

MINUTES

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING-WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15, 2023 1:00 PM  
ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING ROOM-CARIBOU COURTHOUSE

PRESENT

Paul J. Underwood, Chair, County Commissioners  
Norman L. Fournier, County Commissioner  
William T. Dobbins, County Commissioner  
Ryan D. Pelletier, County Administrator  
Joey Seeley, Deputy Sheriff  
Paul Bernier, Community Services Director  
Dana Gendreau, Finance Director  
Bryan Jandreau, IT & Facilities Director  
Steve Pelletier, ARPA Program Administrator  
Tammy Pelletier, Operations Assistant  
Melissa Lizotte, Aroostook Republican/BDN

ART. 1. Chair Paul J. Underwood called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

ART. 2. There was no public comment.

ART. 3. Mr. Ryan Pelletier noted an addition to Article 21-Other Business for consideration of a Letter of Support for Greater East Grand Economic Council. Chair Paul J. Underwood entertained a motion for approval of the agenda as amended.

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 4. Commissioner Dobbins indicated the following corrections to the minutes for February 15, 2023:

A) Article 17 & 18 to read "Motion voted on and passed. 2 in favor, 1 abstained. Commissioner Fournier abstained."

B) Article 26 to read to strike the line: "A motion was made by Paul Underwood and seconded by Norman Fournier to adjourn the meeting at 2:30 pm.", and correct the last line to "Upon return from Executive Session at 3:47 pm, no action was taken."

C) Article 27 to read "A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to adjourn the meeting at 3:48pm."

MOTION:

Motion by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve the minutes as corrected.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

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

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

ART. 6. Mr. Ron Smith, RHR Smith & Co, was unable to attend due to weather. Presentation has been postponed.

**MOTION:**

Motion by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to Table the Article until Mr. Smith is available.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 7. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented the Dispatch contract between the Sheriff's Office and the town of St. Agatha for ratification.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to ratify the Dispatch contract.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 8. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration the re-appointment of the Finance Committee members with expired terms; Area 1 – Kai Libby, Area 4 – Sue Powers, Area 5 – Donald 'Spike' Savage, Area 8 – Nelson Jandreau. All members have expressed their wish to remain on the committee.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to re-appoint the Finance Committee members.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 9. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for discussion the Spirit of America awards for 2021 and 2022 which have not yet been recognized by the County. With approximately 45 recipients to recognize, Mr. Pelletier recommended having a luncheon event in the summer, separate from a regular Commissioners' meeting. Will continue to research possible spaces, dates, costs.

Motion not required.

ART. 10. Mrs. Dana Gendreau presented for consideration the funding for the 2022 General Fund accruals. Vacation accrual funding has been underfunded for years and this will complete the full funding for the accrual.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the 2022 General Fund accruals.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 11. Mrs. Dana Gendreau presented for consideration the 2023 Tax Anticipation Note and Votes of the County Commissioners in the amount of \$3,380,000.00.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve the 2023 Tax Anticipation Note and Votes of the County Commissioners.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 12. Mrs. Dana Gendreau presented for consideration the year-end financial report for the General Fund and the second quarter financial reports for the Jail and Unorganized Territories. Accounts are meeting their benchmarks or are slightly over budget. Factors include increased costs of services such as ambulance, solid waste, medical, and Capital funding of accounts.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to accept the year-end financial report for the General Fund and the second quarter financial reports for the Jail and Unorganized Territories.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 13. Mr. Steve Pelletier presented for consideration an ARPA program statement review. 26 letters of interest have been submitted to the County for ARPA Funding which includes \$1.4 million for Public Health projects, \$1.2 million for Infrastructure projects and Broadband projects for \$300,000. Letters of interest were required by February 17<sup>th</sup> for projects relating to Public Health or Infrastructure. Broadband projects can continue to submit requests until funding (\$450,000) has been exhausted.

Motion not required.

