

M.C.C.A.

Stephen Gorden, President
Cumberland County

Brian Hobart, Vice President
Sagadahoc County

Norm Fournier, Secretary-Treasurer
Aroostook County

Lauren Haven
Administrator



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MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes MCCA Zoom Conference, March 10th, 2021

I., II. Call to Order and Roll Call Attendance

MCCA President Steve Gorden called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 am. Attendees announced themselves.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Noel Madore
Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Hancock – Comm. William Clark
Kennebec – Admin. Bob Devlin proxy for Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman
Lincoln – Comm. William Blodgett
Oxford – Admin. Donald Durrah proxy for Comm. Steven Merrill
Penobscot – Comm. Peter Baldacci
Piscataquis – Comm. Wayne Erkkinen
Sagadahoc – Comm. Brian Hobart
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
Washington – Comm. Chris Gardner
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

OTHERS PRESENT:

Hancock – Admin. Scott Adkins
Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
Piscataquis – Comm. Mike Williams
Sagadahoc – Admin. Pam Hile
MARP – Kathleen Ayers

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Somerset – Comm. Newell Graf

STAFF PRESENT:

Risk Pool Manager – Malcolm Ulmer
Lobbyists – James Cohen and Clara McConnell from Verrill Dana
Administrator – Lauren Haven

III. Approval of the Agenda

President Steve Gorden asked if there any additions to the written agenda. There were none. Comm. Gorden stated the agenda was approved.

IV. Approval of the Minutes

Comm. Gardner moved to approve the minutes from the Board of Directors' meeting on January 13th. The motion was seconded by Comm. Blodgett and the motion passed with one revision.

V. Officer Reports

A. Finance

1. Lauren Haven presented the monthly Financial Reports. Lauren mentioned she was receiving payments for membership dues. Also, she had just received a notice we were invited to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program loan forgiveness through Camden National Bank. Comm. Hobart moved to approve the financial reports seconded by Comm. Gardner and the motion passed with no opposition.
2. Treasurer: Norm Fournier – Comments about the state of MCCA finances. There was not much to report only being one month into the year. He congratulated Lauren on bringing in over \$5,000 extra income from directory advertisements.

- B. NACo: Peter Baldacci - Updates on Federal legislation, national programs and resources
Comm. Baldacci announced the COVID relief monies were being dispersed to counties in two installments directly from the federal government. Comm. Gardner mentioned deferred maintenance will bend the tax curve down. Comm. Baldacci attended a webinar which featured some projects counties have funded with the money. NACo is still waiting for answers to some questions about the usage guidelines. For example, the bill does reference water and sewer lines and the expansion of broadband. NACo has asked that Treasury be more specific so those participating counties will not become financially responsible for nonqualified, unintended projects.

The funds may be used for COVID related expenses incurred, such as a set up for working from home, new sanitation protocols, etc.; additionally, it may also be used to assist qualified small businesses. More detailed information will be shared. The funds must be used for COVID related expenses incurred, such as set up for working from home, new sanitation protocols, etc., but can also be used to help businesses on the brink of failing. More detailed information will be shared. Comm. Baldacci said there was a significant opportunity for funding projects in 2021 and 2022. Awards were made through grants to get businesses through a couple of months during the pandemic. Some towns that didn't get money could be looked at as to what could assist them. We need to look for the gaps. Lee county Florida, for instance, with 134 million was purchasing public safety equipment, medical assistance, childcare, etc. Comm. Madore said some counties were without home rule, and if counties are getting money directly, grants for businesses or renters, Androscoggin County would like to share best practices, etc. Lauren will post the allocations for funding on the MCCA website and details about guidelines as the information becomes available.

- C. President: Comm. Steve Gorden – No report was given.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Standing Committees

1. Budget and Finance Committee – Norm Fournier, Chair
Comm. Fournier said there was nothing to report.
2. Legislative Policy Committee – Brian Hobart, Chair

Comm. Hobart stated the change in the MCCA organizational structure to eliminate the executive director and add a professional lobbyist was proving to be a good decision. Clearly more progress is being made on the legislative front and the Board of Directors is better informed about the bills than in the past. The relationship with MSA is also improving.

