

Kennebec County Budget Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, February 26, 2025  
5:58PM to 8:08PM in Augusta at Hill House 125 State Street

Members present: Eric Austin, Kathryn Mills Woodsum, Lloyd Irland, Kathleen Cutler, Michael Perkins, Ashley Sennett.

Members excused absent: Garry Hinkley, Theresa Haskell, Lee Trahan.

Commissioners Present: Patsy Crockett, Joseph Pietroski.

1. Meeting was called to order by Commissioner Crockett at 5:58PM.
2. New business. Budget Presentations by Agency/Department.
  - All salary positions are given a 4% COLA. Additional percentages given with validation by the Commissioners. Most are to achieve salary parity with same positions in other government agencies.
  - All departments/agencies have increases in Health Insurance, Maine Paid Family & Medical Leave Act.
  - Most departments/agencies include Retiree Sick and Vacation which was not previously accounted for.
  - Some departments/agencies have increases in Utilities due to not being in the department/agency in the FY25 budget but was in a general utility line item, where we will see a decrease.
- **Probate: Ronda Snyder** (22 minutes)
  - Line A001-1070-2000 Judge Salary is now better aligned. Works two days weekly, one in Court, one composing orders. Available on call as needed. Handles 900 cases annually, fourth highest in Maine.
  - Line -4004 Underbudgeted in FY25, actuals are higher due to more cases.
  - Line -4080 Combined into line -4004
  - Line -4081 Security is for office hours protection, shared with DA. 30% here, 70% DA. Says cost for Sheriff was estimated to be higher so they use outside security. \$55,622
  - Line -4614 Judge's bench to be near to door for security reasons.
  - Line -7350 Mandated secure vault space for file storage is full. Need to add rolling files to place in room. Should last for several years and can be added to.
  - Line -7375 Replace one laptop.
  - Lines -4305 & -5304 & -5310 Utilities were not included in FY25 budget. Actual costs with projected increases.
  - Legislature will consider a bill to increase Probate fees; Ronda will testify.
  - Hon. Libby Mitchell gives compliments to her entire department.
- **EMA Budget Highlights: Angela Molino** (42 minutes)
  - Line A001-1010-3101 and -3102 EMA Specialist and Planner were each 29 hours/week; now combined to 1 40-hour/week position. Same overall salary amounts to one person.
  - Line -3103 Removed federal Homeland Security funding.
  - Line -4415 Lease & Service Agreements. Reduced cost.
  - Line -5310 Water & Sewer. Was not included in FY25 budget. Actual costs with projected increases.
  - 5-Year Hazard Mitigation Plan is due in 2027.
  - GIS Mapping of all critical infrastructure will be used to assess damage after incidents or to locate items for emergency use.
- **MD3 Lines** -3104, -4003, -4205, -4211, --4614, -5105, -5106, -5405; total \$221,500
  - This is the only program of its kind in Maine; there are several in other states in large population centers.
  - Start-up cost was \$345,000 covered with ARPA funds.

- Mission is life-saving assistance on calls with most calls being for that purpose rather than ER avoidance.
  - This is a non-transport service which cannot provide billing. Only transport service companies can bill for services.
  - Responded to 211 calls last year and 45% had direct care provided by a doctor.
  - Spent 201 hours training 748 students (paramedics and technicians). Cost of training from outside agencies is \$200 per student for a course. This training enhances every future call.
  - Applied for and will be receiving a \$236,000 grant from Drug Settlement funds. Hope to replace current retrofitted 2019 Toyota RAV4 with a new vehicle properly outfitted for \$110,000 of these funds. Leaves \$126,000 available.
- **Facilities Budget Highlights: Dan Brunelle (25 minutes)**
    - Line A001-1040-3606 Overtime is primarily for winter storm maintenance. Has not been budgeted for in the past; being proactive by including now.
    - Line -4100 Transport Meals Lodging. New item.
    - Line -4415 Lease & Service Agreements. New equipment.
    - Line-4940 Training: Education & Seminars. New item for Mechanics in the Autel system, and for staff in the Seamon building systems.
    - Line -7201 and -4610 Larger projects this year: Remodel EMA & Deeds buildings for insulation, and Court House retaining wall and HVAC replacements.
  - **IT Budget Highlights: Devon Parsons (18 minutes)**
    - Line A001-1035-7374 IT Capital Reserve. Must have some funds available for repairs to maintain servers, HVAC and keycard systems consistently.
    - ARPA funds covered:
      - Replacing both A/C units in the server room when one failed. The second old but functioning unit was installed in the County repair garage to provide better working conditions.
      - Replacing battery backups for the servers. The life expectancy is six to eight years.
      - Installing camera throughout the Court House.
      - Installing Seamons HVAC control system in the Court House.
    - Tour of Server Room
3. Motion to accept the Budget Committee Minutes of February 12, 2025 by Eric Austin, second by Michael Perkins. Approved by unanimous vote.
  4. Report Out of Visits to County Sites:
    - a. Kathleen: Visited EMA, visited Jail previously, will visit DA and ride with a Deputy Sheriff
    - b. Kathryn: Visited Deeds, rode with a Deputy Sheriff
    - c. Lloyd: Visited IT, rode with a Deputy Sheriff previously
    - d. Ashley: Visited MD3 at EMA, rode with a Deputy Sheriff
    - e. Eric: Will visit the DA
    - f. Michael: Has visited Jail previously, will visit Probate
    - g. Jail Visit: Lloyd will ask to have members visit together Wednesday March 5<sup>th</sup> at 4PM. Suggestion made by Dan Brunelle to ask to Cody Brown to join Brian Slaney for the tour so we can see more of the facility.
  5. Public Communication: Lloyd read an excerpt from the Central Maine Paper article of 2/25/25 about our Budget Committee. It stated that the enormous Excel pivot table doesn't include summaries with background information, and that proactive, clear and effective communication is needed. Lloyd would like us to communicate more in ways that the public can access and understand easily.
  6. Motion to adjourn at 8:08PM made by Michael Perkins, Second by Eric Austin. Vote: Unanimous. Respectfully submitted by Kathryn Mills Woodsum, February 28, 2025. Approved March 5, 2025.