

MINUTES

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2023
1:00 PM REGISTRY OF DEEDS FIRST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM – FORT KENT

PRESENT

Paul J. Underwood, Chair, County Commissioners
Norman L. Fournier, County Commissioner
William T. Dobbins, County Commissioner
Ryan D. Pelletier, County Administrator
Shawn Gillen, Sheriff
Joey Seeley, Deputy Sheriff
Paul Bernier, Community Services Director
Dana Gendreau, Finance Director
Christina Theriault, HR Director via Zoom
Bryan Jandreau, IT & Facilities Director
Steve Pelletier, ARPA Program Administrator
Tammy Pelletier, Operations Assistant

ART. 1. Chair Paul J. Underwood called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

ART. 2. There was no public comment.

ART. 3. Mr. Ryan Pelletier noted amendments to Article 15 to add 1 new hire candidate and Article 16 to add Hodgdon. Chair Paul J. Underwood entertained a motion for approval of the agenda as amended.

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the agenda.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 4. Chair Paul J. Underwood entertained a motion for approval of the January 3, 2023 County Commissioners' meeting minutes.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2023 County Commissioners' meeting.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

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

- A) Attendance record.
- B) Bills and warrants.

C) Renewal of Liquor License for Long Lake Sporting Club-Sinclair

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the Liquor License renewal for Long Lake Sporting Club.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed

ART. 6. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented the Commissioners with a request from Dixie Shaw of Catholic Charities to hold the April Commissioners' meeting at the facility in Monticello. Commissioner Underwood identified an error in our meeting schedule for December 2023, noting that the Charter indicates that there must be a meeting in each district every quarter. As such, the meeting for December will need to be changed from Fort Kent to Caribou.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the change for the December meeting to be held in Caribou per the Charter; and to tentatively approve the meeting schedule for April, provided that the Monticello location would be accessible to the public.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed

ART. 7. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented the Decision to Grant the Tax Abatement Appeal for Miragliuolo V. Town of Perham.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the Decision as Granted.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 8. Mrs. Christina Theriault presented and update to the Remote Meeting Policy.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the revised Remote Meeting Policy.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 9. Mr. Ryan Pelletier and Mrs. Christina Theriault presented a discussion regarding the timing of hiring non-department head employees and to gain understanding if these employees could begin work prior to Commissioner approval, if approved by the County Administrator and Human Resources.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to allow new hires for non-department heads to begin employment prior to Commissioner approval, with the County Administrator's approval, and the understanding that the Commissioners have full authority to rescind the new hire when they are formally presented at the monthly Commissioner meeting.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 10. Mr. Bryan Jandreau presented for consideration a ban on the application Tik Tok from all County of Aroostook devices and any personal devices that connect to the County of Aroostook network.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the Tik Tok ban from all county owned devices and personal devices connecting to the network.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 11. Mr. Ryan Pelletier and Mrs. Christina Theriault presented for discussion the need for a Supervisor for County employees within the DA's office. The position used to exist but was eliminated. The Supervisor would perform all the supervisory duties for County employees, including evaluation, discipline, etc. Currently the DA, who is a State employee, is tasked with performing those supervisory duties for County employees within their office. A job description would be posted internally only. Christina to provide additional information regarding cost impact and job description at the March meeting.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to move forward with obtaining information on the cost of adding the Supervisory position and job description for County employees in the DA's Office.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 12. Mrs. Dana Gendreau presented the 2023 Tax Commitment, due date and interest rate for 2023 County taxes.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the 2023 County Tax Commitment, due date and interest rate.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 13. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration a request for a Letter of Support from the Town of Orient for their application for officially naming 2 brooks with special geographical features.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to support the Town of Orient's request and provide the Letter of Support.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 14. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented on behalf of Darren Woods, Director-EMA, for the hiring of Alexis Violette as a Volunteer Fire Fighter for North Lakes Fire & Rescue.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the hiring of Alexis Violette as Volunteer Fire Fighter.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 15. Sheriff Shawn Gillen presented for consideration the renewal of Deputy Commissions for:

1. William Greaves, Civil Process Server
2. Douglas Bell, Civil Process Server
3. Matthew Cummings, Chief of Police-Fort Fairfield
4. Nathan Chisholm, Patrol Sergeant
5. Mitchell Wheeler, PT Deputy/Transport

