

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes August 16, 2022 2397
9:00 AM Commissioners Laura Sanborn, Peter Baldacci and Andre Cushing 67°

Roll Call -

Commissioner Sanborn opened the meeting at 9:00 AM from the Commissioners Chambers with Commissioner Baldacci and Administrator Honey present.

Commissioner Cushing arrived 9:06 a.m.

Treasurer John Hiatt was absent

Approval of Minutes –

Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the Commissioners Special Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2022. Commissioner Sanborn seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 2-0.

Public Comment –

Larry Dansinger – Resident of Bangor

Participant requested answers to an email sent to the Commissioners. Commissioner Baldacci responded:

- The State has set aside a “Rainy Day Fund”; whereas the County has a surplus of unexpended funds placed in a capital account that can be used.
- We have no formal strategic plan at the County; we can take a look at the City of Bangor and later look for a long-term plan for the County.
- We are not considering a jail referendum for November because we have not finalized what is the actual plan. It’s very challenging and the costs are significant at what we’re looking at. We need to find something that’s more reasonable and affordable.
- Treasurer Hiatt has not come into work for months. Under legal advice, we cannot remove Treasurer Hiatt from office. The budget is being watched by our Deputy Treasurer, Commissioners, Administrator, and department heads.

Campus Renovation Project Update -

Commissioner Laura Sanborn read the following statement:

Over the last several months the Penobscot County Commissioner’s Office has continued working on a campus renovation project which includes addressing multiple renovations and space needs for the Penobscot County Jail.

Campus Renovation Project Update – Continued:

We continue to evaluate options that allow for the proper space and services necessary to adequately support the needs of Penobscot County while also considering the physical impact on communities. We are looking to design a facility that can accommodate our current average population of 226 inmates, along with the ability to provide additional medical, mental health and program services for those in our custody. Through the continuous support of our jail diversion programs in collaboration with community partners, we are focusing on a design that can house up to 280 inmates, and our goal is to present a plan in early 2023 that would be supported by a bond measure.

Grant Manager Update –

The Penobscot County Commissioners would like to thank all of the organizations that applied for the Beneficiary grant program. Commissioner Sanborn announced the beneficiary program awardees.

- Welcome to House Home Goods Bank, Inc. of Old Town will receive \$15,000
- Save A Life, Inc in Lincoln will receive \$25,000
- Golden Harvest Grange Hall of Carmel will receive \$10,000
- Bangor Area Homeless Shelter of Bangor will receive \$25,000
- MMHC Together Place of Bangor will receive \$24,250
- Breaking the Cycle of Millinocket will receive \$25,000
- PIR2Peer of Millinocket will receive \$25,000
- Food AND Medicine of Bangor will receive \$24,835
- Neighbors Supporting Neighbors Community Pantry serving Hermon, Carmel, Levant, Etna, and Dixmont will receive \$25,000

The grant funds will be used to help people coping with addiction, with transportation, refrigerated trucks to help distribute food, expand services to the communities these organizations serve, and generally make Penobscot County better able to help its people. We are proud of the work these organizations are doing and thrilled to be able to support them with our county's ARPA funds. Commissioner Cushing moved to approve these grant amounts as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

The Commissioners will be meeting shortly to review the Sub-Recipient program applications and we will announce those funding decisions in the coming weeks.

Grant Manager Update – Continued:

Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the quarterly report placed on the county website. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

A FOAA request was received related to the grants program and has been forwarded to our legal counsel.

DA's Update –

Deputy District Attorney Mark Rucci, Office Manager Kristine Higgins and Restitution Clerk Jeanne Orcutt presented the following:

- The DA's office has returned to a full trial schedule; currently at pre-pandemic terms of what gets tried every month
- Diana Durgan is the new court clerk replacing Peter Schleck
- The DA's Office is requesting to engage in a new program regarding the collection of restitution in Penobscot County. Kennebec County currently garnishes tax returns from defendants to secure restitution payments; and other counties are starting to follow suit. Penobscot County currently has over \$4M owed in restitution; this program would benefit the County in accessing these funds from the defendants for the victims. After discussion, Commissioner Cushing moved to approve Penobscot County utilizing this program as reported. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

UT Update –

Shaw Weeks and George Buswell presented the following:

- Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve New England Whitewater Center – River Driver's Restaurant liquor license as presented. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- Commissioner Cushing moved to approve 2022 Paving Contract of Mud Pond Road with Pike Industries. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- George Buswell met with Mt. Chase selectman to discuss the solid waste programs. Some residents from the unorganized territory dumping trash in their receptacles; more discussion will follow with the selectmen

UT Update – Continued:

- We have been notified that an agreement with DOT from 2004 is ceasing. In this agreement DOT covered snow removal for 0.2 miles of road in the Millinocket region and we provided them roadside mowing at various locations. We are considering adding these 0.2 miles pieces of road to our current contract with the Millinocket Lake Road contractor. We are uncertain of the costs at this time and will come back to report.

Administration Update –

Administrator Honey introduced Penobscot County's new IT Director Douglas Butler to the Commission.

Communication:

- Carmel Notice of Taking

Employment within the County:

- Spreadsheet for position openings; HR is looking into partnering with a recruitment team addressing PRCC and Corrections openings
- Interviews are being held for the Administrator position

Miscellaneous:

- Administrator Honey expressed thanks for the opportunity to serve as Administrator stating it was a positive and challenging experience. There are some wonderful people working here for the county and we're very fortunate. Very confident in your staff and leadership.

This Week:

- General unit negotiations
- Still working on budget reviews; a schedule should go out to everyone to firm up those dates. Working on the audits to make sure done prior to presenting the final budget

Next Week:

- Sub-recipients special meeting will take place August 25th

Administration Update – Continued:

Warrants:

- Payroll Warrant to be approved for 08.12.2022: \$ 265,032.17
 - A/P Warrant to be approved for 08.16.2022: \$ 340,808.29
 - UT Warrant to be approved for 08.16.2022: \$71,613.72
 - UT TIF Warrant to be approved for: NONE
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- Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the warrants as presented. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Payroll Change Notices signed for: Stephen Day – Hired F/T Deputy

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:45 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 and Director Lavoie Session ended at 9:56 a.m.

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:57 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, HR Coordinator Michelle LaBree and Director Mallar. Session ended at 10:36 a.m.

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:37 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 MacDonald and Director Mallar. Session ended at 10:51 a.m.

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:52 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners and Administrator Honey. Session ended at 10:56 a.m.

Public Session/Action Taken –

Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to deny the grievance, GCN#176, for the reason that the Sheriff's decision on hiring a supervisor for the position was supported by the totality of the information available to him. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. There was further discussion to state that Corporal Fitch is a fine officer with a great future with the county and this decision is not a reflection on him. The Vote on the motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the Sheriff's Office Executive Secretary and the DA's Office Manager be considered exempt positions and move to Step Eight on the pay scale that is based upon longevity. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 11:02 a.m., under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners and Administrator Honey. Session ended at 1:30 p.m.

Action Taken – None

Meeting Adjourned-

Commissioner Baldacci moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:31 p.m. with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Certified By:

Laura J. Sanborn, Chair

Peter K. Baldacci, Commissioner

Andre E. Cushing, III, Commissioner

Administrator, Erika Honey