

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes February 23, 2021 2323
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci 34°
Commissioners Laura Sanborn & Andre Cushing via Zoom

Roll Call -

Commissioner Baldacci opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. from the Commissioners Chambers and Commissioners Sanborn and Cushing attending via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes –

Commissioner Cushing moved to approve February 9, 2021 meeting minutes. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Public Comment -

NONE

Probate Update –

Registrar Renee Stupak reported the following:

- There is a staff position currently being advertised and closes March 5th.
- There will be legislative meeting tomorrow discussing the raising of fees for petitions and certificates.
- Commissioner Baldacci stated that MCCA discussed this topic and believes that the legislation doesn't realize that the revenue is an offset for publications. It needs to be explained what is real revenue and costs.

EMA Update –

Director Bradley Nuding presented the following:

- Our civil air patrol agreement has been extended through the month of March.
- Bradley did a walk through at the Cross Insurance Center guided by Northern Light Director of Emergency Preparedness. The operations are currently at approximately 2K vaccines a day. There has been no guidance on expanding the current phase we're in; so, we're in a waiting pattern.
- Penobscot County reportedly has nine new cases of COVID. Penobscot County is relatively low in comparison to this time last month. Our per capita positive rate is around 10; at the end of January, we were around 25.
- The proposed legislative bill regarding Utility liaisons as reported at last week's meeting did not move forward.

EMA Update – Continued:

- The local Emergency planning committee is a Congressional mandate for hazardous awareness. We have two representatives on our local board; Representative Kevin O'Connell of Brewer and Laurie Osher out of District 123 in Orono are our newest representatives. Elected representation was previously held by Ryan Tipping. Our next quarterly meeting started April 15th.
- The Counties Hazard Mitigation Plan is a five-year plan that needs to be approved by FEMA. The plan identifies natural hazards and the municipalities mitigation projects to overcome those risks. Previously written by a consultant who also facilitated municipal meetings; will complete the new plan myself.
- Two exercises in March we're going to help with; one at Bangor International Airport and the other in the Towns of Lincoln/Howland water districts for a water exercise.
- Answering Commissioner Baldacci in regards to opening up expansion, it was reported that there are still quite a few over the age of 70 that needs to be vaccinated. According to the Penobscot County CDC liaison, there is no word on when the expansion will take place.
- Answering Commission Cushing's questions on residents traveling across county lines to get vaccinated. The current recommendation by DHHS is for residents to get vaccinated in their own county as they'll have to get their second shot at the same location as their first. There are reports of citizens traveling great distances to get vaccinated, but with Walmart and Walgreens receiving their own allotment of vaccine, it will become easier for people who are currently eligible to be vaccinated to do so.
- Director Nuding then introduced his new Deputy Director Lynn Dwelley who started with our County yesterday.

UT Update –

Director Shaw Weeks reported the following:

- The salt bid will go out early this year in hopes the bid announcement letters will go out to the towns by March
- Since our tanks are dated, fire departments are using new composite tanks and don't want the old steel ones. We are exploring other avenues to get rid of them. The fire engine should be up on the Fire Chiefs Association site soon.
- Shaw is close watching the following legislative documents:
 - LD80, HP0046 – An Act to Provide Critical Communications for Family Farms, Businesses and Residences by Strategic Public Investment in High-speed Internet and Broadband Infrastructure.

UT Update – Continued:

- LD144, HP0102 – Bill “Resolve, Authorizing the State Tax Assessor to Convey the Interest of the State in Certain Real Estate in the Unorganized Territory”
- There has been a lot of interest on the Argyle/Alton salt/sand shed roof bid. There will be a pre-bid meeting March 4th and bids will be opened March 23rd.
- Director Weeks then provided an update on finances as of January 5, 2021, which would be our six-month check in.
- Shaw reported the following amounts spent:

SERVICES Percent spent

- Roads & Bridges 68.8%
 - Snow Removal 43.0%
 - Salt/Sand Sheds 44.6%
 - Solid Waste 37.7%
 - Fire Protection 83.0%
 - Law Enforcement 45.4%
 - Ambulance Service 80.2%
 - Cemeteries 98.8%
 - Animal Control 39.6%
 - Polling Places 93.9%
 - Snowmobile Trails 100.0%
 - Audit & Bank Fees 0.0%
 - TOTAL SERVICES 47.6%
- Expenses: 48% spent
 - Capital reserves balance: \$625,459.70

CAPITAL RESERVE Balance as of 1/5/2021

- Truck Replacement (yr. 1 of 6) \$17,284.75
 - Road Construction Projects \$218,553.27
 - Road Paving Projects \$199,145.17
 - Salt Sand Sheds Capital \$163,482.45
 - E-911 Addressing \$26,994.06
 - TOTAL CAPITAL RESERVE \$625,459.70
- Other revenues balance: Excise tax received \$193,880.93 about 57% anticipated – not including the Local Road Assistance monies
 - TIF Account Balance: \$2,048,422.12

PRCC Update –

Deputy Director Josh Lilley presented the following:

- For the second year in a row, we are the busiest PSAP in the State with 65,209 9-1-1 calls beating Portland.
- Regarding the Radio Project that is moving forward:
 - Several members of PRCC (Supervisors, Senior Operators, Dispatchers, the Director and Deputy Lilley) travelled to Portland to meet with RCM to take a first look at our new radio consoles. Deputy Lilley is extremely pleased with RCM meeting all our needs.
- RCM will start the re-wiring process on March 9th to make sure we have proper grounding. The week after they will start installing and training the staff on the new consoles.
- Interviews were held for the Call Taker positions and we have a couple conditional offers on the table.