ART. 14. Mr. Bryan Jandreau presented for consideration his recommendation that the County deny the bid for the HVAC project at Houlton Superior Court. The main goal of the project was to improve air quality. Bid was \$417,000 over the budget for the project. Bryan will look at other solutions.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to reject the bid for the HVAC project at Houlton Superior Court.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 15. Mr. Paul Bernier presented for consideration the following bids:

1. Cary & 7 TWP Ambulance Service – One bid received from Southern Aroostook EMS for \$26,767 for April-December 2023. Paul recommended accepting bid as it ensures full coverage for townships that have previously gone uncovered.

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to accept the bid for Cary & 7 TWP Ambulance service from Southern Aroostook EMS.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

2. Cary Fire Protection – Town of Houlton agreed to do the Fire portion only of their original contract for Cary services with no fee change to that service. Paul recommended accepting revised contract for Cary Fire Protection only with Town of Houlton.

**MOTION**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to accept the bid for Cary Fire Protection services from the Town of Houlton.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 16. Mr. Paul Bernier presented for consideration the Town of Ashland subsidy request for 2023 for Oxbow's library, recreation and ambulance services; and for North Maine Woods ambulance services. Ambulance service fees for North Maine Woods increased 57% from \$46,500 in 2022 to \$73,125 in 2023. No other ambulance services offer service to the area.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to accept the subsidy request from the Town of Ashland for Library, Recreation, and Ambulance services for Oxbow; and Ambulance services only for North Maine Woods.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 17. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration the request from Rep. Austin Theriault for a letter of support for LD 607: Resolve, to Direct the Department of Transportation to Examine the Feasibility of Extending Interstate 95 to the St. John Valley.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by William Dobbins and seconded by Norman Fournier to approve a letter of support for LD 607.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 18 Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration a request to participate in a local government services working group by the LDA. Commissioner Dobbins volunteered to serve if the group is formed.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by Paul Underwood for Commissioner Dobbins to serve on the local government services working group, if and when it is formed.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 19. Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration a date and time for the Tax Abatement Appeal hearing in the matter of Watts v. Perham.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to set the hearing for April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 1 pm in the Administrative Hearing Room at the Caribou Courthouse.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 20. County Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Fournier reported on the MCCA/Risk Pool being reinsured for 2023 at a \$200,000 increase in premiums from 2022. Claim amounts were down for February and included claims for water damage, car accidents, and frozen pipes. There are approximately 100 Bills that could either directly or indirectly affect Counties, including a bill to allow juvenile inmates to keep their Mainecare while incarcerated, increasing Jail funding, and funding for Rural patrol.

Commissioner Dobbins reported that all of the Commissioners, and Ryan, attended the ACAP Sledgehammer event in Presque Isle earlier in the day. He has also been working with New Limerick and sharing information regarding the Broadband study and how New Limerick and surrounding communities could come together to potentially improve their internet options.

ART. 21. Other Business

Mr. Ryan Pelletier presented for consideration a request for a letter of support for the Greater East Grand Economic Council for their recently submitted three-year capacity building grant.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve a letter of support for GECEC.

**VOTE:**

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 22. At 2:48 pm, the following motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins:

**MOTION:**

“I move that we enter Executive Session pursuant to Title 1 MRSA 405(6)(A).”

**VOTE:**

Motion voted and passed.

Upon return from Executive Session at 2:57 pm, a motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to approve an amendment of Ryan Pelletier’s Employment Agreement regulating salary and fringe benefits.

ART. 23. Adjournment.

**MOTION:**

A motion was made by Norman Fournier and seconded by William Dobbins to adjourn the meeting at 2:58 pm.

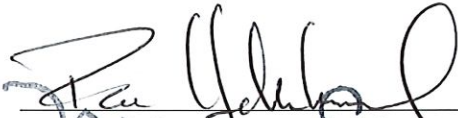
**VOTE:**

Motion voted and passed.

ATTEST: A True Copy  
of Commissioners’ Meeting

  
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Ryan D. Pelletier  
County Administrator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Norman Fournier

  
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AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
DATE: April 19, 2023