

~Meeting Minutes~
Androscoggin County Commissioners
November 15, 2023
Regular Meeting 5:15 p.m.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER - Chair Sally Christner at 5:15 P.M.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners: Chair Sally Christner, Vice-Chair Terri Kelly, Brian Ames, Roland Poirier, Edouard Plourde, Andrew Lewis. Absent: Garrett Mason.

Other: Interim County Administrator/Sheriff Eric Samson, DA Neil McLean, Communications Director Martin Fournier, DA Office Manager Michael Perry, HR Manager Hillary Nadeau, Chief Deputy William Gagne, Detective Nathan McNally, Treasurer Clarice Proctor, Register of Deeds Tina Chouinard, Register of Probate Thomas Reynolds, Sun Journal Steve Sherlock, Sandy Berube, Lisbon council member Harry Moore, Budget Committee Chair Lisa Cesare and Larry Pease, Historical Society President David Chittim and Treasurer Curtis Jack, Craig Zurhorst and citizens.

IV. MINUTES

A. Meeting Dates: November 1, 2023 regular meeting minutes.

Motion: to approve with a waiver of the reading of the November 1, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented.

Kelly-Lewis 6-0

V. WARRANTS

Motion: to approve all warrants as presented: AP Warrants JV1311, JV1314, JV1320, JV1321, JV1322 & Payroll Warrants.

Kelly-Lewis 6-0

VI. REPORTS

A. MCCA-No report.

B. Central/Western Maine Workforce Board-No report.

C. AVCOG Report-No report.

D. Treasurer's Report-Treasurer Proctor updated Commissioners regarding financial matters.

Motion: to approve the Treasurer's report.

Plourde-Kelly 6-0

E. Administrator's Report-Interim County Administrator/Sheriff Eric Samson noted that a sewer line was repaired in the jail basement and an agreement was made regarding a cover for the rec yard.

At this time, Commissioners jumped to *VIII. Comments From the Public.*

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**A. Executive Session Pursuant to Title 1 MRSA Section 405 (6) Subsection (A)
Discussion of Personnel Issues**

Motion: to enter into Executive Session Pursuant to Title 1 MRSA Section 405 (6) Subsection (A) Discussion of Personnel Issues.

Poirier-Ames 6-0

Motion: to enter into public session.

Poirier-Ames 6-0

At this time, Commissioners continued with *XII. Adjourn.*

VIII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Harry Moore, Lisbon-Thanked the Sheriff, Chief Deputy William Gagne, and their entire crew for their professionalism on the night of the October 25th shootings.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. ARPA Report-Treasurer Proctor explained coding issues and incurred costs for the Fire Alarm and Commissioners Meeting Room projects.

Motion: to accept the ARPA report.

Ames-Lewis 6-0

B. Appoint Interim Administrator as MCCA & Risk Pool Proxy

Motion: to appoint the Interim Administrator as MCCA & Risk Pool Proxy.

Lewis-Kelly 6-0

C. Approve 2024 Budget

Interim Administrator/Sheriff Eric Samson-noted a seemingly lack of support for the proposed traffic enforcement deputy for the Route 4 Corridor and pointed out that if Commissioners were reconsidering budgeting the proposed traffic position (\$60,000), that there would be an opportunity to fund an additional trial assistant for the DA's Office.

He recommended using the \$60,000 in this manner:

\$40,000 for the Trail Assistant.

\$10,000 for the Harriman contract.

\$5,000 for Patrol overtime

\$5,000 for Human Resource Director when SHRM Certification is complete.

DA Neil McLean-Discussed the link his office has to public safety and explained the ongoing needs of his office before and after the October 25th shootings.

Budget Committee Chair Lisa Cesare and Larry Pease presented the following recommendations to the Commissioners:

- #1. **(034-2023) Recommended action** that the electricity usage be accurately assessed-the *electricity line 64040* at \$6,800 is stated as 25% of fire station electricity expense.
VOTE: 9-0

Chair Christner stated that she would email the EMA Director Angela Molino and follow up with Lisa Cesare and Larry Pease regarding the response.

- #2. **(042-2023)** to reduce *IT Department, Service Contracts Line 64135 (by- \$5,000)*.
VOTE: 9-0

- #3. **(046-2023)** to reduce *County Admin/Commissioners-12020, Professional fees line 60010 (by -20,000)* from \$50,000 to \$30,000.
VOTE: 9-0

Treasurer Proctor noted that the Professional fee line also includes the PR Consultant, and (with the building coming up) questioned whether we would need PR Consulting to inform the public about getting ready for bond.

