

M.C.C.A.

Richard Dutremble, President
York County

Norm Fournier, Vice President
Aroostook County

George Jabar, Secretary-Treasurer
Kennebec County

Stephen Gorden, Past President
Cumberland County

William Blodgett, Emeritus
Lincoln County



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Lauren Haven
Administrator

MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Annual General Membership Meeting Minutes

Senator Inn and Spa, Western Ave, Augusta

10:00 am January 11th, 2024

1. Call to Order

MCCA Vice President Norm Fournier called the Annual General Membership meeting to order at approximately 10:05 am. He stated that in President Richard Dutremble's absence, he would be chairing the meeting.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Franklin – Admin. Amy Bernard, proxy for Comm. Bob Carlton
Hancock – Admin. Mike Crooker proxy for Comm. John Wombacher
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman
Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer proxy for Comm. William Blodgett
Oxford – Exec. Asst. Abby Shanor proxy for Comm. Steven Merrill
Penobscot – Comm. Peter Baldacci
Piscataquis – Comm. Paul Davis
Somerset – Comm. Robert Sezak
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
Washington – Admin. Renee Gray proxy for Comm. Chris Gardner
York – Comm. Richard Clark proxy for Comm. Richard Dutremble

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Garrett Mason
Hancock – Comm. John Wombacher
Lincoln - Comm. William Blodgett
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Sagadahoc – Comm. Charles Crosby
Washington – Comm. Chris Gardner
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kennebec – Comm. Patsy Crockett
Kennebec – Admin. Scott Ferguson
Knox – Comm. Ed Glass
Knox – Admin. Andy Hart
MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
MSA – Sheriff Ken Mason
Penobscot – Admin Scott Adkins
Piscataquis – Comm. Wayne Erkinin
Piscataquis – Admin. Mike Williams
Somerset – Admin. Tim Curtis
Verrill Dana – Lobbyist Jim Cohen
Verrill Dana – Associate Brody Haverly-Johndro

2. Approval of Membership of the 2024 Board of Directors

The group reviewed the list of submitted nominations to the Board.

Androscoggin	Commissioner Garrett Mason; proxy Interim Administrator Sheriff Eric Samson
Aroostook	Commissioner Norman Fournier; proxy Commissioner William Dobbins
Cumberland	Commissioner Stephen Gorden; proxy Commissioner James Cloutier
Franklin	Commissioner Bob Carlton; proxy HR Director/Deputy Admin. Tiffany Baker
Hancock	Commissioner John Wombacher; proxy Administrator Mike Crooker
Kennebec	Comm. George Jabar; proxy Comm. Patsy Crockett, Comm. Joe Pietroski, Admin. Scott Ferguson
Knox	Commissioner Sharyn Pohlman; proxy Administrator Andrew Hart
Lincoln	Commissioner William Blodgett; proxy Administrator Carrie Kipfer
Oxford	Commissioner Steven Merrill; proxy Interim Administrator Abby Shanor
Penobscot	Commissioner Peter Baldacci; proxy Commissioner Andre Cushing, Administrator Scott Adkins
Piscataquis	Commissioner Paul Davis; proxy Manager Mike Williams
Sagadahoc	Commissioner Charles Crosby; proxy Administrator Amber Jones
Somerset	Commissioner Robert Sezak; proxy Administrator Tim Curtis
Waldo	Commissioner Betty Johnson; proxy Commissioner Amy Fowler, Commissioner William Shorey
Washington	Commissioner Christopher Gardner; proxy Comm. Vinton Cassidy
York	Commissioner Richard Dutremble; proxy Commissioner Richard Clark

Comm. Gorden moved to approve the submitted list of 2024 Directors, seconded by Comm. Sezak, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Consent Agenda:

3.1. Approval of the Minutes

3.2. Officer Reports:

3.2.1. Finance

- Financial Reports - Lauren Haven
- Secretary-Treasurer – George Jabar

Comm. Fournier invited a motion to approve the consent agenda with the condition that the Legislative section needed to follow this item as Lobbyist Jim Cohen had a scheduling conflict. *Comm. Sezak made the motion*

to approve the consent agenda with the requested change. The motion was **seconded** by Comm. Gorden, and the motion **passed** with no opposition.

(NOTE: Agenda item 4.3 was addressed at this point in the meeting.)

4. Committee and Officer Reports:

4.1. Budget and Finance Committee – Norm Fournier, Chair

Approval of the 2024 Budget Presented at the December Meeting

Budget and Finance Committee Chair, Comm. Norm Fournier, explained the highlights of the 2024 Budget draft with the MCCA dues formula as recommended by the Budget and Finance Committee which included Comm. George Jabar, Comm. Richard Dutremble Comm., Steve Gorden, Comm. Betty Johnson, Admin. Scott Adkins, and himself. The draft was discussed at the December meeting and recommended to be passed with the following two changes. The Risk Pool Assessment was voted to be increased by four percent and to decrease the same amount from the fund transfer balance. The 2024 budget draft had been updated and the final draft was included in the agenda packet. Comm. Fournier invited questions about any of the budget line items. Hearing none, Comm. Fournier invited a motion to approve the 2024 Budget as presented.

Comm. Baldacci made the **motion** to approve the 2024 Budget, **seconded** by Comm. Jabar, and the motion **passed** without opposition.

