

MINUTES

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING – WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 2023 - 1:00 PM
SHERIFF'S OFFICE BUILDING SECOND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM - HOULTON

PRESENT

Paul J. Underwood, Chair, County Commissioners
Norman L. Fournier, County Commissioner
William T. Dobbins, County Commissioner
Ryan D. Pelletier, County Administrator
Bryan Jandreau, Facilities & IT Director
Shawn Gillen, Sheriff
Joey Seeley, Deputy Sheriff
Peter Johnson, Commander
Chris Lavoie, Director, Penobscot Regional Communications Center
Tammy Pelletier, Operations Assistant
Darren Woods, Director of EMA-Zoom
Steve Pelletier, ARPA Program Administrator-Zoom
Kathleen Tomaselli, Bangor Daily News-Zoom
Richard Rhoda, Resident of Houlton
Angie Wotton, District Manager, Southern Aroostook Soil and Water Conservation District
Lauren Ouellette, District Forester, Department of Conservation

- ART. 1. Chair Paul J. Underwood called the meeting to order at 1:07 pm.
- ART. 2. Pledge of Allegiance.
- ART. 3. No public comments.
- ART. 4. Mr. Ryan Pelletier requested the following changes to the July 19, 2023 agenda; 1) Add new hire recommendation for Carson Cole as FT Corrections Officer to Article 11; 2) Mr. Ryan Pelletier will present on behalf of Mr. Paul Bernier for Article 13; 3) Add Spirit of America Ceremony update to Article 15; 4) Move the Discussion of PSAP Contract from Executive Session to Article 6 (E).

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 5. Chair Paul J. Underwood entertained a motion for approval of the June 20, 2023, County Commissioners' meeting minutes.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the minutes of the June 20, 2023 County Commissioners' meeting.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 6.

The County Commissioners approved and signed the following:

- A) Attendance record.
- B) Bills and warrants.
- C) BYOB permit – Benedicta Snow Gang/Benedicta

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the BYOB permit for Benedicta Snow Gang/Benedicta.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- D) Liquor license renewal – Eagle Lake Sporting Camps/T16R6

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the liquor license renewal for Eagle Lake Sporting Camps/T16R6.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- E) To consider the PSAP contract with Penobscot County Regional Communications Center.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the 3-year (2024-2026) PSAP contract with Penobscot County Regional Communications Center.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 7.

Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for ratification the liquor license renewal for Homestead Lodge/Oxbow.

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to ratify the liquor license renewal for Homestead Lodge/Oxbow.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 8. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for ratification a letter of support for the Wolastoq-St John watershed restoration project.

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to ratify the letter of support for the Wolastoq-St John watershed project.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 9. Mr. Bryan Jandreau presented for consideration the recommendation for planting three (3) native Red Maple trees and two (2) native Sugar Maple trees at the Superior Court Building. Ms. Angie Wotton, Director of SASWCD, and Ms. Lauren Ouellette, District Forester, Department of Conservation, presented materials and comments in support of the recommendation based on various soil, environmental, and potential pest factors that show Maples have a better chance of thriving in the area. Mr. Richard Rhoda, a resident of Houlton, presented comments and written material explaining his mission over the last three (3) years to have Elm trees restored to the historic Houlton location. Mr. Rhoda offered to pay for the Elm Trees as a donation to his community, including yearly maintenance until his death, and removal of the trees should they not thrive or become diseased.

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to accept Mr. Rhoda's offer to restore Elm trees to the Superior Court building. Commissioner Fournier added that in order to accept this offer, the County would need to drive all decisions regarding the Elm trees, including but not limited to, how many trees and the placement of trees. An outline of the actions to be taken by The County includes:

1. The County will develop, in consultation with the Southern Aroostook Soil & Water District and others identified by the County to be knowledgeable in the area of tree species, a tree planting plan for the Houlton Superior Court building.
2. As directed by the County Commissioners, the type of tree to be quoted will be the Princeton American Elm Tree.
3. The County will ascertain the appropriate number of trees to be planted based on subject matter experts and the appropriate area size of the property.
4. Once a total cost per tree is identified, the County will generate an invoice to Richard Rhoda for the total amount of trees to be procured and planted by the County.
5. When receipt of the donation by Mr. Rhoda is received, the County will place the order for trees to be delivered in the Spring of 2024 and planted soon thereafter.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed. (2-1) Commissioner Underwood voted Nay.

ART. 10. Mr. Darren Woods presented for consideration the recommendation to accept the highest bid for the sale of a 1987 GMC Topkick Rescue truck to Dutch Gap Auto (\$10,551).

MOTION:

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to accept the bid from Dutch Gap Auto (\$10,551) for the 1987 GMC Topkick Rescue truck.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 11. Sheriff Shawn Gillen presented for consideration the hiring recommendation of Shawn Levasseur as a full-time Corrections Officer and Carson Cole as a full-time Corrections Officer.

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the hiring of Shawn Levasseur and Carson Cole as full-time Corrections Officers.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 12. Sheriff Shawn Gillen presented for consideration the hiring recommendation of Brigitte Morrison as a part-time corrections officer.

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the hiring recommendation of Brigitte Morrison as a part-time corrections officer.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 13. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration the contract with the Town of Blaine for snow removal in E-Plantation Township (7/2023-6/2026).

MOTION:

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the contract with the Town of Blaine for snow removal in E. Plantation Township (7/2023-6/2026).

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

- ART. 14. County Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Norman Fournier reported on the Risk Pool which has had roughly the same number of claims in the first six (6) months of 2023 as they did in 2022 and June had the fewest claims statewide (4). The audit report will be available in November. Legislatively, MCCA representatives testified in over 50 bills. County jails were not funded during this session but efforts are ongoing to get supplemental State funding.

- ART. 15. Other Business

Ms. Tammy Pelletier presented an update on the Spirit of America Award Ceremony to be held on July 21. 16 awardees and 2 legislators have confirmed attendance. Room setup and buffet options are confirmed. Total attendees expected to be about 50.

Commissioner Dobbins inquired if progress had been made regarding the Superior Courthouse door. Mr. Pelletier said he would follow up with facilities.

Commissioner Dobbins inquired if Madawaska had accepted the ARPA funds that were offered. Mr. Steve Pelletier indicated that they have verbally accepted.

ART. 16. At 2:41 pm, the following motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier:

“I move that we enter Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA 405(6)(A) to discuss personnel matters at the Sheriff’s Office.”

VOTE:

Motion voted and passed.

Upon return from Executive Session at 3:15 pm, a motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to offer a beginning salary scale at Step 9 for the ACCCP Caseworker position, with the understanding that the individual hired will be red-lined at Step 9 until their years of experience exceeds that Step.

VOTE:

Motion voted and passed.

ART. 17. Adjournment.

MOTION:

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to adjourn the meeting at 3:17 pm.

VOTE:


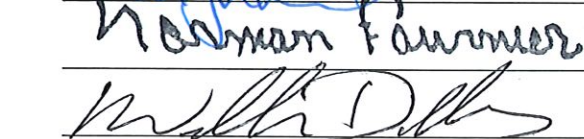
Motion voted and passed.

ATTEST: A True Copy

of Commissioners’ Meeting



Ryan D. Pelletier
County Administrator

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DATE: August 16, 2023