

MINUTES

**AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015 - 5:30 P.M. -
SHERIFF'S OFFICE BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - HOULTON**

PRESENT

Paul J. Adams, Chairperson, County Commissioners
Norman L. Fournier, County Commissioner
Paul J. Underwood, County Commissioner
Douglas F. Beaulieu, County Administrator
Darrell Crandall, Sheriff
Shawn Gillen, Chief Deputy
Ross McQuade, Lieutenant
Terry "Joe" McKenna, Chief, Houlton Police Department

ART. 1. Chairperson Paul J. Adams called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

ART. 2. Public Comment Period.

There was no public comment.

ART. 3. Approval of agenda.

Chairperson Paul J. Adams entertained a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Adams to approve the agenda.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 4. Chairperson Paul J. Adams entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2015 County Commissioners' Meeting.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Adams to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2015 County Commissioners' Meeting.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 5. The Commissioners approved and signed the following:

A) Attendance Record.

B) Bills and Warrants.

C) Tax Abatement Decision.

The County Commissioners had a discussion about a tax abatement decision in Charette vs. Town of Crystal. A hearing on the appeal was held in Houlton on March 27, 2015. In the case at hand, Mr. Charette claims that an abatement should be granted on his property because of a septic spreading site abutting his land. The town claims that the septic spreading site is on private property, and is consistent with rules and regulations promulgated by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. In addition, the town claims a consistent methodology was employed in the valuation of properties in their community. Commissioners Adams and Fournier, while being sympathetic to the property owner, found that the town did not err in its valuation of the Charette property. Commissioner Underwood dissented with that conclusion. He believes the fact that the town has no zoning ordinance is a mitigating factor in approving the abatement.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Adams to approve the order denying the tax abatement for the Applicant, Michael Charette.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 6. Presentation on Maliseet Tribe Legislative Initiatives. (Henry Bear, Elected Maliseet Tribal Representative)

Mr. Bear did not attend the meeting; therefore, there was no presentation.

ART. 7. Sheriff's Department Appointments.

A) Sheriff Darrell Crandall recommended that the County Commissioners approve the hiring of Brian McQuarrie of Fort Fairfield as part-time deputy sheriff.

MOTION:

Motion by Paul J. Underwood and seconded by Norman L. Fournier to approve the hiring of Brian McQuarrie of Fort Fairfield as part-time deputy sheriff.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

B) Sheriff Darrell Crandall recommended that the County Commissioners approve the hiring of Terry "Joe" McKenna of Houlton as part-time deputy sheriff.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Underwood to approve the hiring of Terry "Joe" McKenna of Houlton as part-time deputy sheriff.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 8. County Administrator's Report.

A) LD 967.

County Administrator Doug Beaulieu reviewed LD 967, the Municipal Cost Components' legislation, with the County Commissioners. He indicated that the amount attributable to Aroostook County in the bill was correct and that he and Public Works Director Paul Bernier would attend the public hearing and work session later this month.

B) Aroostook Municipal Association (AMA) Assessing Survey.

County Administrator Doug Beaulieu reviewed both the assessing survey and the outcome of the last meeting he and Public Works Director Paul Bernier had with Jon Fredericks and Austin Bleess. Mr. Fredericks and Mr. Bleess will be polling interested communities to gauge the level of interest in obtaining a price quote from the County of Aroostook to perform these services. This is an area that is ripe for regional service, but it has to have the support and commitment from the municipalities in order to succeed.

D) LD 186 Update.

County Administrator Doug Beaulieu and Sheriff Darrell Crandall provided the County Commissioners with an update on LD 186, which would abolish the Board of Corrections and return the operational control of the jails to the Maine Sheriffs. This bill has had a public hearing and two (2) work sessions to date. It appears the committee is having discussions amongst themselves and it is reported that they would like to report the bill out of committee in short order. What remains to be decided is the amount and nature of the "soft landing" funds that are likely to be attached to the bill. On a separate note, the House and Senate gave final approval to LD 236, which would provide FY 15 Supplemental funding to five (5) jails. Our jail is slated to receive \$782,000 of that money if the Governor signs the bill into law.

E) Other Items of Interest.

1) Law Enforcement Operations.

County Administrator Doug Beaulieu said he was yielding the remainder of his time under this Article to allow Sheriff Crandall the opportunity to provide a short report on law enforcement operations. Before he did that, he wanted the County Commissioners to know that he monitors emergency radio traffic in his travels around the county and there has never been a time when he has heard as much radio communication by our Sheriff's Office as presently. In his opinion, this is a product of an extremely dedicated and busy corps of deputies, dispatchers and other law enforcement personnel. This reflects positively on the Sheriff's Office and our county government, and he wanted to take the opportunity to thank the Sheriff and his command staff for a job well done!

Sheriff Crandall offered the County Commissioners a review of Sheriff's Office law enforcement operations for calendar year 2014. The Sheriff's Office eliminated a long standing call sharing agreement with the state police in January of 2014, and deployed their deputies throughout Aroostook County as opposed to small portions of it on a rotating basis. During 2014, the Sheriff's Office experienced a 29% increase in calls for service throughout Aroostook County. The Sheriff believes it is clear that this was the right decision. In 2013, Deputy Sheriffs solved or otherwise closed 37.5% of their reported index crimes, which are rape, robbery, burglary, theft and assault. The

state average in 2013 was 32%. In 2014, our clearance rate rose to 69.3%. Arrests made by deputies increased by 23% in one (1) year as well. Because property tax payers fund Sheriff's law enforcement operations, the Sheriff reported that deputies carried out 638 residential, commercial and industrial property inspections in 2014, up from just thirteen in 2013. Finally, the Sheriff reported that they received 378 requests for assistance from state law enforcement and 305 from local agencies in 2014.

ART. 9. Other Business.

There was no other business to discuss.

ART. 10. Executive Session.

Chairperson Paul J. Adams entertained a motion to go into executive session.

MOTION:

The following motion was made by Paul J. Underwood and seconded by Norman L. Fournier:

"I move we go into executive session pursuant to Title 1, M.R.S.A., §405, sub-section 6, paragraph (A) to discuss a personnel issue."

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

Upon returning to open session, no action was taken.

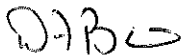
ART. 11. Adjournment.

MOTION:

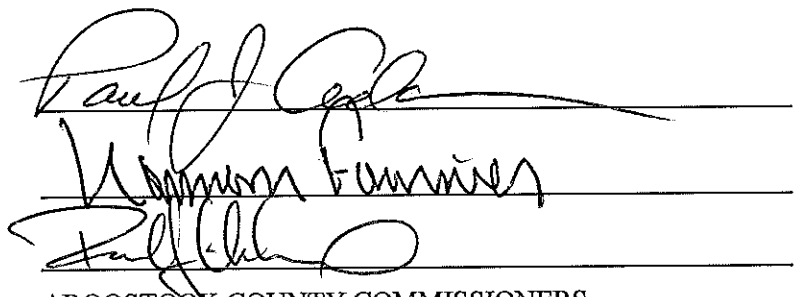
Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Underwood to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

ATTEST: A True Copy
of Commissioners' Meeting



Douglas F. Beaulieu
County Administrator



AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DATE: April 1, 2015