

PISCATAQUIS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING

June 4, 2024

DOVER-FOXCROFT

Minutes

8:30 AM PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Piscataquis County Commissioner Chairman Andrew Torbett called the meeting into session at 8:30 AM in the Chambers. Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen and Commissioner Paul Davis were in attendance. The meeting was available online on Zoom.

1. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the minutes of the May 21, 2024 meeting. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0
2. Piscataquis County Commissioners added and signed the UT Budget Adjustment of \$170k from the undesignated fund balance per the Budget Committee Meeting. The Budget Committee met on May 30 and voted to take \$170,000 out of Undesignated Funds to increase the Budget for FY24 from \$2,205,199 to \$2,375,199 to be used for the plow contract increase and to cover storm damage from December 2023. If there are any leftover funds, they can return to the undesignated fund balance or go into the capital fund. Commissioner Paul Davis made the motion to approve the UT Budget Adjustment of \$170k per the Budget Committee vote with Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen seconding. It was unanimous. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0

Piscataquis County Commissioners added two Executive Sessions both per MRSA 1, section 405, paragraph 6 A., personnel matter.

3. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed for approval the County expenditures in the amount of \$234,981.65. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0
4. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed for approval the Jail expenditures in the amount of \$33,651.96. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0
5. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed for approval the Unorganized Territory expenditures in the amount of \$124,628.02. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0
6. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed for approval the Payroll Warrant for May 23, 2024 in the amount of \$135,147.69. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0
7. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed for approval the Payroll Warrant for May 23, 2024 in the amount of \$673.75. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0
8. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed for approval the Employee Benefit Warrant in the amount of \$103,939.31. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0
9. Piscataquis County Commissioners opened and reviewed the County fuel bids. A.E. Robinson #2 fuel oil bid was: fixed price \$2.6869 and capped price \$2.7869. DeadRiver #2 fuel oil bid was: fixed price \$2.8393. A.E. Robinson regular unleaded gasoline bid was: \$0.23 (cents over rack price) plus rack price \$2.3931 as of 06/03/2024. Commissioner Paul Davis said we award the bid for fuel and gasoline to A.E. Robinson with Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen seconding. It was unanimous. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0

10. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and approved the liquor license renewal for New England Whitewater Center, Inc. doing business as Penobscot Outdoor Center, located at 135 Base Camp Road, Millinocket and owned by Matthew Polstein. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0

11. Piscataquis County Commissioners reviewed and signed the Agreement for the Storage of Salt/Sand between Piscataquis and Penobscot Counties for 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0

12. Piscataquis County Commissioners approved the Probate Office's request to transfer \$850.00 from account 130-01-03-160 (Professional Fees) to account 130-01-04-070 (Books & Periodicals) for the 2023 Statutes. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0

13. Department Heads:
 - a. County Manager, Michael Williams
 - We have been meeting with FEMA on the roads in the UT from the December 2023 storm and we have a couple more meetings coming up. On May 24th, we had a site visit with Road Commissioner Carl Henderson going to Frenchtown and myself to Blanchard. The reimbursement rate is 70 cents on the dollar.
 - Thursday, June 6, I am going to Frenchtown to meet with the DOT at the bridge over Interval Brook. The DOT did an inspection late last fall and it is starting to undermine. The DOT took a picture of the Inland Fisheries & Wildlife sign showing they were doing work there which probably undermined it and may have caused the erosion. I plan to talk to Senator Stacey Guerin and other Representatives to see if Inland Fisheries & Wildlife will chip in on fixing the bridge.
 - Paul Bradeen in Milo would like the brush taken care of at the EMA Bunker site. Maintenance Head Josh York showed the Commissioners the pictures of the area and stated the last time it was mowed/bush hogged was in 2021. There is a lot of rock and ledge and is not really needed. You can't even really see it from the road unless you really look for it. It is an expense that is not really needed and there are lots of wildlife there making it a butterfly and bee haven. Mr. Paul Bradeen told Maintenance Head Josh York that he would just do it but Maintenance Head Josh York told him no as it would be a liability issue to which he replied, well you better find the money. Commissioner Paul Davis asked County Manager Micheal Williams to get an estimate on what the cost would be and maybe the inmates from Charleston Hill could help with it. County Manager Michael Williams said he would look into getting an estimate.
 - The Dispatch and HVAC projects are going well.
 - b. County Treasurer, Trisha White-did not attend.
 - c. Jail Administrator, Michelle Lacroix
 - Nothing new to report. The count is 12 County, 11 FEDS and 1 out of the County.
 - d. Sheriff, Robert Young-did not attend (excused)
 - Chief Deputy Todd Lyford said they do not have much new to report, still down one and sending one to the academy.
 - e. EMA Director, Jaeme Duggan
 - We are busy with FEMA for the December storms. Homeland Security grant was submitted. The next step would be to hire a project manager to get things rolling.
 - f. Probate Register, Donna Peterson-did not attend
 - g. Deeds Register, Gail Clark-did not attend (excused)

