

MINUTES

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' SPECIAL MEETING – TAX ABATEMENT APPEAL HEARING – TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2016 – 1:00 P.M. – CARIBOU COURTHOUSE – LAW LIBRARY – CARIBOU

PRESENT

Paul J. Adams, Chairperson, County Commissioners
Norman L. Fournier, County Commissioner
Paul J. Underwood, County Commissioner
Douglas F. Beaulieu, County Administrator
Robert Shampang, Property Owner
Nancy Shampang, Property Owner
Kevin Drake, Assessor, Winterville
Dale Emery, Assessor, Winterville
Lewis Cousins, Former Assessor's Agent
Margaret M. Pierce, Current Assessor's Agent
Louise Caron, Register of Deeds - North
Melissa Richardson, Register of Deeds - South

ART. 1. Chairperson Paul J. Adams called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

ART. 2. Chairperson Paul J. Adams entertained a motion to approve the agenda.

County Administrator Douglas Beaulieu recommended that one (1) item be added to Article 5. Other Business. "Discussion and possible approval of expenditures out of the Registry of Deeds Surcharge Account."

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Underwood to approve the agenda as recommended.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 3. Tax Abatement Hearing: Robert and Nancy Shampang vs. Winterville Plantation.

Chair Paul J. Adams convened the above-referenced Tax Abatement Hearing. The witnesses were sworn in under oath. The Chair asked the parties if all statutory procedures and time frames had been complied with or waived and whether this dispute was properly before the Commission.

Winterville Plantation Assessor Dale Emery argued that a formal abatement request to the Plantation has not been made. He further contends that if it had been made, it would have been filed 128 days past the 185 day statutory time frame. Based on these facts, he contends the abatement request is procedurally flawed and should be dismissed or denied.

It is the position of the Applicants that they requested an abatement of their 2015 taxes, but after further discussion, they acknowledged that they may not have followed proper procedure. They indicated they are formerly from Connecticut and do not fully understand Maine law.

After a brief discussion amongst the Commissioners and parties, the following motion was made:

MOTION:

Motion by Paul J. Underwood and seconded by Norman L. Fournier to deny the request for abatement in this matter based on the fact that the appeal is not within the statutory time limits and, as such, that this appeal is procedurally flawed.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 4. The Commissioners approved and signed the following:

- A) Attendance Record.
- B) Bills and Warrants.

ART. 5. Other Business.

- A) Discussion and possible approval of expenditures out of the Registry of Deeds Surcharge Account.

County Administrator Douglas Beaulieu explained the purpose of this agenda item. He indicated that both Registers were considering making expenditures out of the Surcharge Account for preservation of records in an electronic format and this project would require personnel to complete the project. During the recent budget process, this project was discussed with the County Commissioners and it was decided that this item would be dealt with outside of that process because the revenues come out of a dedicated account, which is fee based and not raised through taxation.

Registers Louise Caron and Melissa Richardson discussed the scope of the proposed project, which would essentially put records that predate 1960 into an electronic format. That is, these records would be scanned, and the intent would be to scan all records in both Registries. After a dialogue with the Commissioners and staff, the County Commissioners requested that the Registers prepare a formal request to the County Administrator, which would highlight the scope of the project and associated costs and also reaffirm their commitment to comply with the governing statute. It is the intent of the County Commissioners to review this request and give formal approval at the November 16, 2016 County Commissioners' Meeting in Caribou provided that the Registers have covered all of their bases and done their due diligence on this project.

ART. 6. Executive Session.

None.

ART. 7. Adjournment.

MOTION:

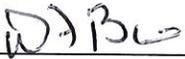
Motion by Paul J. Underwood and seconded by Norman L. Fournier to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE:

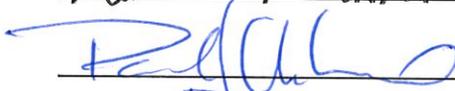
Motion voted on and passed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

ATTEST: A True Copy
of Commissioners' Meeting



Douglas F. Beaulieu
County Administrator



AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DATE: October 25, 2016