

PISCATAQUIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

April 4, 2017
DOVER-FOXCROFT
Minutes
8:30 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the minutes of their March 21, 2017 meeting. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
2. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the County expenditures in the amount of \$27,141.12. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
3. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the Jail expenditures in the amount of \$9,576.46. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
4. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the Unorganized Territory expenditures in the amount of \$142,803.91. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
5. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the Payroll Warrant for March 23, 2017 in the amount of \$112,490.85. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
6. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the Employee Benefit Warrant in the amount of \$59,641.35. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
7. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the CDBG Warrant in the amount of \$4,045.00. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
8. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the lease purchase proposal from Gorham Leasing Group for the replacement of the County's computer system. M: James White S: James Annis V: 3-0



Gorham Savings Leasing Group
63 Marginal Way
Portland, Maine 04101

March 23, 2017

Piscataquis County
52 Court Street
Dover-Foxcroft, ME 04426
Attn: Thomas Capraro

MUNICIPAL LEASE PURCHASE PROPOSAL

Lessee: County of Piscataquis

Equipment: New ThinkPads, Towers and software

Cost of equipment: \$43,536.00

Amount financed: \$43,536.00

Lease term: 5 years

Interest rate: 3.77% fixed

No. of payments: 5

Payment schedule: \$9,376.81 (see amortization schedule)

Commencement date: This lease shall commence on or about April 1, 2017.

First payment due: The first payment of principal shall be due and payable April 15, 2017.

Purchase option: One dollar (\$1.00) at end of lease term.

Fee(s): None

Prepayment: There are no prepayment penalties.

Insurance: Prior to delivery of the leased assets, Lessee at its sole cost and expense, will provide all-inclusive physical damage and liability insurance in the joint names of the Lessor and Lessee, in amounts satisfactory to Lessor.

Title (if required): Lessee listed as owner and Lessor listed as lien holder.

Non-appropriation: The lease will contain a non-appropriation clause.

Confirmation: The anticipated total borrowing for 2017 will not exceed Ten Million dollars (\$10,000,000.), making this lease "Bank Qualified".

Type of lease: This lease shall be considered a **Municipal Lease/Purchase** by all parties. Lessee is a state or a political subdivision thereof, within the meaning of Section 103 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Advances or deposits: If Lessor advances any deposits or pays any invoices prior to Delivery and Acceptance of the equipment by lessee, interest will accrue at the above rate and be due at closing.

Legal opinion: Leases greater than \$100,000 require an **Opinion of Counsel**. The opinion must include a statement that the lease represents a valid and binding obligation of the lessee and further that the lease is a "qualified tax exempt obligation" for the purposes of Section 265 (b) (3) (B) (ii) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

Financial information: Lessee will provide Gorham Savings Leasing Group LLC with most recent Audited Financial Statements, current year budget, Annual Report, a copy of the meeting minutes or council order approving the transaction and any other supporting data requested during the term of the lease.

Lessor's proposal: This lease proposal is subject to final credit review and not binding until accepted by lessor. Lessor may withdraw the proposal at any time if any adverse information relating to the lessee's affairs is discovered prior to any lease closing. **Lease rates are subject to change according to the FHLBB daily advance rates.**

Expiration of proposal: This lease proposal shall expire if not accepted by a qualified official by 5:00 p.m. on April 30, 2017.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this lease proposal to you. If you are in agreement with the terms of the proposal, please sign and return it with the proper credit information. If you have any questions, please contact me at 222-1498.

Sincerely,



Frederick G. Proctor, Vice President
Gorham Leasing Group

AWARD ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

This proposal is accepted and this financing is awarded to Gorham Leasing Group



Name and Title

Date: April 4, 2017

9. Piscataquis County Commissioners nominated Everett Worcester of Orneville Twp. to serve another 4-year term as the Piscataquis County member of the Land Use Planning Commission. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
10. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved a revised job description for the District Attorney's full-time domestic violence investigator. This position has gone from a part time job to a full time. M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0
11. Piscataquis County Commissioners accepted the recommendation from the District Attorney's Office that Scott Arno be hired as full-time domestic violence investigator. Chris Almy, Esq. was not able to attend the meeting, but Corina Tibbetts, Administrative Assistant for the DA's department represented Attorney Almy. Corina submitted a letter to the Commissioners on Almy's behalf:

STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
PROSECUTORIAL DISTRICT V

R. CHRISTOPHER ALMY
District Attorney

ALICE E. CLIFFORD
Deputy District Attorney



PISCATAQUIS COUNTY
(207) 564-2181
Fax (207) 564-6503

PENOBSCOT COUNTY
(207) 942-8552
Fax (207) 945-4748

PISCATAQUIS COUNTY COURT HOUSE
159 East Main Street • Suite 11 • Dover-Foxcroft, Maine 04426

April 4, 2017

Piscataquis County Commissioners
163 East Main Street
Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426

RE: Domestic Violence Investigator

Dear Commissioners,


I am pleased to present Scott Arno as my nomination for the full-time position of Domestic Violence Investigator for the Office of the District Attorney. Scott has over 32 years of law enforcement experience and has been the part-time Domestic Violence Investigator within our office for the past 11 years.

