

MINUTES

**AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' MEETING –WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2009– 5:30 P.M. –
REGISTRY OF DEEDS OFFICE – FORT KENT**

PRESENT

Paul J. Adams, Chairperson, County Commissioners
Norman L. Fournier, County Commissioner
Paul J. Underwood, County Commissioner
Douglas F. Beaulieu, County Administrator
Jim Madore, Sheriff
Bryan Jandreau, Facilities Manager

ART. 1. Chairperson Paul J. Adams called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ART. 2. Approval of Agenda.

Chairperson Paul J. Adams informed the County Commissioners that one (1) item would be added to Article 7 – Other Business: Discussion of Silver Ridge Cemetery Mowing Contract extension.

MOTION:

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

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 3 Approval of minutes of January 6, 2009 Organizational County Commissioners' Meeting.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Underwood to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2009 County Commissioners' Organizational Meeting.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

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

A) Attendance Record.

B) Bills and Warrants.

ART. 5. Sheriff Department Appointments:

A) Hiring of four (4) part-time Corrections' Officers.

Sheriff Madore recommended that the County Commissioners approve the hiring of Matthew R. Jeffrey of Houlton, Logan A. Jay of Houlton, Deborah J. Rafford of Houlton and Ryan J. Runerstrum of Linneus as part-time Corrections' Officers.

MOTION:

Motion by Paul J. Underwood and seconded by Norman L. Fournier to approve the hiring of Matthew R. Jeffrey of Houlton, Logan A. Jay of Houlton, Deborah J. Rafford of Houlton and Ryan J. Runerstrum of Linneus as part-time Corrections' Officers.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

B) Hiring of one (1) part-time Dispatcher.

Sheriff Madore recommended that the County Commissioners approve the hiring of JoAnn Cole-Sanchez as part-time Dispatcher.

MOTION:

Motion by Paul J. Underwood and seconded by Norman L. Fournier to approve the hiring of JoAnn Cole-Sanchez as part-time Dispatcher.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

ART. 6. County Administrator's Report:

A) Updated 2008 Flood payments.

The County Administrator briefly reviewed and entertained questions in regards to a flood payment spreadsheet provided by Vern Ouellette, EMA Director.

B) North Lakes Fire and Rescue Grant Application.

The County Administrator advised the County Commissioners that Darren Woods, Public Safety Coordinator, has applied for a grant for three (3) 110 watt Kenwood mobile radios for his fire department. The grant requires a 50% match, which was budgeted in the departmental budget.

C) Houlton Courthouse Renovation Project update.

Both the County Administrator and Bryan Jandreau, Facilities Manager, updated the County Commissioners on the Courthouse Renovation Project. The Court System is slated for a potential move April 1, 2009, even though that seems overly optimistic according to Mr. Jandreau. This renovation has had a major, disruptive impact on our staff and we appreciate their patience and understanding. It is anticipated that the renovation of the court space will dramatically increase our utility and maintenance agreement costs. These costs will have to be taken into consideration when the County and Court System negotiate a new lease agreement.

D) E-911 PSAP Service update.

On January 8, 2009, the County Administrator sent a letter to Cliff Wells, Director of Public Safety, to respond to his inquiry regarding the future of a contractual relationship with his department. To date, the County has not heard from Mr. Wells.

The County Administrator indicated that the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) met today to deliberate the PSAP/Dispatch rate request from the Department of Public Safety (DPS). The deliberations focused on six (6) elements of the rate request, which the County Administrator summarized. Only one (1) element, having to do with a pay grade request, was approved by the PUC. It is unclear as to what the rates will be in the future. The DPS will be recalculating a new rating structure under the guidance of PUC's ruling.

The County Commissioners had a discussion regarding making a decision on the future of our E-911 System in Aroostook County. It was decided, by consensus, that a decision will be deferred until the February 28, 2009 County Commissioners' Meeting in Houlton.

E) Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust (MMEHT) Claims Experience Report.

