

Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes December 17, 2024 #2485
9:00 AM Commissioners Peter Baldacci, Andre Cushing and David Marshall

Roll Call -

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

Chair Cushing recognized outgoing Commissioner Peter K. Baldacci as this meeting will be the final scheduled meeting in his County career. After 36 years of serving the public as County Commissioner of Penobscot County, Commissioner Baldacci is retiring from the Commission.

Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner Baldacci led the pledge.

Approval of Meeting Minutes -

Commissioner Baldacci made a motion to approve the December 3rd, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.

Public Comment – Anne Bennett from the Hampden Garden Club reported on the Harmony Hall building in dire need of repair. Committee members will come back during the ARPA discussion.

Public Hearing- 2025 County Budget and FY26 UT Budget -

Commissioner Cushing opened the public hearing on the 2025 / Penobscot County Commissioner's Budget and the fy26 / UT (Unorganized Territory) Budget at 9:05 AM. The County budget was presented with Total Expenditures of \$ 31,457,861, resulting in a municipal tax assessment of \$25,095,288, which is an increase of \$2,207,763 or 9.65% over prior year. The fy26 / UT Budget was presented with \$2,614,310 in Expenditures, resulting in a tax assessment of \$1,938,696, which will be \$70,627 or 7.21% over prior year.

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the 2025 / Penobscot County Budget and fy26 / UT Budget as presented; Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion & a 3-0 vote to approve.

UT Update –

Director Buswell presented the following:

- Introduction of Aaron and Elaine St. Louis, owners of the Argyle landslide property. Commissioner Marshall moved to approve the MOU as presented and allow Administrator Adkins to sign; Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion & 3-0 vote to approve.
- The Town of Mt. Chase three-year Solid Waste Agreement was presented for approval. CC Marshall moved to approve; CC Baldacci seconded & 3-0 vote to approve.
- The Food Sovereignty Ordinance was presented for a vote. After discussion, no vote was taken. Commissioner Cushing is waiting for more requested information; Commissioner Baldacci does not feel comfortable approving this ordinance due to the risks involved; and Commissioner Marshall feels that protocols would be in place. At this time, Commissioner Marshall would be in support.

UT Update – Continued:

- There was continued discussion on the East Millinocket Fire Department cancellation of UT EMS services for four communities. February 19th is the close-off date for no service for these four communities.
- The replacement of Nancy Bodine, former Fiscal Administrator of the UT, Harold Tip Jones would like to introduce himself at an upcoming Commissioners meeting.

DA Update –

DDA Lynds and Office Manager Higgins submitted the following requests:

- The National DA Association Advocacy Conference for DDA Lynd with funding paid by the DA Forfeiture Account. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to approve this request as presented. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.
- The National Cyber Crime Conference for two DA's attendance with funding paid by the DA Forfeiture Account. After the discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to approve DDA Lynds' attendance. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.

EMA Update –

EMA Director Nuding, EMA Deputy Fox, PRCC Director Lavoie, and IT Deputy Simpson presented information on the Starlink internet findings. The request is for three Starlink devices. One will be in use and two others will be used as needed. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to approve \$8,500 with funds used by ARPA. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.

ARPA / Administration Update –

Grant Manager Dana presented the following:

- ARPA Commissioners Fund Discussion -
 - The Town of Lincoln is requesting \$12,000 for a drone. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to approve using District 3 Commissioner Funds for the requested purchase of a drone. This is predicated on an MOU for sharing the drone with the surrounding region. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.
 - The Veazie Water District request for a generator and camera was discussed. Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve \$50K from the undesignated funds. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.

ARPA Update – Continued:

- Discussion on the Burlington Food Pantry which had not used \$6,500 and requesting those funds be used for extra food and personal items. Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve Burlington food pantry to allocate the balance of their funds as requested. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.
- The Bangor Y releasing of funds was discussed. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved that \$1M will be released today, \$1M for groundbreaking and final \$1M will be at February final announcement. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 2-1. Commissioner Cushing opposed.
- County Capital Requests – will be discussed at later meeting.
- An application for \$49,999 from Hampden Garden Club was submitted and discussed. Jeanette Douglas, Anne Bennett, Nicole Brown, & Jane reported on the Harmony Hall repairs that are needed. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve \$49,999 from District 2 Commissioners Funding to augment their fundraising efforts. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.

HR Update –

Director Dyer presented the following:

- Discussion on the Retiree Health Coverage options. Commissioner Marshall moved to approve the request as presented for a new policy for retirees and spouses buy-out. Commissioner Baldacci seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 2-0; Commissioner Baldacci abstained.
- Discussion on the County MOU – Sign-On Bonus Program. It was recommended to end this program end of 2024. The referral for \$500 will be kept. After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve the recommendation as discussed. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.

Administrative Update –

Administrator Adkins reported the following:

- After discussion, Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve a 2% increase in the wage adjustments as presented. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Moved to approve passed 3-0.
- Commissioner Baldacci moved to approve modifying hours for employees on Christmas Eve to leave at noon and on New Year's Eve employees can leave at 2 PM. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. Moved to approve passed 3-0.
- The Katahdin Region Newsletter was discussed by Commissioner Marshall.

Approval of Warrants-

Payroll Warrant	12.06.24	\$ 396,342.21	12.13.24	\$354,715.09
A/P General Fund	12.10.24	\$ 847,820.97	12.17.24	\$452,176.76
A/P PRCC Bond	12.10.24	\$ N/A	12.17.24	\$ N/A
A/P Unorg Terr	12.10.24	\$42,002.48	12.17.24	\$8,345.50
A/P UT TIF	12.10.24	\$ 5,577.66	12.17.24	\$ 150,433.65
A/P ARPA	12.10.24	\$495,951.91	12.17.24	\$ 185,142.61

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

Payroll status changes signed for: Alycia Hallett, Kellie Williams, Caleb Thacker, Allyse Bonenfant, Janey Ross, Macee Pearl, Jarek Ireland, Matthew Hobson, Elijah Law, Ryan Robichaud, Jacob House, Ryan Roy, Damien Goodwin, George Harrison, Joshua Legassie, Maxime Monde Pierre, Shawn Schuurman, Sylvia Miholovich, David Quinn, Jonathan Chasse, Randall Medeiros, Riley Schoch and Eric Tripp.

Commissioner Baldacci moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 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