After submitting his application, Scott was interviewed for this position by a three-person panel on March 23, 2017.

Scott's inter-agency relationships as well as his relationship with other community agencies will make him a valuable asset to our office. His knowledge of domestic violence issues and the dynamics of these complicated relationships will assist our office in providing support to victims while conducting follow-up investigation on these complicated cases.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



R. Christopher Almy, Esq.
District Attorney

RCA/cat

M: Wayne Erkkinen S: James Annis V: 3:0

12. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed recommendations developed by the County Law Enforcement Task Force.

Piscataquis County Law Enforcement Task Force

Final report and recommendations

Task Force mission: To establish a county-wide task force (with equal representation of geography, citizens, town managers and law enforcement) to address law enforcement needs and processes, specifically addressing patrol, staff recruitment, coverage, mutual aid, communication, use of vehicles, contracts with towns.

Goal: To study the issues and to discuss ways to strengthen how we offer police protection to the communities in Piscataquis County, in the most efficient and affordable manner. Task Force recommendations will be forwarded to the Piscataquis County Commissioners.

Membership:

Chief Deputy Robert Young, Piscataquis County Sheriff's Department
Tom Capraro, Director, Piscataquis County Emergency Management Agency
Corina Tibbetts, Administrative Assistant, District Attorney's Office
Jesse Crandall, Greenville Town Manager
Chief Jeff Pomerleau, Greenville Police Department
Tom Goulette, Guilford Town Manager
Jack Clukey, Dover-Foxcroft Town Manager
Chief Dennis Dyer, Dover-Foxcroft Police Department
Damien Pickel, Milo Town Manager/Police Chief
Kathy White, Brownville Town Manager
Chief Nicholas Clukey, Brownville Police Department
Jane Conroy, Dover-Foxcroft, citizen representative
Scott Snell, Big Moose Twp., citizen representative

Terry Knowles, Brownville, facilitator; Tom Lizotte, County Manager, recorder

The Task Force met on Jan. 26, Feb. 16 and March 16, for two hours at each session at the County Commissioners' office in Dover-Foxcroft, and the group arrived at conclusions by consensus. A summary of major issues follows:

--There is a shortage of manpower to adequately staff county and local municipal police departments with fully-trained law enforcement officers. Qualified applicants for open positions are scarce.

This problem is not unique to Piscataquis County, and is occurring throughout Maine and nationally as fewer people choose law enforcement careers. Contributing factors to the staffing shortage include stagnant pay, poor work-life balance, high job risk, the changing nature of police work and negative public perceptions about police use of force.

In Piscataquis County, the Sheriff's patrol division will soon be fully staffed with six officers (Lt. Kane, Sgt. Gould, and Deputies Dow, Wilson, Ober and Duby), and the Greenville PD has a full complement of 2.5 officers. Yet the Dover-Foxcroft PD has one vacancy on a 5-man department, the Milo PD has two vacancies on a 3-man department, and the Brownville PD's 2-man department has been de-funded. The generally accepted ratio of one police officer per 1,000 population is not being met, with 13.5 full-time

local officers now responsible for a county population of 16,931. Although the county's population is declining, and the crime rate is dropping, the low population density and 3,967 square miles in Piscataquis present a challenge to mounting an effective rural patrol.

Task Force findings: The rural law enforcement system is breaking down, and local elected officials need to acknowledge this truth and develop a coordinated response to the emerging crisis. Aspects of this response may include increased pay/benefits to attract qualified officers, a stronger support system (including Employee Assistance Programs) to help retain officers, more family-friendly work schedules, and a law enforcement recruiting strategy that promotes our area's small-town quality of life and sense of community. Recruitment of law enforcement officers should start with a "grow your own" initiative by reaching out to local high school students and promoting police work as a rewarding future career.

Piscataquis County Commissioners can play a convening role in this process by beginning discussions with local Boards of Selectmen on a response to the police manpower issue.

--Local law enforcement agencies have typically covered gaps in police manpower through the use of part-time, reserve officers. These officers have completed the basic course at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy and received their green pin, but are restricted to no more than 1,040 hours of police work per year. It is common for reserve officers to work part-time for multiple local departments.

The pool of reserve officers is shrinking. In addition, there is a clear trend of increasing required training for police officers, and rural police chiefs worry that the MCJA may phase out the use of part-time officers entirely. While the goal of increased professionalism in police officers is laudable, the loss of reserve officers could turn the existing police manpower shortage into a full-blown crisis. The feeling among Task Force members is that a part-time officer who is available to provide routine patrol coverage is an improvement over the full-trained, full-time officer who exists only in theory.

Task Force findings: Rural departments need to maintain the flexibility to employ part-time, reserve police officers. The County's local Legislative Delegation should be asked to advocate for the preservation of the reserve officer system and to oppose any attempt by the MCJA to phase out the use of reserve officers.

