

**Penobscot County Commissioners' Meeting Minutes February 4, 2025
9:00 AM Commissioners Daniel Tremble, Andre Cushing and David Marshall**

2489

Roll Call -

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 Buswell led the pledge.

Approval of Meeting Minutes -

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the January 21st, 2025 meeting minutes. Commissioner Tremble seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.

Public Comment – None

UT / TIF Discussion –

Dee Williams from MaineStream Finance, Department Director presented the following:

- A TIF application from Friends of Veteran's Memorial Library requesting \$51,500.00 for a new facility. Representing Friends of Veteran's Memorial Library, Jesse Moriarty agrees with the Committee's recommendation of offering a conditional approval of \$25K until all other funds are procured. After discussion, Commissioner Tremble moved to accept the Committee's recommendation. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- A TIF application from Millinocket Regional Hospital requesting \$50,000.00 for a new CT scanner. After discussion, Commissioner Marshall moved to accept the Committee's recommendation to approve this application as presented. Commissioner Tremble seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- The commission requested that the TIF Committee members come in to discuss current policies.
- The TIF Committee is currently looking for a third voting member.

Director Buswell and Deputy Morrison requested the following:

- There was a discussion about replacing the truck, as the current vehicle is over five years old. The commission agreed that Director Buswell can go forward with an RFP for a new truck.

PACC (Piscataquis Area Community Center) Presentation:

Executive Director, Manda Stewart presented the following:

- PACC has replaced the former YMCA by establishing a new board.
- PACC is requesting \$92,000 from the County of Penobscot for updates of the building; as well as future on-going support.
- Currently Old Town-Orono YMCA is holding the mortgage, but as soon as the 501C paperwork is available PACC will re-take over the mortgage.

Commission agreed not to take action at this time; but will revisit once more information is available.

Finance Update –

Treasurer Mower presented the following:

- After discussion on the 2025 Municipal Tax Assessment presented for approval for Municipal Tax Invoices, Commissioner Tremble moved to approve it as presented. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.
- After discussion on going out to bid for a TAN (Tax Anticipation Note) of \$11.2M, Commissioner Tremble moved to approve an RFP in the amount as presented. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.
- Our cash needs are worrisome at this time; Treasurer Mower requested to utilize \$2M from the ARPA funds until TAN monies are acquired. Commissioner Tremble moved to approve the Treasurers recommendation as presented. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0.

Approval of Warrants-

Payroll Warrant	01.24.25	\$ 322,551.40	01.31.25	\$ 371,510.75
A/P General Fund (2024)	01.28.25	\$ 25,505.07	02.04.25	\$ 25,551.46
A/P General Fund (2025)	01.28.25	\$ 585,661.52	02.04.25	\$ 322,880.73
A/P PRCC Bond	01.28.25	\$ N/A	02.04.25	\$ N/A
A/P Unorg Terr	01.28.25	\$ 1,562.40	02.04.25	\$ 100,880.38
A/P UT TIF	01.28.25	\$ 2,625.00	02.04.25	\$ 4,584.18
A/P ARPA	01.28.25	\$ 3,148.97	02.04.25 (2024)	\$12,066.14

Commissioner Marshall made a motion to approve the warrants per Item I on the agenda. Commissioner Tremble seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Signed.

Tax Abatement Appeal Hearing –

Commissioner Cushing opened the hearing at 9:55 AM. Administrator Adkins swore in the participants.

- Present were:
 - Michael Mikulka – Property Owner
 - Vonna Lee Sides (Dixie) – Town Clerk
 - Steven Salley – Assessor's Agent for Stacyville
- For property located at 40 Torres Lane, Stacyville / Penobscot County / Tax Map 12 / Lot 063-OTG / Account # R198
- Property is a 38-acre lot with 2 homes
- Property was purchased 10 years ago

Tax Abatement Appeal Hearing – Continued:

- Assessed value in 2024 is \$148,200. Mr. Mikulka feel that this amount is overvalued since the town was penalized \$500K for improper valuation years ago and is being treated unfairly.
- Mr. Mikulka referred to a building permit that was submitted from the town (#2006-04). This permit is not for his piece of property.
- Mr. Mikulka is requesting a \$480.10 abatement (assessed value \$24,000 reduction).
- Steven Salley, Assessors Agent submitted in record the information packet including Presumption of Validity/Burden of Proof, the assessment method, and the Town's position. that were referred to during testimony. Mr. Salley admitted to wrong building permit and apologized.
- Mr. Salley reported that the Town is in the middle of re-valuation currently.
- Clerk Dixie Sides reported that for the last 20 years the selectmen were always the ones doing the tax assessments.
- Commissioner Cushing asked if the Town provides training for selectmen in tax valuations / abatements? Mrs. Sides replied indicating the Assessors have always used the formula built into TRIO and comparables for assessments. Commissioner Cushing asked if Mr. Mikulka's concerns came into play with the re-valuation taking place and was answered with an affirmative.
- Commissioner Cushing stated with Mr. Mikulka advocating for himself, things will likely change.
- Rebuttal from property owner offered to allow the person conducting the assessment into his home and he declined to be admitted.
- The Commissioners stated that they would make a decision and get back to all parties.

The hearing was closed at 10:33 AM

Payroll status changes signed for: Caleb Thacker, Kellie Williams, Gary Bragdon, Louis St. Pierre, Billie Jo Stover, Brayden Porter, Gloria Evans, Jonathan Neel, Robin Bouchard and Mastin Fletcher.

Executive Session---Commissioner Marshall made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:34 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C)Acquisition of Real Property. Commissioner Tremble seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, Administrator Adkins, HR Director Dyer, and Director MacDonald. Session ended at 10:50 AM.

Action Taken - None

Executive Session---Commissioner Marshall made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:51 AM under 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (A) Personnel. Commissioner Tremble seconded the motion. A vote to approve passed 3-0. Present were: Commissioners, Treasurer Mower, and Administrator Adkins. Session ended at 11:45 AM. Commissioner Cushing requested HR Director Dyer at 11:45 to join the meeting. Session ended at 12:13 PM.

Action Taken - None

Commissioner Marshall moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:14 PM. Commissioner Tremble seconded the motion. Vote to approve passed 3-0.

Certified By:

Administrator, Scott Adkins

Andre E. Cushing, III, Chair

Daniel J Tremble, Commissioner

David S. Marshall, Commissioner