

**Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes May 21, 2024  
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci, Andre Cushing and David Marshall**

**#2471**

**Roll Call -**

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

**Pledge of Allegiance - Administrator Adkins**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to approve the May 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0. Signed.

**Public Comment** – Merrilee Schoen – UMaine Graduate Student / Resident of Bangor - Ms. Schoen introduced herself to the commission and provided a short summary of her thesis exhibit project. Merrilee stated that she received a small amount of funds through the cultural commission for her project on the demolition of the former Y Building. Ms. Schoen will come back later in the summer with more information on this project.

**Town of Woodville -**

Christopher Swift, appointed by the Town of Woodville, presented a report of the Woodville Selectmen's Meeting which was held on April 18th, 2024. Since the Town has no record keeping process, they have used the County to be keeper of the records since 2018. Commissioners feels the town should consider to de-organize since they are a town of a little over 200 people and perhaps should seek legal counsel on some of the issues they are concerned about. The Town of Woodville report can be found online at: <https://www.penobscot-county.net/minutes>

**Probate Update –**

Register Stupak presented the following Maine Association of Registers of Probate (MARP) Updates:

- Discussion on required visitor training
- Discussion on the proposed bill for non-partisan Probate elected officials
- Discussion on the filing of estates which is in the works and an inventory may be required
- Discussion on contract with software provider (ICON) which ends on 12/31/25

**DA Update –**

Office Manager Higgins, ADA Lynds and Restitution Clerk Orcutt presented the following:

- Restitution Clerk Orcutt presented un update of restitution collections for years 2017 through 2024. Clerk Orcutt states that there has been an increase in restitution payments since the online payment system was instituted in 2023 which provides a more convenient option for defendants to pay.

**DA Update – Continued:**

- ADA Lynds reported on the work currently taking place in the DA's Office and establishing best practices. The domestic violence attorneys have their own Victim Witness Advocates working with them.
- Some of the challenges are providing discovery with the ballooning number of active cases. At this time there are 2,964 cases with 50 of the cases in jail awaiting appointment for counsel which should have access to discovery. Those without counsel in jail gets their discovery printed for them and delivered by Detective Higgins.
- Every month there is a large docket call list which requires quite a bit of work preparing for the case to be heard. Since not all cases get heard, there have been a large number of plea's that have taken place.
- In 2025 the court is transitioning to e-filing. This change will be a challenge changing from paper to e-filing.

**EMA Update –**

Director Nuding and Deputy Director Fox presented their ARPA external funding requests from the communities:

- Director Nuding's original ask was over \$1M and shaved down to the following requests for items such as towable telescoping communication tower with repeater, towable telescoping diesel-powered LED light towers, towable message boards, cot shelter trailer / cots and accessories, portable generators, search and rescue trailer supplies. After discussion, Commission decided to table a decision until at a June commissioners meeting after all departmental requests are heard.

**PRCC Update –**

Deputy Director Fitzgerald presented the following:

- Deputy Fitzgerald stated that at the Maine NENA Conference, the "Silent Hero Award" was presented to Brittany Russell for exceptional professionalism.
- Deputy Fitzgerald stated that the EMA ask for the towable telescoping communication tower with repeater would be beneficial to PRCC.
- Deputy Fitzgerald reported on staffing, the radio project, Amazon web services (AI Contact Center), and Public Education taking place in PRCC.
- Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the Central Maine and Quebec Railway land purchase contract with Administrator Adkins authorized to sign. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Move to approve passed 3-0. Signed.

**UT Update –**

Director Buswell and Deputy Morrison presented the following:

- Discussion on the regional Animal Control Officer pay; a new concept would be a salaried position with 22 hours weekly. A Memorandum of Understanding will be written internally and presented at the next meeting.
- Bids have been sent out for the solid waste contracts for the most northern half of Penobscot County and will be opened at the June 4<sup>th</sup> Commissioners meeting
- Discussion on the Lower Shin Pond & Tar Ridge Road junk yard problems
- Director Buswell and Deputy Morrison met with the Millinocket town manager and the fire chief last week with negotiations taking place. A new contract is being written up and will be presented at the next Commissioners meeting

**Facilities Update –**

Director MacDonald reported the following:

- Discussion on the ARPA funding requests were presented. Director MacDonald is requesting funding for a 40 x 30' storage building on county grounds with inside storage, a small tractor with a bucket for snow removal and forks for storage and moving of materials, and monies for counter upgrades & office renovations to cover the stairwell and the map room for the Department of Deeds. This request is tabled until June when all department requests are heard.