4.2. NACo: Comm. Peter Baldacci

Updates on Federal legislation, national programs, and resources

Comm. Baldacci reported that he and Comm. Pohlman were scheduled to attend the NACo Legislative Conference in February. They will have an opportunity to talk with various legislators, NACo staff, and congressional members. . Comm. Pohlman mentioned there was a FEMA Management training and discussion about the latest ARPA update. Comm. Baldacci said one topic would be the White House and House Republican Leadership agreement to address the debt limit and cap spending. The deal passed last year was titled, *the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023*. It suspended the debt ceiling through January 1, 2025, effectively increasing the amount of money that the federal government could borrow to fund federal programs. Comm. Pohlman said Medicaid and mental health were also top issues. Some progress had been made as juveniles now maintain Medicaid services during incarceration. Comm. Gorden said we should invite someone from NACo to speak at the convention.

Comm. Fournier stated according to the MCCA bylaws, our NACo representatives should be renominated and reappointed to their positions. Comm. Sezak made the **motion** to renominate and approve the current NACo representatives, Comm. Peter Baldacci from Penobscot County and Comm.

Sharyn Pohlman from Knox County. The motion was **seconded** by Comm. Gorden, and the motion **passed** without opposition.

4.3. Legislative Policy Committee: Steve Gorden, Chair

4.3.1. Legislative Update, Jim Cohen

4.3.2. Next Steps

Mr. Cohen updated the meeting attendees on the status of the bills being followed by the Legislative Policy Committee.

Among others, he reported on the main topics, rural patrol and jail funding. Although LD 630, our bill on Rural Patrol, died in committee, the conversation has been started and the testimony rose awareness about the issue. Another related bill has been introduced, *“An Act to Maintain State Police Rural Patrol Services at 2020 Staffing Levels”*. This bill had been presented by Senator Timberlake of Androscoggin as an emergency bill. It was thought that 45 positions in the Maine State Police were open. Testimony on this bill could help our cause.

The second important topic, jail funding, was discussed. There had been no proposed increase in funding even though some counties reported shortfalls in their jail budgets. The group talked about working on a strategy to show the fixed costs to the Appropriations Committee to demonstrate the tight parameters that were in place and the lack of leeway in the budget. The group thanked Admin. Scott Ferguson for compiling the data submitted. Mr. Ferguson had presented the data exactly as requested, even resubmitting the data using other criteria when asked, and still the jails were not awarded more money although the prisons were given an additional 12 million dollars. We should focus on pointing out the unfunded mandate, medically assisted treatment (MAT) and the huge financial burden it imposed on jails.

4.4. Affiliate Organization Committee Reports - recognize those in attendance or submitted Information:

MSA, MACCAM, MARP, MRODA, Others

MSA - Sheriff Ken Mason spoke on behalf of the Association. He thanked commissioners for continuing to fight for jail funding and rural patrol. MAT was definitely a driver of the spiking jail costs. He thought many groups were fighting for the same money that was available and it was a good tactic to work on getting the Maine State Police’s money utilized to satisfy the Maine statute which had given them the responsibility of rural patrol. He announced that the 2024 MSA President was Sheriff Scott Nichols. Comm. Fournier reminded the group about the MSA Annual Conference occurring March 20th and 21st. Lauren had distributed the details about the even by email.

MACCAM – Admin. Andy Hart said the Association held a hybrid meeting on December 6th and was working on their bylaws. Another meeting had been planned for January 17th via Zoom conference. He said their group members also wanted to convey thanks to Admin. Scott Ferguson for his work on supplemental jail funding.

5. Recommendation and Election of 2024 Officers

Vice President Norm Fournier stated that during the December Board meeting, President Dutremble recommended nominating the same slate of MCCA officers as those members were willing and had time left in their positions. According to the MCCA bylaws, officers can hold their position on the Executive Committee for two years consecutively. Following a brief discussion, Comm. Gorden made the **motion to cease the nominations. The motion was **seconded** by Comm. Sezak, and the motion **passed** without opposition. Then Comm. Gorden made the **motion to renominate the same slate of officers for 2024, **seconded** by Comm. Baldacci, and the motion **passed** unanimously.****

6. Adjournment

Comm. Fournier asked if there were any other topics to be discussed. He mentioned the 27-page report developed by the Legislative Committee on Discontinued and Abandoned Roads of which Aroostook County Admin. Ryan Pelletier represented MCCA. The report was recently distributed to county representatives and posted on the MCCA website. The group also discussed the process of tax abatement and appeals. There was a recent case in Aroostook. Comm. Baldacci said there was a ruling about jurisdiction over a property tax abatement appeal. The outcome clarified the rule. If a taxpayer who owned nonresidential property valued at \$1 million or more sought abatement appeal, he/she has the option to appeal an assessment either to the county commissioners or to the State Board of Property Tax Review. Any taxpayer with property located in a municipality without a BAR (board of assessment review) can appeal their property tax assessment to the county commissioners, regardless of its equalized municipal valuation. Comm. Baldacci said this might affect the Bangor Mall.

Vice President Norm Fournier invited a **motion to adjourn at approximately 11:30 a.m. Comm. Baldacci made the **motion, seconded** by Comm. Pohlman, and the motion to adjourn was **approved**.** Attendees remained for the catered lunch that was provided.

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, George Jabar