--State government, especially the State Police, need to be part of the solution for rural police coverage. State Police officers do reside in Piscataquis County, but there is a perception that the State Police have retreated from their traditional role in rural patrol and are concentrating efforts on the I-95 corridor and specialized police units.

On the flip side of that perception problem, State Police have stated that they do not always feel welcomed in Piscataquis County by local police agencies.

Is there a communications breakdown between State Police, and to a lesser extent the Warden Service, and Piscataquis County police departments? How can these departments work together to effectively serve Piscataquis residents?

Task Force finding: County Commissioners should reach out to the county's Legislative Delegation for help in examining these questions. A joint meeting of representatives from the State Police, Sheriff's Department, and local police departments should be arranged to open up lines of communication, clarify expectations for rural police patrol, and identify specific areas of collaboration.

--Improving mutual aid relationships between municipal departments, between the Sheriff's Department and municipal departments, and between the State Police and Piscataquis agencies is seen as one way to get maximum value out of the police manpower that does exist. State statute encourages mutual aid, but unlike fire departments, local police departments do not have formal, written mutual aid agreements. Mutual aid is still provided between departments in emergency situations, but is not as consistent as it should be.

The centralized, countywide dispatch service at the Piscataquis County Sheriff's Department does provide a communications framework in which mutual aid police calls can be coordinated. Yet for mutual aid to be fully effective, County Commissioners and local Boards of Selectmen need to get beyond provincial concerns over local control and financing, and put their full political support behind this concept.

Task Force finding: The use of formal mutual aid pacts between police departments could provide the flexibility to stretch existing police manpower to where it can be used most effectively, putting officers in the right place at the right time. County Commissioners should support this outcome, and a good starting point would be a meeting between county officials and Selectmen from the towns that still have local police – Dover-Foxcroft, Milo, Greenville, Guilford – to develop mutual aid protocols that all parties can support.

--The de-funding, and potential demise, of the Brownville Police Department provides a test case for how to manage changes in Piscataquis County law enforcement. Voters at the Brownville annual town meeting on March 20 agreed to de-fund their local police force and to rely on the Piscataquis Sheriff's Department for law enforcement services.

Whether Brownville decides to eventually contract with the Sheriff's Department for dedicated coverage, over and above the level of service any town without its own police force normally receives, remains to be seen. This development does provide the Sheriff's Department with the opportunity to demonstrate its capabilities by taking over coverage of the county's sixth-largest town.

Task Force finding: The Brownville vote occurred after the final meeting of the Task Force, but members will watch the transition with interest.

Submitted by Tom Lizotte, County Manager

13. Department Heads:

- a. County Manager, Thomas Lizotte –
 - Consultant Annalee Rosenblatt provided employee training on the County's new Personnel Policy Manual on March 27, when copies of the manual were distributed to Department Heads and all employees.
 - During her visit, Rosenblatt and the County Manager had a separate meeting with union representatives in an attempt to resolve a disagreement over the conversion of earned time benefits to vacation/sick leave for employees of the Sheriff's Department who are promoted into the administrative bargaining unit. A tentative resolution was reached, and settlement language is being developed that will be presented to the Commissioners for their approval at a later date.
 - Paving bids for this summer's project in Elliottsville are scheduled to be opened at the next Commissioners' meeting on April 18, when paving consultant Roger Picard will be present. Commissioner White requested that road agent Carl Henderson also be invited to give a report on road maintenance projects anticipated for the spring/summer seasons.
 - The Sheriff's Department maintenance employee is constructing an evidence storage cage in the basement of the Peaks House, in order to remove evidence from the wet basement in the Sheriff's Office building.
 - Fred Michaud, Maine DOT, informed the County that the state is moving forward with plans to construct an information kiosk in the Millinocket Lake region, which will be partially funded through the County's whitewater rafting reserve fund. Maine DOT may also request assistance from the County in applying for state submerged lands funding to construct a boat landing ramp in that area.
 - Chris Winstead, PCEDC Executive Director, and the County Manager attended a March 29 meeting in Dover-Foxcroft at which time Eastern Maine Community College representatives solicited local input for improving program offerings at the Penquis Higher Education Center.
 - Winstead and the County Manager met March 22-23 with regional Internet service providers as part of the County's broadband connectivity initiative. PCEDC is also getting good returns from a survey of local businesses and residents designed to understand their Internet service needs.
- b. County Treasurer, Johanna Greenfield – did not attend
- c. Jail Administrator Maria Landry – no comment
- d. Sheriff, John Goggin – did not attend
- e. EMA Director, Tom Capraro –
 - has training every weekend for the month of April
 - Because of the snow depth – the density has given the potential of flooding for Piscataquis County
- f. Probate Register Donna Peterson –did not attend
- g. Deeds Register, Linda Smith – did not attend
- h. DA Administrative, Chris Almy – did not attend
- i. Head of Maintenance Joshua York – did not attend

OTHER BUSINESS:

Meeting to adjourned: 9:45 am
M: James Annis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0