**Administration and HR Update –**

Administrator Adkins and Deputy Administrator LaBree presented the following:

- A reminder that the Employee Breakfast will be held this Thursday from 7 AM until 8 AM
- A date in June will need to be set for when the County ARPA asks can be decided upon

**Approval of Warrants-**

Payroll Warrant	<b>05.10.24 \$ 318,787.25</b>	<b>05.17.24 \$ 316,946.28 &amp; 487.62</b>
A/P General Fund	<b>05.14.24 \$ 284,342.09</b>	<b>05.21.24 \$ 81,753.41</b>
A/P PRCC Bond	<b>05.14.24 \$ N/A</b>	<b>05.21.24 \$ N/A</b>
A/P Unorg Terr	<b>05.14.24 \$ N/A</b>	<b>05.21.24 \$ 40,158.60</b>
A/P UT TIF	<b>05.14.24 \$ 70,000.00</b>	<b>05.21.24 \$ 2,287.34</b>
A/P ARPA	<b>05.14.24 \$ 1,000,000.00</b>	<b>05.21.24 \$ 7,114.00</b>

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

Payroll status changes signed for: Elizabeth Day, Alessandra Towns, Lisa Dwinal, Michael Kennedy, Stephen Day, David King, Sawyer Houpt, and Eugene Abramov

**Executive Session**---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:53 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C) Acquisition of Real Property. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins, Deputy Administrator LaBree and Director MacDonald. Session ended at 11:01 AM

**Action Taken – NONE**

**Executive Session**---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 11:02 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) Labor Negotiations. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approved passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins and Deputy Administrator LaBree. Session ended at 11:12 AM

**Action Taken – NONE**

Commissioner Baldacci moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:13 AM with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

**Certified By:**

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Administrator, Scott Adkins

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Andre E. Cushing, III, Chair

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Peter K. Baldacci, Commissioner

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David S. Marshall, Commissioner

To the Penobscot County Commissioners,

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the ordinary scheduled Town of Woodville, Maine Selectmen's Meeting at 6:30 PM was a discussion on the National Guard Facility that is in that town and T2R9 with some easements in the Town of Chester. Woodville Town Hall has been used since 2016 for the public hearings by the State of Maine for that facility.

The following Selectmen were there:

Fred Harriman Lead Selectman, Nick Fleming Selectman, Rodney Bernier Selectman

In addition was Debbie Harriman the Town Clerk and Laurie Petersen the Tax Collector and two news reporters for the Maine Wire and 6 citizens of the Town of Woodville.

Issues discussed were the Request of the Maine National Guard to have another hearing at Woodville Town Hall and then the Selectmen appointed myself, Christopher J. Swift, as the liaison to the State for that purpose as I had arranged and chaired the three that occurred in 2018 and 2019.

The next issue was lots purchased near the Woodville National Guard Site on lots 006-06A and 006-002 by Ling Xing Chen of 652 Woodville Road in Woodville, Maine 04457. The owner has established a Marijuana growing site and has been asked to stop by the Town of Woodville and has not. The concern is the 5 SUV vehicles with New York license plates that come and go at night all the time. The Town has passed an ordinance to stop this grow site and contacted the Sheriff's Office to be informed there is a multi agency investigation going on with no follow up contact with the Town. I got with Ed Ford of Susan Collins office a couple weeks ago to prepare for the previous meeting that was snowed out April 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss having a contact point for the Selectmen with a Federal Agency in the event of Espionage regarding the National Guard Site.

The issue of the Town of Woodville having received no compensation in lieu of property taxes since inception was brought up. The Selectmen will prepare a complete list of acreage and designated usage to assess correct loss of taxes will be supplied to the State upon request.

The last issue was the effect of the Water Shed. Since there is no public health officer in the Town of Woodville it was discussed the director of the Lincoln Water Supply should be required to address the Town and State as to the status of the public safety of the Supply.

The Contact information for the Town of Woodville is (207) 746-9355

Respectfully Submitted

Christopher J. Swift

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