The County Administrator reviewed the claims experience report with the County Commissioners, indicating that the loss ratio is at 106%.

F) Board of Corrections Funding.

The County Administrator reported that the Board of Corrections has recommended 90% funding of the County's request from the State General Fund Budget (\$1.5 m) to provide gap funding for the Aroostook County Jail. This amount translates to \$96,578.00.

Although this does not represent all that we asked for, the County owes a debt of gratitude to Sheriff Scott Story of Waldo County for championing our cause and recommending funding at the 90% level, as opposed to the 50% funding level that was recommended by the Corrections Working Group.

G) Maine County Commissioners' Association (MCCA) Meeting.

Commissioner Underwood and the County Administrator briefed the County Commissioners on the Risk Pool Annual Meeting in Hallowell. Of particular significance to Aroostook County, the Risk Pool decided to offer limited insurance coverage for counties utilizing K-9's (police dogs).

Highlights of the MCCA meeting were also discussed with the County Commissioners.

H) Jail Heating Issue (East Wing).

Bryan Jandreau, Facilities Manager, reported that the temperature control unit has not been working properly in the East Wing of the jail for many years. Accolades go out to Dan Bouchard, Houlton Building Superintendent, who was instrumental in determining that the problem was attributable to a "bare wire" that regulated the control apparatus. This problem has been repaired by our heating contractor and we are happy to report that the unit is now functioning properly.

I) Other items of interest.

1) LD 33, "An Act to Change the Name of Township 16, Range 4, WELS, to Madawaska Lake".

The County Administrator indicated that he received a phone message from Roger Roy and also had a face-to-face discussion with Representative Ken Theriault requesting that the County Commissioners send a letter of support to the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government regarding the proposed name change of T16, R4 to Madawaska Lake. The County Administrator indicated that he supports this request.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Underwood to authorize the County Administrator to send a letter to the Joint Standing Committee on State and Local Government supporting the name change of T16, R4 to Madawaska Lake.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

2) Hammond Road Closure.

The County Administrator reviewed a complaint from Attorney Nelson regarding a road issue in Hammond. The County Administrator indicated that he would have this issue researched and report back to the County Commissioners at the next meeting.

ART. 7. Other Business.

1. Silver Ridge Cemetery Mowing Contract.

The County Commissioners discussed the issue of the Silver Ridge Cemetery Mowing Contract amongst themselves. They were all in agreement that this issue should be put out to bid at the appropriate time. Commissioner Underwood indicated that he had called Mr. Sides and apologized to him for the County not getting back to him in a more timely fashion. He also indicated that he had spoken to Durward Humphrey, Chair, Silver Ridge Cemetery Committee, and Mr. Humphrey indicated that he had no objections if the County needed to follow statutory requirements pertaining to the bid process.

MOTION:

Motion by Norman L. Fournier and seconded by Paul J. Underwood to send a letter to Mr. Sides to inform him that the County will be going out to bid for the Silver Ridge Cemetery Mowing Contract at the appropriate time and we encourage Mr. Sides to bid on the contract, if he is so inclined.

VOTE:

Motion voted on and passed.

Commissioner Fournier indicated that he was invited to a Limestone Rotary Club Meeting on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., but will be unable to attend. Commissioner Adams and Sheriff Madore indicated that they would be attending this meeting.

Commissioner Underwood mentioned that he was concerned with rampant inflation and how it may affect our future County budgets. He believes this situation was not addressed in the LD1 Tax Cap Legislation and that the County may have to engage the Maine County Commissioners' Association (MCCA) to correct an oversight in the law.

ART. 8. Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Issue.

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

MOTION:

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

"I move that we go into executive session pursuant to Title 1, MRSA, §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.

It was agreed, by consensus, that the February 4, 2009 County Commissioners' Meeting will be moved to February 11, 2009.

ART 9. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

ATTEST: A True Copy
of Commissioners' Meeting

Douglas F. Beaulieu
County Administrator

AROOSTOOK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DATE: January 21, 2009