, and then to <b>Peter Marchesi, County Lawyer</b>, and after review, it will be sent to the Commissioners for approval.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ The offices in EMA are being painted.</li> <li>➤ There are missing documents for a Homeland Security Grant audit from 2021. These documents need to be submitted by the State and a Town within Kennebec County.</li> <li>➤ The FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) disaster recovery location will be moved from Manchester to Farmingdale.</li> <li>➤ FEMA is still looking for a place for a disaster recovery center in the Winslow/Waterville area.</li> <li>➤ FEMA projected that Kennebec would have 557 claims, but we are around 600-they have paid out \$200,000</li> </ul>	
Facilities	<p><b>Facilities Maintenance:</b></p> <p><b>Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Estimates for roofing are being developed.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trying to get them within budget range for ARPA funding.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director</b>, requested a motion and approval from the Commissioners to reallocate ARPA funding left over from work on 77 Winthrop Street to fund work on the heat pumps/AC units for 77 and 73 Winthrop Street:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, made a motion to reallocate funding and <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair</b>, seconds the motion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ An estimate to upgrade the courthouse from pneumatic heat to digital controls is quoted at \$199,562 which is unfunded.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dan Brunelle, Finance Director</b>, stated that Siemens is the project manager and has hired and obtained quotes from other professionals (electricians and plumbers) that they would be working with to complete the project.</li> <li>• <b>Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director</b>, stated that if we were to obtain more quotes, it would mean another Winter with difficult heating circumstances in the Kennebec County Courthouse.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <u>Court security</u>:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an old wooden door that leaks, and it needs to be replaced to put on key FOB entry-the estimate is not in the upgrade; it is \$12,500 to replace door and there is no money funded for this.</li> <li>• A discussion will take place at a later date to figure out where funding for these projects will come from.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Approved 2-0</p>
<p><b>Administrator</b></p>	<p><b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <u>Jail</u>:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Jail would like to request an additional 7% raise on top of the 7% raise already allotted in the FY25 preliminary budget for the NCEU (National Correctional Employees Union) employees.</li> <li>• There is nothing written in the budget to account for true ups.</li> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, had asked <b>Bryan Slaney, Jail Administrator</b>, to provide information on the funding that is needed overall for FY25 and asked that he be as accurate as possible.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, testified at the State House regarding LD2214 at state house. He spoke about equity, mandates, and the lack of fiscal notes causes the county to increase property tax.</li> <li>➤ Angela Molino was selected as the new EMA Director.</li> <li>➤ Attended the soft opening at Johnson Hall (County ARPA recipient).</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>Old Business/ Follow Up Items</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sheriffs cost estimate for the court security was received and it was decided that it would not be cost effective.</li> <li>➤ The salary of the Deputy Treasurer was discussed. Scott Ferguson, County Administrator, recommended \$5,000 which equates to about 4 hours a week at \$25 per hour. Tom Doore, County Treasurer, felt that would be sufficient.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new line will be created in the budget.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>Sean Goodwin, Acting EMA Director</b>, will stay working when the new Director starts to help with training.</li> <li>➤ <u>Stone garden grant:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peter Marchesi, County Lawyer</b>, replied to <b>Ken Mason, Sheriff</b>, on January 25<sup>th</sup> after review of the grant with his comments. The e-mail has been re-sent today.</li> <li>• <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, stated that there are some strict guidelines in the grant that need to be met.</li> <li>• <b>Ken Mason, County Sheriff</b>, indicated that these funds have been received for years and that they are compliant with the requirements of the grant.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ There was a discussion of the salary decisions for the Budget Committee.</li> <li>➤ The Vehicle Use Policy will be sent to <b>Peer Marchesi, County Lawyer</b>, for review.</li> <li>➤ The BerryDunn Civil Department Audit quote will be revised and revisited.</li> <li>➤ The Budget Committee will approve the budget meeting minutes.</li> <li>➤ Alternative medications (shots) are being analyzed by Al Morin, Chief Deputy, for the jail programs to reduce costs.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is said that the shots are painful and <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, mentioned that consent to administration of the shot would be necessary and you cannot force anyone to take it.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b>, wanted to know what other counties are doing with their Civil Departments and <b>Scott Ferguson, County Administrator</b>, stated that he would look into it and bring some numbers back to the Commissioners.</li> <li>➤ The Payroll Audit has begun.</li> <li>➤ <u>Walt McKee, Attorney: Concerns about Green Street Church Shelter:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Green Street methodist church shelter will come before the planning board next week and Walt McKee, Lawyer and property abutter, wanted to appeal to the County ask that they withdrawal their</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



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	<p>support of the shelter because of the hazards that will be created in this densely populated area of Augusta.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The shelter will be low-barrier, meaning that there will not be any treatment requirements for those who are drug-addicted or that have mental health illness.</li> <li>• <b>Dan Brunelle, Facilities Director</b>, pointed out that granting parking space use to the Green Street shelter would make snow removal difficult in the winter months and that there is already a problem with people sleeping under County trailers and leaving hypodermic needles in the grass next to the parking area.</li> <li>• This would be the biggest low-barrier shelter in the area and would attract a lot of people.</li> </ul>	
<b>New Business</b>	All Addressed in departmental reports.	
<b>Public Comments</b>	<p>➤ <b>Jim Accurso, Public Affairs Specialist for the SBA (Small Business Administration)-Disaster loans</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and businesses can access resources at SBA.gov or at a disaster recovery center.</li> <li>• Works for field operations center for the disaster recovery office.</li> <li>• Reviews loans for damaged businesses and homeowners for disaster recovery.</li> <li>• There are economic disaster recovery loans available.</li> <li>• Mitigation loans available.</li> <li>• Stated locations of FEMA disaster recovery application sites in Manchester and Farmingdale.</li> <li>• There was an explanation of further resources and benefit information.</li> </ul>	
<b>Adjournment</b>	Motion by <b>Joe Pietroski, Commissioner</b> to adjourn regular session at 2:03pm, and <b>Patsy Crockett, Commissioner Chair</b> , seconded the motion.	Approved 2-0

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