

**Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes March 19, 2023
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci, Andre Cushing and David Marshall**

#2467

Roll Call -

Commission Chair Cushing opened the meeting at 9:00 AM from the Commissioners Chambers with all Commissioners, Treasurer Mower and Deputy Administrator LaBree present. Administrator Adkins present via zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Baldacci

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the March 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0. Signed.

Public Comment –

Maryalice Mowry resident of Patten is requesting the Commissioners full support of ARPA funds for the Patten Veterans Memorial Library.

Agenda Change – Commissioner Cushing approved the agenda change as presented by Deputy Administrator LaBree.

Probate Update –

Register Stupak and Judge Brandmeir discussed hourly court appointed attorney fees. Penobscot County is the third largest county with the second to lowest hourly wage/hour at \$100 for attorney fees. In order to recruit and retain attorneys, it is felt that Penobscot County must remain competitive with sister counties with an average rate of \$150 per hour. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve starting on May 1st an increase of court appointed hourly attorney fees to \$150 on May 1st. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

FOP Supervisor and Line Contract Signings –

Present for signatures were FOP Union Representatives Joel Wilkinson, Mike Edes, Det. Sgt. Trask, Staff Sgt Sheehan, Deputy Sheriff Polk and Deputy Sheriff Birch

After introductions of the negotiation panel took place, Commissioner Cushing thanked them all for the productive negotiation. Deputy Administrator LaBree provided a summary of changes of the contracts.

FOP Representative Mike Edes recognized Bill Birch who after 33 years of service is leaving the County. Joel Wilkinson said it was a pleasure working with Administrator Adkins and Dep. Administrator LaBree and appreciated the accessibility of their time.

ARPA –

Grant Manager Dana presented the three Commissioner Fund Requests.

- District One –
 - The Brick Church (Requested \$49,999) After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve \$22,000 for the Brick Church updates. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
 - Wabanaki Public Health (Requested \$49,999) After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve \$20,000 for the kitchen buildout. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
- District Two –
 - Corinna Water District (Requested \$16,455) After discussion, Commissioner Cushing moved to approve \$16,455 for the accounting system. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Grant Manager Dana presented the five sub-recipient applications

- Heart of Maine Resource Center located in Dexter. This application will be tabled until Commissioner Cushing visits the site.
- Patten Veterans Memorial Library. Representatives Chair Rae Bates, Katahdin Region Economic Director Amy Collinsworth, and Jesse Moriarty (via zoom) presented their request for the Patten Veterans Memorial Library. The requested amount is for \$1,000,060 which will be used for a combined library/community center. Commission will table this request until the next meeting April 2nd.
- Save-A-Life – Jody Stevenson requested \$149,850 for capital improvements. Commission will be tabled until further information/clarification is delivered.
- Town of East Millinocket – Rep. Mike Michaud reported that the funds will be used for removing rubble from the recycling building. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve up to \$214,000 for this project. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
- Town of Kenduskeag – Sandy Preston Case Memorial Library - Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve up to \$200K for the Town of Kenduskeag. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
- Penquis Jason Bird – Two recent proposals were reported to the Commission on housing and social services. Tentatively the amounts would be approximately \$3M. Further discussion will take place at a later meeting.

Tax Abatement Appeal Hearing–

Commissioner Cushing opened the hearing at 10:43 AM

- Present were:
 - James and Rachel Hanscom – Property Owners
 - Curt Ring – Family Member of Property Owners

Tax Abatement Hearing – Continued:

- Brent Spencer, Chair, Mattawamkeag Board of Selectmen
- Joshua Morin, Hamlin Associates – Assessors Agent for the Town of Mattawamkeag
- For property located at 327 Main Street, Mattawamkeag / Penobscot County / Tax Map 4 / Lot 4 / Account #194000069
- Property is a .5-acre lot with 4,800 sq ft storage building
- Property was purchased six years ago
- Assessed value in 2023 is \$166,190. The Hanscom's feel that this amount is overvalued since it is the only storage center in Mattawamkeag and there are no other comparable available.
- Building has no steel, heat, insulation or electricity
- The Hanscom's are requesting a tax abatement of \$1,039.67
- Joshua Morin of Hamlin Associates submitted in record the information packet including six exhibits that were referred to during testimony.
- Mr. Morin reported that the increase in value were due to a recent reevaluation
- Rebuttal from the property owners stated that none of the comparison listed are from the area; they are all southern Maine.
- The Commissioners stated that they would make a decision and get back to all parties

The hearing was closed at 11:27 AM

Short Recess -

Approval of Warrants-

Payroll Warrant	03.08.24	\$296,724.83	03.15.24	\$ 301,753.32
A/P General Fund	03.12.24	\$558,856.39	03.19.24	\$ 235,073.18
A/P PRCC Bond	03.12.24	\$ N/A	03.19.24	\$ N/A
A/P Unorg Terr	03.12.24	\$55,948.46	03.19.24	\$ 6,399.42
A/P UT TIF	03.12.24	\$38,088.87	03.19.24	\$ 1,792.41
A/P ARPA	03.12.24	\$1,100,000.00	03.19.24	\$ N/A

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the warrants as presented as Item K listed on the agenda. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0. Signed.

Payroll status changes signed for: Lindsay McPhail, Sarah Dietze, Joseph Stewart, Timothy Davis, Kevin Howard, Billy Sheperson, Sarah Johnson, Jeffrey Hunter, Deborah Sargent, Jordan Knappe, Nicole Matthes, Christopher Urquhart, Ryan Roy, Damien Goodwin, William Birch, Alyshia Dillon, Chris Watson, Alexis Wagner, Billy Sheperson, Ezra Haines, Hannah Craig, Brandon Watson, Dustin Umlauf, Stephen Marko, Dana Gatcomb Mark Fucile, Michael Parady, Michael Kennedy, Tammy Adams and Patricia McLaughlin.

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 11:35 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel Matter / Grievance #179. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins (Zoom), Deputy Administrator LaBree, Attorney John Hamer, John Nuttall, Sheriff Morton, Captain Boulier and Lt. Raymond. Session ended at 12:06 PM

Action Taken – None

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 12:07 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) Contract Matter. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins (Zoom), Deputy Administrator LaBree, Attorney John Hamer and Director MacDonald. Session ended at 12:33 PM

Action Taken – None

Commissioner Baldacci moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:34 PM with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Certified By:

Deputy Administrator, Michelle LaBree

Andre E. Cushing, III, Chair

Peter K. Baldacci, Commissioner

David S. Marshall, Commissioner