

PISCATAQUIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

June 1, 2021

DOVER-FOXCROFT

Minutes

8:30 am PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Piscataquis County Commissioner Chairman James White called the meeting into session at 8:30 am in the Chambers in person and via Zoom. Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen and Commissioner Andrew Torbett were also in attendance.

1. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the minutes of the May 18, 2021 meeting.
M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
2. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the County expenditures in the amount of \$7,121.14. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
3. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the Jail expenditures in the amount of \$9,807.19. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
4. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the Unorganized Territory expenditures in the amount of \$85,860.81. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
5. Piscataquis County Commissioners approved the Payroll Warrant for May 13, 2021 in the amount of \$103,867.65. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
6. Piscataquis County Commissioners approved hiring a part-time janitor for the jail. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
7. Piscataquis County Commissioners approved promoting a part-time corrections officer to full-time. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
8. Piscataquis County Commissioners approved a Versant Power Pole permit for Boyd Lake Road in Orneville TWP. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
9. Piscataquis County Commissioners heard from John Shea, Executive Director of the Piscataquis County Economic Development Committee and Brian Lippold of Casco Bay Associates regarding broadband issues. PCEDC Executive Director John Shea said they submitted a \$30,000 grant last week to Connect ME which if they get it, they will need to identify matching funds. John Shea said he talked to Puritan and County Manager Michael Williams regarding the gap analysis for broadband in the county. Broadband was the number one issue at the budget meeting last September. We put this in front of you as important and the towns go through the process and then the data produced is used to support the infrastructure. There is \$300 million available under the competitive grant program across the State. Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen said we need to do the study and put up some money and then the towns put in their share. County Manager Michael Williams said he used a proportional rate of .0061%. Commissioner Andrew Torbett said that was a starting point. Commissioner Chairman James White stated that was about as equal as can be. Brian Lippold said it is easier for towns with grants to write checks. Possibly the County comes up with 2/3 and the towns come up with 1/3. Some may give more or some may give less. John Shea said he can reach out to the Town Managers and get a sense pretty quickly. EMA Director Tom Capraro said it is definitely needed. Jack Clukey, Dover-Foxcroft Town Manager, stated he supports it 100%, and we all need to work together to get the funds needed. Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen made

the motion to use .0061% of the American Rescue Plan money for County Broadband study. Commissioner Chairman James White thanked both John Shea and Brian Lippold. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0

10. Department Heads:

- a. County Manager, Michael Williams
 - The Unorganized budget is about 99% utilized with about \$18,000 left for the remainder of bills that come in.
 - Next week, I will have a Department Head meeting to discuss the ARP \$ guidelines and will present a plan in the future.
 - Last Friday, an affidavit was dropped off to start a County Charter. I have talked to Augusta and we will have to provide the signature materials. 741 signatures will be needed.
- b. County Treasurer, Johanna Turner-did not attend
- c. Jail Administrator Maria Landry

We are short staffed. I would like to raise the hourly rate from \$14/\$14.50 to \$16/\$16.50 and I have some money left in the budget. Finance Director Kathy Walsh said she would work with me on it. Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen made a motion to raise the hourly rate to \$16/\$16.50 as of today. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0
- d. Sheriff, Robert Young-did not attend
- e. EMA Director, Tom Capraro
 - The first draft on the whole radio study project is in. We all met by Zoom and went over the relocation of dispatch. Normand Bouchard of Communication Design Consulting Group will be coming up the end of this week or next week. They made some good recommendations and we'll get out in the next few weeks.
 - We are getting internet put in at the garage. IT ordered a new router and phone and will be installing for us. Dispatch has the bunker to use or the trailer and now the trailer can be hooked up to internet right next door at the garage.
 - Last Thursday, the Air National Guard, had a very high-tech, great team to assist the State hazmat incident evaluation at the fairgrounds. The Chief of Police, Fire Department, and myself were able to witness the 22-member team. It was very impressive and eye opening.
- f. Probate Register Donna Peterson-did not attend
- g. Deeds Register, Linda Smith
 - Just finished twenty documents. We have been really busy. Things are really selling. Out of State is buying up lots of property.
- h. District Attorney, Marianne Lynch-did not attend. Office Manager Corina Rackliff attended.
 - We are busy. Things are coming back. More cases are coming in. Caseload is picking up. Jury trials are scheduled for July. Computer project is going full steam ahead. We go live in September. We haven't had jury trials since 2019 so our next regular jury trial is scheduled for July. Our usual months are March, July and November. Corina stated that the staff are wonderful and doing everything they can. Law Enforcement is great too. We are very fortunate to have the workers we do. It has been frustrating for people waiting to have trials. Commissioner Chairman James White said the State has not expanded the docket for court so violent offenders make bail and have a court appearance but no trial. A delay in justice is no justice and very discouraging.
- i. Head of Maintenance Joshua York-everything is good.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Recess at 9:12 am with meeting reconvening at 9:17 am.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion was made to enter Executive Session per MRSA 36, section 841, paragraph 2 A. to review Property Abatement procedures. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0

In: 9:17 am

Out: 10:05 am

No action taken. A decision will be made at the meeting on June 15, 2021.

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 am. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Andrew Torbett V: 3-0-0