- h. District Attorney Office, Corina Rackliff
 - We are doing okay.
 - We did have a slight issue with the sprinkler system people. They shut down the power and we lost everything. Called Maintenance Head Joshua York and thankfully he figured it out and fixed it for us. We are still working with IT to get back to where we were with things on our computers.
- i. Head of Maintenance, Joshua York
 - The County Manager Michael Williams stole all of my items to talk about, haha.

OTHER BUSINESS

George Johnson was in attendance with some other Atkinson Residents to complain about the dust issues on the John Doore Road since it has been torn apart. He said no one keeps the culverts cleaned out due to the beaver. You can clean out one night and they are filled back up the next day. This makes the water back up on my property. Maybe Inland Fisheries & Wildlife could help with this issue. The dust is extremely bad, almost unlivable. Mr. Williams has promised multiple times to take care of and it hasn't been taken care of yet. County Manager Michael Williams said he had Chuck O'Brien clean the culvert out. Plus, Road Commissioner Carl Henderson put a call in to get a cage put up to keep the wildlife out and I will follow up on. On the dust control, almost every time we have thought about doing something it has been raining. We do not get our big shipment of calcium until July. We can spread it by hand in the mean time if we can find some left over bags from last year. Mr. Johnson said those small bags won't touch it and the Dyer Road is just as bad. This is a serious health issue. The material used on the road creates dust when traveling over 5 mph. David Kinney said he wouldn't be able to live on the road with his asthma and asked about paving. County Manager Michael Williams will see if there are any big bags left from last year. We will have to make a plan to get by with it until it can be paved. It will take approximately 2600 ton of asphalt at \$120 a ton amounts to over \$300k and we only have \$250k in the budget for paving for the entire UT. It is better to do the road all at once rather than piece meal. We need a good fine crown grading before paving so the water drains off. The calcium chloride goes from July to September and we get 44 ton a year. Mr. Johnson asked about it being illegal in NH and the County Manager Michael Williams said he was unsure as it is used everywhere in Maine. We only have three contractors that will put calcium down with a boom truck or sander. I will try to get someone there this week. Hopefully, Chuck O'Brien can do it, David Kinney said. Mr. Johnson said he may close up the house and get a rental. The bill will be coming here. I am 86 and I can not keep suffering. I will see what happens in the next two weeks. Another gentleman asked if can not get the calcium, can you have the road watered down? We can not even open our windows. County Manager Michael Williams said he will check with the fire department. Mrs. Johnson said we have a lovely porch and can not even sit on it. It is a gray dust like cement dust. We are not all here just complaining, it is a serious issue. Commissioner Chair Andrew Torbett said it is very dusty but is probably one of the strongest roads in the UT. It is packed down with crushed slate (shale). County Manager Michael Williams will get the contractor to put some calcium down right away if he can find any leftover and maybe the fire department can wet it down. The pavement will have to wait until there are enough funds.

RECESS 9:08 AM

EXECUTIVE SESSION(S):

Piscataquis County Commissioners to enter executive session, per MRSA 1, section 405, paragraph 6 A., personnel matter. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0

Time in: 9:10 AM

Time Out: 9:23 AM

Action: No action taken, informational purposes only.

Public Session 9:24 AM

Piscataquis County Commissioners to enter executive session, per MRSA 1, section 405, paragraph 6 A., personnel matter. M: Wayne Erkkinen S: Paul Davis V: 3-0-0

Time in: 9:25 AM

Time Out: 10:15 AM

Public Session 10:17 AM

Action: Commissioner Chair Andrew Torbett stated we are out of Executive Session at 10:17 AM and at this point, I will entertain a motion to terminate Jaeme Duggan as Director of Piscataquis County Emergency Management Agency effective immediately. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0

Public Session 10:18 AM

Piscataquis County Commissioners to enter executive session, per MRSA 1, section 405, paragraph 6 A., personnel matter. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0

Time in: 10:19 AM

Time Out: 10:28 AM

Action: No action taken, informational purposes only.

Meeting adjourned at 10:29 AM. M: Paul Davis S: Wayne Erkkinen V: 3-0-0