

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes December 12, 2023 #2459
8:45 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci, Andre Cushing and David Marshall

Executive Session---Commissioner Marshall made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:51 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C) Acquisition of Real Property – Discussion on Tower Purchase. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Administrator Adkins, Deputy Administrator LaBree, Treasurer Mower Director Lavoie, UT Director George Buswell and Deputy Fitzgerald. Session ended at 9:02 AM.

Action Taken: None

Roll Call -

Commission Chair Cushing opened the meeting at 9:03 AM from the Commissioners Chambers with all Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins and Deputy Administrator LaBree present.

Pledge of Allegiance – Treasurer Mower

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the December 5th, 2023 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0. Signed.

District Attorney's Office –

DA Almy and ADA Lynds reported on the jail population. Discussion on number of prisoners in custody awaiting trial with examples of why defendants are in the county jail versus Department of Corrections. Commission will send a letter to Judge Murray requesting assistance in moving cases along for those that are awaiting sentencing.

UT Update –

Director Buswell and Deputy Morrison presented the following:

- After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to approve the Patten Ambulance Service Agreement as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the interim agreement with GRACE, LLC. as presented. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the 2-year extension with EMDC. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to table this motion. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to table passed 3-0.
- Susan Adams representing Katahdin Tourism Partnership and Randy Jackson from Millinocket Chamber of Commerce presented a PILT request for \$19,850; these funds will contract a project event coordinator for the April 8th eclipse. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall

UT Update – Continued:

moved to approve this request as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Public Hearing- 2024 County Budget

Commissioner Cushing opened the public hearing on the 2024 Penobscot County Budget at 9:45 AM. Commissioner Cushing summarized the County budget at \$ 29,204,636 with a tax assessment of \$22,887,525. The increase in taxes is \$1,800,520 which is an 8.54% increase.

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to close the hearing at 9:47 AM. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to close the hearing passed 3-0.

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the 2024 Penobscot County Budget as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion; commenting that this is the largest increase that I've experienced in all the years as Commissioner by exceeding the LD1 growth by almost a quarter of a million dollars. Commissioner hopes that this is not repeated in the future as it is very burdensome to our towns, cities and taxpayers. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Sheriff's Office

Sheriff Morton and Capt. Boulier reported the following:

- Corrections Sgt. Morin and Deputy Cpl. Walsh are representing the Sheriff's Office in the Wreaths across America event currently taking place
- Jail count is 158 in house, 71 boarded out and 102 participating in Maine Pre-Trial
- Discussion on the mental and health issues that are problems in the jails
- Discussion on problems on the jail facilities failures that need to be addressed.
- Chair Cushing request for a Project Manager discussion at the next meeting

Recess –

Spirit of America Award presentation in the Third Floor Great Room. Attached to the end of the minutes are a list of the 2021 – 2023 recipients.

Administration Update –

Deputy Administrator LaBree presented the following:

- Discussion on the County hours on Friday, December 22nd. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to close the county offices at Noon on Friday the 22nd. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve 2-0.

Approval of Warrants-

- Payroll Warrant (12.08.23) ***\$328,764.91 and \$216.54***
- A/P General Fund (12.12.23) ***\$811,172.82***
- A/P Unorg Terr (12.12.23) ***\$96,442.75***
- A/P UT TIF (12.12.23) ***\$1,671.57***
- A/P ARPA (12.12.23) ***\$21,214.35***

Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to approve the warrants as presented as Item J listed on the agenda. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve 2-0. Signed.

Payroll status changes signed for: Olivia Averill, Althea Baker, Alyshia Canwell, Timothy Davis, Connor Gray, Cheri Heaps, Keith Howard, Doug Libby, Seth Libby, Lindsay McPhail, Jeanne Orcutt, Alexander Rawcliff, Jason Raymond, Ashley Roberts, Billy Sheperson, Hunter Terrel and Ross Whitford.

Commissioner Baldacci moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:28 AM with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Cushing seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 2-0.

Certified By:

Administrator, Scott A. Adkins

Andre E. Cushing, III, Chair

Peter K. Baldacci, Commissioner

David S. Marshall, Commissioner