- #4. **(036-2023) Recommended action** that the Patrol position that is currently being funded by ARPA continue to be funded for the full year and that Commissioners explore cost reimbursement/a contract from the Town of Turner.
VOTE: 8-1

This topic was discussed at length in regard to who should pay for the position, call volume, time constraints, how effective the officer could be, crash statistics, road engineering, highway barriers, legislative help, varying opinions, etc.

- #5. **(044-2023)** to reinstate *AVCOG-19202* expenditures to \$8,197.29.
VOTE: 8-1

Commissioner Lewis said that he is willing to attend AVCOG meetings if Commissioner Mason cannot attend.

- #6 The salaries cannot be changed because the vote count is not high enough, but please read the recommended action.

~~(047-2023) to raise Commissioners salaries to \$6,500 and \$7,000 for the Chair;~~
Recommended action to change the charter to reduce the count of Commissioners from seven to five, and to also revise the charter to lower the 11 affirmative budget committee votes required to reject or modify any line item.
VOTE: 8-1

Chair Christner explained that Commissioner salaries (where it would take a vote of at least 9), is according to a consent agreement created after the lawsuit and is sort of on a different page than the charter. Christner also explained that redistricting and changing the charter would have to go back to voters.

- #7. **(048-2023)** to approve \$15,000 for the Historical Society.
VOTE: 7-2

Chair Christner and Chair Cesare questioned whether they wanted this to be added to the budget every year.

Historical Society Treasurer Jack Curtis pointed out that this year's request is a one-time donation without the expectation of adding to the budget every year, (but they would also like to leave open the possibility to ask for future donations).

Historical Society President David Chittim explained that they were in the middle of a campaign to raise money to get them moved over to the new building. Next year, they will launch an annual campaign for operating costs to keep them running, but this is the seed money to get them where they need to be.

* Five Minute Recess

Treasurer Proctor recommended the following:

\$ 4,000 Risk Pool Liability Insurance

\$ 43,160 Reduce Dispatch Revenue

\$ 100,000 Reduce Deeds Revenue

\$ 2,430 Increase State Court Rent

\$ 1 million – Undesignated fund balance - recommend use \$150,000 to cover adjustments.

Treasurer Proctor, "With all Budget Committee recommendations, not including the Commissioner raises, all above, with \$150,000 in fund balance is what you're looking at."

Motion: to pull \$65,000 out of Professional Services/Center Street Property to fund \$40,000 for the DA's position, another \$20,000 to cover health & medical insurance, \$5,000 of that would go to our HR employee when she passes the exam, and with accepting the Budget Committee & Treasurer Proctor's recommendations, with the exception of the Commissioner raises.

Ames-Lewis (no vote)

Amendment to motion: to pull \$65,000 out of Professional Services/Center Street Property to fund \$40,000 for the DA's position, another \$20,000 to cover health & medical insurance, \$5,000 of that would go to our HR employee when she passes the exam, and with accepting the Budget Committee & Treasurer Proctor's recommendations, with the exception of the Commissioner raises (*vote 047-2023*) and with the exception of the cut to the Commissioners Professional Fees Line (*vote 046-2023*).

Ames-Lewis 6-0

Motion: to accept the 2024 Revenues at \$2,623,248.
Ames-Kelly 6-0

Amendment to motion: to accept the 2024 (Support of Prisoners) Revenues at \$2,623,248
and the (County) Revenues at \$2,139,638.
Ames-Kelly 6-0

Motion: to accept the Expenditures for 2024 at \$18,365,494.29.
Ames-Lewis 6-0

Motion: for the 2024 Tax Levy as \$13,602,608.29.
Ames-Lewis 6-0

At this time, Commissioners returned to *VI. Executive Session.*

X. DISCUSSION ITEMS-None

XI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- * Opioid Settlement – (Workshop or Agenda Discussion)
- * Strategic Planning Workshop (After budget season)
- * 774 Center Steet (ongoing)
- * Building Committee
- * Hire County Administrator

XII. ADJOURN

Motion: to adjourn.
Ames-Kelly 6-0

Interim County Administrator/Sheriff Eric Samson