Jim Cohen thanked Comm. Hobart for the kind words and commenced the discussion about the explosion of approximately 350 new bills printed last week. Some of these bills were duplicative. The group talked about a few of the newly printed bills and updates on existing bills MCCA was following. Some of the discussion included:

MMA is strongly and vigorously opposed our bonding bill, LD 434. After some discussion, the group decided they might consider an amendment if an acceptable compromise led to the passing of the bill. Later in the meeting we came back to this bill. Comm. Blodgett moved to support getting approval from the budget committee rather than going back to the voters as long as it didn't require changing the membership of the committee. This would guard against overspending. Comm. Fournier seconded the motion and it passed.

The MSA/MCCA jail funding bill is being sponsored by Charlotte Warren who is committed to the bill. Legislative Advocate at Maine Municipal Association Kate Dufour agreed MMA would support the bill. Admin. Carrie Kipfer said it was good we put in some of the language they proposed. Jim mentioned one piece is still unresolved, the fees for housing state inmates which doesn't include annual debt service cost. He will seek input from Ms. Warren. The Board of Directors wants it included. Carrie suggested grandfathering debt service as of a certain date.

Regarding LD 521, the Jail Standards rule-making bill, Jim said there was broad discretion in statute and was not clear about costs. This bill is being sponsored by Joe Baldacci and has recently been printed. Gov. Mills Senior Policy Advisor/Legislative Affairs, Mary Anne Turowski asked why we thought the passing of the bill would increase costs. We need to be able to provide numbers and address any other questions identifying the additional costs for increased services that would be required. Comm. Gardner spoke with Ryan Anderson and the proposed rules were rejected by jail review committee. All but one said not a good idea, but they did it anyway. Possibly there was political pressure to make these changes. Many comments followed. The conclusion was the group agreed Jim should arrange a meeting and Pam and/or Betsy would forward the numbers to Lauren for the fiscal note. We would also keep MSA in the loop.

LD 400 An Act To Modify the Composition of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Criminal Justice Academy presented by Representative Bell would add a county commissioner to the criminal justice academy board of trustees. There is a similar bill in progress. Comm. Gorden said MSA was in favor of adding a commissioner.

3. Risk Pool Agency - Norm Fournier and Malcolm Ulmer– Comm. Fournier said there was nothing to report.
4. Affiliate Organization Committee Reports

MACCAM – Admin. Carrie Kipfer said the group would meet the next week. President Gorden would like feedback from their perspective on some of the bills.

MARP – Kathy Ayers reported the bill regarding substance issues passed and the bill from priority domestic partners is considered ONTP. Ms. Ayers and President Gorden testified on the bill to update probate fees. They were waiting for a work session. 719 which is a Resolve, To Establish the Commission To Create a Plan To Incorporate the Probate Courts into the Judicial Branch, had not come out yet, but was expected.

5. Other

B. Ad Hoc Committees -

1. Bylaws and Policies Committee – Norm Fournier, Chair

Comm. Fournier reported a meeting had been scheduled for the Committee which included himself, Comm. Gorden, Comm. Johnson, Comm. Gardner, Comm. Dutremble, Admin. Adkins, to discuss the proposed bylaw changes. The changes would be voted on at the April Board of Directors meeting which would be a general membership meeting for this purpose. This would fulfil the requirement of giving the group a twenty-day notice of the vote.

Comm. Fournier reviewed the highlights and invited questions. Comm. Baldacci thanked the group for a job well done. Comm. Gardner said there was a wide spectrum of views which was good for a healthy discussion. Comm. Fournier made a **motion** to bring the committee recommendations for changes to the existing by-laws to the April meeting for adoption. Comm. Johnson **seconded** the motion and it **passed** without opposition.

- C. MCCA Staff Reporting – Admin. Lauren Haven said there was nothing significant to report beyond normal operations. Copies of the 2021 Directory of Maine Counties had been mailed to each office.

VII. New Business

VIII. Adjournment BH PB/adjourned

MCCA President Steve Gorden invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 11:40 p.m. Comm. Baldacci made the **motion** seconded by Comm. Hobart, and the **motion** was **approved**.

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, Comm. Norman Fournier