

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes June 01, 2021
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci and Laura Sanborn
Commissioner Andre Cushing – via Zoom

2337
57°

Roll Call -

Commissioner Baldacci opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. from the Commissioners Chambers with all Commissioners present.

Public Comment - NONE

Cooperative Salt Purchase Bid Opening –

Commissioner Baldacci opened up the winter salt bids for the Unorganized Territory. The following five vendors submitted their bids by the requested deadline.

| Vendor | Northern Region 2312.5 tons | Southern Region 3413 tons |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cargill | No Bid | No Bid |
| Eastern Salt Company | No Bid | No Bid |
| Harcros Chemicals, Inc | 73.42 | 63.05 |
| Morton Salt | No Bid | No Bid |
| New England Salt, LLC | 64.75 | 58.35 |

Commissioner Sanborn moved to award New England Salt, LLC the winter salt vendor. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

UT Update –

Deputy Director George Buswell reported the following roadwork update for FY 22:

- This is the standard road work layout we follow every year consisting of measurements and estimates. All of them fall in line with exception of Scraggly Lake Road. Last five years we've worked hand in hand with Huber timber and forestry pushing the shoulders back and brush removal. It's been a big project, but we're slowly getting it all done. The shoulder widening project will be finish this year on this budget. This makes it a lot safer road.
- The Grand Fall paving which funds come a 12-year capital improvement plan for our paving projects. We're going back to the Grand Fall roads for the first time in 12 years. We're right back where we started and can start cycling through it again. The roads look great, we've been able to stay on top of them.

UT Update – Continued:

Director Shaw Weeks reported the following:

- An amended contract with the Town of Sherman for Solid Waste to include four additional residences on the Grindstone Road. Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve this amended contract. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- Director Weeks has been in discussion with the Milford Fire Chief regarding the contract fire protection in Greenfield Township. Currently our contract is \$5K a year, plus call billing; after reviewing the last three years billing, Director Weeks proposes that we accept the negotiated amount of \$7K annually, with no call billing. Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve the proposed contract of \$7K a year with no call billing from the Town of Milford. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- A follow-up from last week's meeting in regard to the West Seboeis Road in Long A Township. State of Maine Bureau of Parks and Land reached out to Shaw directly regarding some conflicts with landowners, just north of the railroad tracks and just south of where we maintain the road. Landowners are proposing gating that road. Director Weeks sent a letter to the landowner, requesting that we open a dialogue with them on behalf of the County Commissioners, so that it can be figured out what the true issues are, and what resolutions we can come to.
- Deputy Buswell states that he has met the homeowner on a couple occasions. Last year there was a pickup truck load of building debris and material dumped off onto the snowbanks and he helped me pick it up, clean it up and haul it off. Last summer he commented that the dust was bad. The State built a beautiful, expensive boat launch on the West Seboeis Road which is one of the nicer ones in the County.

NWDB Update –

Executive Director Joanna Russell reported the following on the Board activities:

- Our program year 2021 funding begins July 1 and Director Russell presented a comparison of 2020 program allocations. FY 2020 is actual decreasing numbers and it shows per county by program. We receive contracts for Adult, Relocated Worker and youth. In Penobscot County for FY21 we received \$196,421.21 and increase of \$5,636 from FY20. Because Aroostook County was hit hard with a decrease, we will be working on finding alternative and additional funding to support them.

NWDB Update – Continued:

- We're happy to report that according to the Department of Accounting and finance services, there are no issues with the PY20 Monitoring Notice. In fact, we were complimented of the work that we've done. Maine Department of Labor will be conducting a review of our Program Year 2020 on the week of June 22nd.
- NWDB strategic planning process is almost complete. There were some challenges sticking to the scheduled submission dates due to revisions and additions of content. Linking the regional and workforce planning efforts while both economic development districts and NWDB were in the process of update and renewal ensured that goals and priorities were aligned. NWDB worked collaboratively with Eastern Maine Development Corporation to circulate a Business Services Survey that addressed economic and workforce development topics.
- June 10, 2021 is the next scheduled NWDB meeting.

Ben Hawkins presented the following:

I am the program coordinator for the Northeastern Workforce Development Board, specifically focused on the national emergency grant, opioid grants, and dislocated worker grant of what we have publicly branded the connecting with the Connecting with Opportunities initiative. That is largely focused on helping people who have been affected by the opioid crisis get back into the workforce.

In addition to that, the board has recently started a new initiative to create a list of recovery friendly employers. This draws a lot of inspiration from New Hampshire's model, a really successful program that they've launched three years ago. The essence of the program is to have a centralized list of recovery friendly employers, which is useful for the employers because it helps them formalize something they may already be doing. It also helps them, sort of put into language what recovery friendliness means in terms of employment. There is no one set answer, it's really just a time to help them reflect and figure out what that means for them. This is also useful for job seekers, maybe in recovery, or just are interested in a more recovery, mindful place of employment. The list will be available to see if there's any related openings to those employers; and it's just a good place to start from the job hunt.

In terms of being listed, we do have a few steps required there accessible for most employers. The main purpose is to help employers learn what recovery is, and then have them self-identify and proclaim that they support recovery. Then for them to explore on their own with the support of the board what that means.

NWDB Update – Continued:

These three steps are required to be listed:

- Step One is they reach out to the board saying they're interested.
- Step Two is to attend a brief workshop, learning about recovery, learning about its intersections with employment, how substance use disorder and recovery, affect the workplace, and also discuss some ideas about what an employer can do to be more recovery friendly.
- Step Three is they notify their entire staff that they're joining this list; that they're striving to become recovery friendly, and that they want to empower their employees feel comfortable asking for help, or feeling comfortable having conversations.