Sheriff Gillen also presented Donald Gibson as a Full Time Dispatcher.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the 5 renewed commissions as noted and to approve the hiring of Donald Gibson as Full Time Dispatcher.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 16. Sherriff Gillen presented for ratification the 2023 Dispatch Contracts for Monticello, Linneus, Mars Hill, Haynesville, Limestone, Van Buren, Frenchville, Bridgewater, Grand Isle, Littleton, Central Aroostook EMS, and Hodgdon.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to ratify the 2023 Dispatch agreements as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 17. Mr. Paul Bernier presented for consideration the Ambulance Services Inc. 2023 Subsidy Request for Sinclair, Cross Lake, Square Lake, T15R6, T14R6, T16R6.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Paul Underwood to approve the 2023 Subsidy Request as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed 2-1. Commissioner Fournier abstained.

ART. 18. Mr. Paul Bernier presented for consideration a 3-year Ambulance service agreement with the Town of Madawaska for the Baie Creuse region of Sinclair.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Paul Underwood to approve the 3-year agreement as presented for Ambulance services provided by the Town of Madawaska to Baie Creuse.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed 2-1. Commissioner Fournier abstained.

ART. 19. Mr. Paul Bernier presented the following contracts for approval:

1. Ambulance services for Madawaska Lake with the City of Caribou.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the contract as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

2. Ambulance and Fire services for Connor with the City of Caribou.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the contract as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

3. Ambulance and Fire services for Cary Plantation with the Town of Houlton. There was a second proposal from Southern Aroostook EMS which included only Ambulance services for Cary Plantation and 5 other Unorganized Territories.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to Table the matter and to put the Ambulance and Fire Services for Cary Plantation and Ambulance Services for the additional 5 Unorganized Territories out to formal Bid.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 20. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for ratification the MOU with the Maine Prosecutor's Association for the County to take over payroll and benefit administration for 3 IT employees within the DA'S office from January 28, 2023 to July 1, 2023.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to ratify the MOU as presented.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 21. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration a corporate resolution naming himself as the Authorized Representative of Aroostook County for Sun Life Financial.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the corporate resolution as noted.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 22. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented an update on the Jail Study Commission. We will be engaging the National Institute of Corrections to assist with providing research and studies regarding the need for a new Jail facility. Next meeting is March 20th. Mr.

Pelletier made a request for \$126,000 to be moved from the Jail ADA fund to the New Jail fund.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve reallocation of \$126,000 from Jail ADA to the New Jail fund.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 23. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented an update on a new Opioid Settlement which included CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Teva and Allergan. To date, we have received \$325,482 in settlement funds from other settlements. All Opioid Settlement funds are kept in a separate account from all other funds. Funds will come in over a long period of time (17 years for some settlements totaling in excess of \$4,000,000). Unsure of total amounts due to pending litigation/settlements.

No motion necessary.

ART. 24. County Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Fournier provided an update for MCCA/Risk Pool. The number claims for January remain within normal limits. Reinsurance rate went up \$200,000 for 2023. 5 new Commissioners on the Board for 2023. Speaker of the House R. Talbot Ross and Senate President Troy Jackson were in attendance at the MCCA meeting.

Legislatively, there are 175 Bills that would currently affect the Counties directly or indirectly. MCCA is in support of an increase in jail funding which has stayed at the same level for 2 years, while other areas of funding have had increases. Surveys were sent to every Sheriff and County for budgets over 3 years to present as proof of the need for this increase.

Commissioner Underwood provided an update from the Solar Eclipse Board. The eclipse will occur April 8, 2024 and last 4 minutes. There will be several optimal viewing locations with Monticello being the best. Houlton and Presque Isle are expecting 40-60,000 people for the event and are preparing for increased traffic, activity and accommodations such as camping areas.

ART. 25. Other Business

No Other Business

ART. 26. At 3:00 pm, the following motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins:

"I move that we enter Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA 405(6)(A) to discuss the County Administrator's 2022 goal review and evaluation."

MOTION:

A motion was made by Paul Underwood and seconded by Norman Fournier to adjourn the meeting at 2:30 pm.

VOTE:

Motion voted and passed.

Upon return from Executive Session at 3:17 pm, no action was taken.

ART. 27. Adjournment.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to adjourn the meeting at 3:18 pm.

VOTE:

Motion voted and passed.

ATTEST: A True Copy
of Commissioners' Meeting

Ryan D. Pelletier
County Administrator

Norman Fournier

William Dobbins

Rafael P

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DATE: March 15, 2023