

**Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes November 5, 2024
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci, Andre Cushing and David Marshall**

#2482

Roll Call -

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

Pledge of Allegiance – Director Bragdon led the pledge.

Approval of Meeting Minutes -

Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to approve the October 15th, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0. Signed.

Public Comment – None

UT Update –

Director Buswell and Deputy Morrison presented the following:

- State of Maine Director of Licensing of Cannabis Planning, Elisa Ellis was available for questions regarding Adult Use and Medical Cannabis in the Unorganized Territory. Discussions on whether we should “opt in” or “out-out” were discussed. Other Counties have worked through this process; we received this communication a couple of weeks ago and we have 90 days to make a decision. We get to pick and choose how we would want guidelines set for the ordinance, which can be as complicated or simple as it is decided. Commissioner Baldacci recommends we “opt-in” with the next step being to start developing a process and check with legal.
- Director Buswell reported on the Webster de-organization meeting he attended with Maine Revenue Service, LUPC and Commissioner Marshall on October 28th. There was no vote taken at that time. The next town meeting will be on November 18th with a vote to be taken at that meeting.
- Review on ACO Ethel (Ann) Greenlaw compensation. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to approve the request for a .75 cent increase per hour and continue to follow county guidelines for mileage. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Moved to approve passed 3-0.
- The Drew Township (Reed Plantation) Fire Protection Agreement was presented for approval. Commissioner Marshall moved to approve the fire protection agreement as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Move to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- Review of the Hammond Ridge (T1-R8 WELS) master plan – phase two was presented with information from Matt Polstein. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall approved a letter of project understanding from the Commission. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Sheriff will also be writing a letter of project understanding.

UT Update – Continued:

- The FY26 UT Budget was reviewed. At this time, we are still uncertain as to if Webster will become de-organized. However, to be on the safe side increases were added for roads, salt/sand, fire protection, and bridges. This year's budget shows an increase of approximately 10.96% (\$204,761.00), with the majority (\$122,194) of the increases from Webster.
- Commissioner Marshall moved to exceed the CAP in this fiscal year budget; Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Commissioner Marshall moved to approve the budget as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.

EMA Update –

Director Nuding and Deputy Fox reported on the Hurricane Helene/Western North Carolina Response

- When deployed, Deputy Fox's key take-aways were:
 - That an all-hazards approach to personnel preparedness, both as a county and as individuals
 - Being properly equipped with effective Emergency Management equipment to be able to successfully support the mission
 - An example of this was having multiple means of communication. Cellular was non-existent at times, and spotty at best at other times. Satellite internet was key
 - Individual preparedness needs to be considered beyond the 72 hours. It is possible that help will arrive to the area in that time frame, but it may not be able to reach those impacted in a timely manner.
- No local expenses were paid by the County for the cost of deployment. All expenses will be reimbursement by Federal or the State.
- Deputy Fox was recently certified for Associate Emergency Manager with International Association of Emergency Management

ARPA –

Grant Manager Dana presented the following:

- Commissioner Fund request for \$5,000 from the Clifton Community Food Bank for District 1 was discussed. Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve this request of \$5,000 for purchase of food. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.
- The four remaining sub-recipients were discussed. It was decided to hold off until our next meeting after further review of funds.
- Commissioner Baldacci moved to reallocate the monies from Wellspring to unallocated funds. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

ARPA – Continued:

- Discussion on the Y project. We will find out when the City of Bangor plans on releasing their funds.
- It was agreed to wait until the next meeting to dedicate the appropriate time for the last of the ARPA funds.
- We are approximately \$1.9M with undesignated funds.

Commissioners' Meeting

- Grant Manager Dana reported on the trip to the Katahdin Region on October 31st.

2025 Budget Review –

- Dept. 5 – District Attorney's Office
 - DA Almy, Office Manager Higgins and ADA Lynds reported to the Commissioners the reasoning of their request for additional staffing. DA Almy reported that the request isn't just do the change to E-filing, but there is not enough staff to keep up with the current workload. DA Almy has enlisted help from Piscataquis County clerical for assistance. The DA Office needs have increased exponentially; clerical has not increased. How can we meet people's constitutional rights while we don't have the appropriate number of staff? It's hard to meet our obligations. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve one full-time clerical and increasing the part-time VWA to full time starting July 1, 2024. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Move to approve 3-0.
- Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the 2025 County Budget as amended.
 - Total Expenditures: \$31,457,861 / Includes the Jail CAP of \$8,594,059
 - Total Revenues: \$6,362,573 / Includes a Transfer IN of \$465,000
 - 2025 / Assessment: \$25,095,288 / Increase of \$2,207,763 or 9.65% over 2024
- Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Administrative Update –

- Administrator Adkins will be on vacation from November 7th to the 14th

Approval of Warrants-

Payroll Warrant	10.18.24	\$ 313,911.51	10.25.24	\$ 334,513.01	11.01.24	\$329,132.55
A/P General Fund	10.22.24	\$ 2,058,342.65	10.29.24	\$ 2,602,509.22	11.05.24	\$111,211.71
A/P PRCC Bond	10.22.24	\$ 5,175.00	10.29.24	\$ N/A	11.05.24	\$ N/A
A/P Unorg Terr	10.22.24	\$ 1,139.56	10.29.24	\$ 12,433.60	11.05.24	\$57,637.67
A/P UT TIF	10.22.24	\$ 2,625.00	10.29.24	\$ 5,508.26	11.05.24	\$ N/A
A/P ARPA	10.22.24	\$ 19,964.60	10.29.24	\$ 2,200.00	11.05.24	\$40,030.46

Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to approve the warrants per Item H on the agenda. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve 3-0. Signed.

Payroll status changes signed for: Ashley Roberts, Mark Domenech, Phillip Oulton, Nicole Howell, Vanessa Holmes, Jordanna Sprague, Thomas Barrows, Brandi Alton, Toni Bridges, William Sheehan, Camron Barrieau, Brody Gaslin, and Jeffrey Smith

Executive Session---Commissioner Marshall made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:26 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) Contractual Matter. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins, Director Dyer, Director Buswell & Deputy Morrison. Session ended at 10:41 AM.

Action Taken – None

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:42 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C) Acquisition of Real Property. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins, Director Dyer, Facilities Director MacDonald, & Sheriff Morton. Session ended at 10:52 AM.

Action Taken – None

Executive Session---Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to go into Executive Session 10:52 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins & Director Dyer. Session ended at 11:42 AM.

Action Taken – None

Commissioner Baldacci moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:43 AM with no further business on the agenda. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Certified By:

Administrator, Scott Adkins

Andre E. Cushing, III, Chair

Peter K. Baldacci, Commissioner

David S. Marshall, Commissioner