IT Update –

Director Cliff Warren presented the following:

- Only spending has been monthly expenses and payroll; we haven't started on any larger projects.
- General workload, we have closed 220 tickets in the last 30 days.
- Two projects were stalled because of COVID:
 - Improved virtualization system for our campus
 - Piscataquis County virtualization as they have a single server and makes me nervous
- Other projects we've been involved with are:
 - Tying ImageTrend into our system so fire records are transferred to ImageTrend
 - An interface for an application for the Sheriff's Office to pull information from our records management system
- There will be an opening coming up in his department with the recent resignation. Currently is working on the job description that is out dated.

Finance Update -

Director Alexander reported the following departmental update:

- Stetson is the only town that has not paid their 2020 tax yet, but will be processing a check tomorrow, February 24. Letters billing for interest owed have been sent out to those who have paid late.
- Finance is working on direct deposit paystubs being accessible to employees online versus hard copies being provided weekly. This will certainly save a lot of staff time and materials.
- Finance is working on the new labor law for part time employees receiving vacation benefits. (One hour vacation for each 40 hours worked)
- The 10-year \$6M PRCC Infrastructure bond loan was discussed.
 - Director Alexander received written confirmation that there will be no payments on principal until we start drawing down.
 - The \$279K that was paid out already on this project; Director Lavoie reported to Judy that there will be another \$250K paid out in the next thirty days.
 - Director Alexander will present at next weeks meeting a more formal outline on what the numbers will look like.
- Commissioner Baldacci requested that Director Alexander speak to our auditors in order to find a better way to handle payouts for vacation/sick time when an employee leaves County employment.

Sheriff's Update –

Sheriff Morton reported the following on Law Enforcement:

- Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve Darling Ford of Bangor for (8) eight 2021 Ford Police Interceptor Utility vehicles for the total amount of \$289,800. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Sheriff Troy Morton reported the following on Corrections:

- In-house jail population is 162; 15 boarded out to other facilities, no federal inmates, county swaps and there 202 inmates in Pre-trial Services.
- There has been an outbreak of COVID with several correction officers over two shifts testing positive over the last two days. Many thanks to the HR Coordinator LaBree and

Sheriff's Update – Continued:

Administrator Honey on communicating with Maine CDC and the officers; performing contact tracing, setting up doctor appointments, submitting all the necessary paperwork and have providing direction on a plan. Rather to be safe than sorry, the officers that are “perceived” to be close contacts are out of work until confirmation that they are safe to return.

Remaining staff members are stretched thin. Schedules are being adjusted, diversion for inmates to go to other county jails is being looked at, and other departments with corrections background are being asked to help cover shifts in the jail.

- There were 73 inmates that have been tested in February all testing negatives; 32 tests have been done in the last couple days.
- There will be a second round of vaccinations scheduled for next week for our Correction Officers and Deputies.
- There was a significant behavior issue in the jail block holding maximum security inmates. This cell block area had quite a bit of damage done.

Administration Update –

Administrator Erika Honey reported on the following:

- As previously reported from other departments, we have multiple staffing positions open within the County. Administrator Honey will be participating in interviews to get these positions filled.
- Director Nuding will be participating in a NACo webinar that deals with accessing COVID funding available.
- JustGrants accounts are getting set up for both the Sheriff's and EMA grants. Hopefully we are on our final stretch in order that we can get our reports updated and funds able to be drawn down.
- Recapping the COVID outbreak in the County; we have eight (8) active cases campus wide – with the majority with correction officers.
- The following is a breakdown of COVID cases campus wide:
 - December, we had four (4) positive cases
 - January, we had four (4) positive cases
 - February, we had a total of nine (9) cases, eight (8) that are active
- Ongoing contract negotiations are still going on
- Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve the warrants as presented. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Administration Update – Continued:

- Payroll Change Notices signed for: Kevin Brokaw and Jennifer Jalbert – Resignations; Ronald Ogden, Alexis Rodriguez, Jeremiah Campbell, Louis St. Pierre, Jessica Luna, John McEwen, Travis Morse and Kenneth York – Payroll Status Change
- Payroll Warrant to be approved for 02.19.2021: \$256,968.67
- A/P Warrant to be approved for 02.23.2021: \$251,587.40
- UT Warrant to be approved for: NONE
- UT TIF Warrant to be approved for: NONE

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:05 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) Contract Matter. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Honey, Director Alexander, Sheriff Morton and Treasurer Hiatt. Session ended at 10:24 a.m.

Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve Jail Custodian funding to be transferred to C/O Jail budget. Pay to pay facilities within jail budget as C/O Officer. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0.

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:25 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Honey, Director Alexander and Treasurer Hiatt. Session ended at 10:48 a.m.

Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve adjustment in pay for Part time clerical assistant in Finance to \$17.00 starting the next pay period. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0.

Meeting Adjourned-

Commissioner Cushing moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:51 a.m. with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Certified By:

Administrator, Erika Honey

Peter K. Baldacci, Chairman

Laura J. Sanborn, Commissioner

Andre E. Cushing, III, Commissioner