There are also a number of other resources available such as: we refer to policy guidance, situational advice, and we also offer tailored workshops for the workplace. We're very excited to say we have ten employers in the process right now being listed, five of which are just wrapping up their final the final step. We're really motivated by the quick entry from employers, and we're looking forward to seeing what happens.

Susan Cerini – Director of Workforce Services

Susan expanded more on Ben's discussion on the Connecting with Opportunities Grant. The employer piece is really key to some of the work that we're doing. In the Northeast region approximately 114 individuals that have been enrolled into that program. From that 114, 77 of them actually fall under Penobscot County (67%). The idea is to help individuals get into that job, to get that second chance and get that opportunity. We are finding a lot of success right now coming out of that. We have employers who are allowing individuals to get that chance and hiring directly. We are working with a landscape company who not only hired an individual, but is working to make sure that individual has transportation to work. That is important, because that's one of the big barriers that they see. We hear there's a shortage of workers, and there are a lot of individuals trying to get back into that workforce.

Susan stated that there are 30 days left in this program year right now. We're working in a year that's very different than what we're used to. We have serviced approximately 439 people, in the activity there were 208 for the actual region, fall under Penobscot County. That's a lot of people that we served during this pandemic. We've been able to provide these services in person and reach people virtually. We found new ways to actually reach them and nothing stopped during this period of time. We created virtual activities and workshops for these individuals. In the past five months, we started a virtual office hours forum. On Tuesdays and Thursday between nine and five, we have a zoom link were not just job seekers, but referring

NWDB Update – Continued:

partners can come in and actually meet with staff on demand. When they enter into the zoom link, they are greeted by a staff person (receptionist), who then puts them into a breakout room with a staff member waiting to meet people.

Our offices in the Northeast region are Bangor, East Millinocket, Dover, Ellsworth and Machias; but we're able to see people no matter where they are, because of being able to provide these other services. It's the staff, their work and their dedication to providing those services that is making this program successful. They're getting people employed and starting new programs.

Currently, we're working with Bangor Adult Education who has received a grant that's going to be able to address an employment need with CBL drivers (bus drivers). They're working closely with companies to be able to address that need.

Lastly, Susan shared about the work we do for those who are in recovery or coming out incarceration. We have an individual that was released in February, and started working with EMDC in March. Susan felt it important to highlight his story because he came out very motivated. EMDC was able to assist him with tuition, books, bus pass and a laptop to be able to complete the work getting his license reinstated. He passed his test back on May 20th and now is moving forward with job leads and working on a possible OJT.

Administration Update –

Administrator Honey reported on the following:

- Communication placed in the Commissioners folders.
 - A letter from SunVest Solar
 - We have a member of the public commented on last week's meeting
 - A letter regarding Dam Safety
 - Notice of intent to file from Woodville Training Site. Commissioner Sanborn stated in the past former UT Director Barbara Veilleux, Deputy George Buswell and herself attended these hearings. Administrator Honey will get in touch with UT Administration.
- Employment within the County:
 - There were 35 applications received for the HR Clerical Assistant position. Interviews will be held this week.
 - We're working with PRCC to advertise for call taker positions
 - Jail Correction Officer positions have been advertised; we have three full time positions open right now

Administration Update – Continued:

- Coming up meetings this week include:
 - After this meeting we are having our jail visit
 - Will be participating in the PRCS Board of Directors meeting tomorrow
 - Will be meeting with our health insurance carrier this Thursday
 - Will be meeting with the command staff at the Sheriff's Office tomorrow to discuss wage benefits and contracts
 - Will be meeting with Director Alexander and Sheriff's Executive Assistant this Friday to discuss different options for a corporate credit card
 - We are reviewing the COVID masking mandates and what that means here at the County. We will have a survey that we'll be sending out to employees.
- Last week's meetings included:
 - The contract with the FOP line officers was ratified last week
 - LD 1654 "Act to Stabilize State Funding for County Corrections" was voted to carry over to the next session.
 - We received a request from MCCA to submit a one light highlighting the most important industry of natural resource in the county.
- Next week's meetings include:
 - MCCA meeting is next Wednesday via zoom
 - Negotiations for PRCC contracts will be held in the next week or two
 - Annual training has been pushed out to employees to include harassment training, ergo training and hazcom training.
- Commissioner Sanborn moved to approve the warrants as presented. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
- Payroll Change Notices signed for: John Nuttall – Resignation; Brandon Anctil – Hired Full-time; Eric Petterson III – Change of Position; Alex Rodriguez – Resigned F/T to P/T position; Kristen Patha, John Neff, Diana Ronald, Adam Orcutt, and Jordan Norton - Payroll Status Changes.
- Payroll Warrant to be approved for 05.28.2021: \$259,215.81
- A/P Warrant to be approved for 06.01.2021: \$455,505.20
- Accounts Payable Bond Warrant to be approved for 06.01.2021: \$602.16
- Unorganized Territory Warrant to be approved for 06.01.2021: \$570.00
- Unorganized Territory TIF Warrant to be approved for: NONE

Administration Update – Continued:

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:40 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, Director Warren, Taylor Keeran, Director Alexander and Administrator Honey. Session ended at 10:09 a.m.

Executive Session---Commissioner Sanborn made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:10 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, Director Lavoie and Administrator Honey. Session ended at 10:16 a.m.

Public Session

Upon further review it was found that a bid was inadvertently read wrong during the opening of the Cooperative Salt Purchase Bids earlier in the meeting. Commissioner Cushing moved to rescind the awarding Cooperative Salt Purchase Bids. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Commissioner Sanborn moved to take these bids under advisement. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Meeting Adjourned-

Commissioner Sanborn moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 a.m. with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Cushing 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