

# M.C.C.A.

Amy Fowler, President  
Waldo County

Michael Cote, Vice President  
York County

William Blodgett, Secretary-Treasurer  
Lincoln County



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Charles Pray  
Executive Director

Lauren Haven  
Office Manager

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## MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

### Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes MCCA Offices in Augusta, February 12, 2020

#### I. Call to Order, Introductions, Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance

MCCA President Amy Fowler called the meeting to order following the MCCA Risk Pool meeting. Attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** *Androscoggin* – Larry Post proxy for Comm. Noel Madore; *Aroostook* – Comm. Norman Fournier; *Cumberland* – Comm. Steve Gorden; *Hancock* – Comm. William Clark; *Knox* – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman; *Lincoln* – Comm. William Blodgett; *Oxford* – Admin. Tom Winsor proxy for Comm. Steven Merrill; *Penobscot* – Comm. Peter Baldacci; *Piscataquis* – Comm. Wayne Erkinen; *Sagadahoc* – Comm. Brian Hobart; *Somerset* – Admin. Dawn DiBlasi proxy for Comm. Newell Graf; *Waldo* – Comm. Amy Fowler; *Washington* – Comm. Chris Gardner and *York* – Comm. Michael Cote.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** *Knox* – Admin. Andy Hart; *Lincoln* – Admin. Carrie Kipfer; *Sagadahoc* – Admin. Pamela Hile; *York* – Comm. Al Sicard; *MARP* – Kathleen Ayers; *MACCAM* - Admin. Bill Collins; *MECCA* – Owen Smith; and *MSA* – Sheriff Ken Mason and Sheriff Troy Morton. Special guest speakers included Dr. Hannah Carter – University of Maine Cooperative Extension; Dan Jenkins – District Representative for Congressman Jared Golden; and Waldo EMA Director Dale Rowley.

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** *Androscoggin* – Comm. Noel Madore; *Kennebec* – Comm. George Jabar; *Oxford* – Comm. Steven Merrill; *Somerset* – Comm. Newell Graf.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Executive Director Charles Pray, Risk Pool Manager Malcolm Ulmer and Office Manager Lauren Haven.

#### II. Approval of/Additions to the Agenda

President Amy Fowler announced the meeting agenda items would be taken out of order in consideration of guest contributors who could participate earlier in the meeting and then leave after their presentation. (Please note the minutes follow the agenda for the sake of readability.)

### III. Approval of January 8<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

Comm. Gardner moved to approve the minutes from the annual general membership meeting on January 8<sup>th</sup>.  
Comm. Cote seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### IV. County Government Day Proclamation

Office Manager Lauren Haven stated the date had been set as April 14<sup>th</sup> for the celebration of Maine County Government Day in the Hall of Flags at the State House. Counties were invited to participate by creating a booth displaying materials about county programs and services as well as information about unique features in their county. We will set up the room at noon to be ready for a 1:00 start. As we did last year, the Spirit of America ceremony to honor volunteerism would follow our event in the hope some county officials would stay to meet some award recipients. E.D. Charles Pray mentioned the Maine Cooperative Extension requested to participate in the event. Lauren said there was an opportunity for any county to sponsor refreshments from Cross Café and to please email her if a county was interested. Last year the amount spent was \$300, but the sponsoring county could choose what would be served and the amount they want to contribute.

### V. Consider By-law Change Regarding the Number of Votes per County

The group discussed various points of view regarding the number of votes per county factoring in the recently adopted membership dues formula. Reasonable arguments were presented for and against increasing the number of votes. There were also deliberations about when a general membership meeting could occur. Comm. Fournier reminded the attendees of the MCCA By-laws Article V. Section 1. “*Any meeting of the general membership shall be held upon the call of the President or any five Directors.*” This has been interpreted to mean a membership meeting can occur at the monthly Directors’ meeting if requested in advance. A vote to change the by-laws requires not only advanced notice of a membership meeting, but also the wording of the proposed amendment to be sent out at least 21 days prior to the membership meeting. In this case, the language regarding the number of votes per county had not yet been formalized. Comm. Gorden moved to table the topic until June. Comm. Baldacci seconded the motion which passed.

### VI. Reports

#### A. Executive Director and Legislative Report

Executive Director Charles Pray presented his report reminding the group about upcoming deadlines to submit jail budget documentation for the distribution of funds. He planned to follow LD 2094 regarding changes to the Maine Indian claims which could reclassify some Maine land rendering it untaxable.

LS 1967 was discussed with Comm. Gardner expressing concern about property tax ramifications. No official position was taken.

Register of Probate Kathleen Ayers updated attendees on several bills affecting probate including LD 1862, *Resolve, Authorizing the Probate and Trust Law Advisory Commission To Submit Trust Decanting Legislation*, LD 1863, *An Act To Amend the Maine Uniform Probate Code*, and 2034, *An Act Concerning Name Changes for Minors*. She will continue to follow these and other bills and alert MCCA about developments which need action from staff or commissioners.

Mr. Pray continued to lead the discussion with updates on the progress of bills the Legislative Policy Committee has been following as well as new developments. He announced a meeting had been arranged with Comm. Liberty on Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am on proposed changes to the draft of LD 973, *An Act to Stabilize County Corrections*. A new amendment would lift the tax cap once in four years. MSA

planned to send two or three sheriffs, MACCAM and MCCA were invited to send representatives to the meeting as well, although they would like to keep the group small.

Waldo County EMA Director Dale Rowley spoke about MEMA legislation being developed. There is no LD number as it is still in draft form and no placeholder has been submitted. The title will have, "Local Disaster Declaration" in the name. The intent is to make it easier to declare a disaster. Right now, only the governor has the authority to do so. This bill would cut through the red tape, improving efficiency and timeliness.

More items were included in Mr. Pray's report which will be filed with the original agenda packet materials for the meeting.

## **B. Financial Reports**

Office Manager Lauren Haven presented the January financial reports. She noted a few items. Two checks from 2018 made out to the Maine Farm Bureau had been voided as the checks were never cashed and the MFB never requested the checks be reissued. Lauren alerted staff to the issue repeatedly with no response. MCCA membership dues had been invoiced. She expected most of the payments would be received within the next month. She mentioned she was able to sell ad space in the 2020 Directory of Maine Counties. The total was \$4,650 which would be categorized as, Other Income 4400-00.

Ms. Haven reported the Independent Auditors' Report for 2017 had been received. Copies were passed out to the group. As discussed in prior meetings, the auditors requested revisions in the account numbering considering this to be a significant deficiency. The changes had been completed with their help, although previously they had resisted identifying exactly what changes they recommended to be made. The auditors also requested the association discontinue the practice of transferring funds from the checking account and the Money Market account to income lines in the budget. This is not an accepted practice and was causing misstatements in QuickBooks. The issue had been corrected in 2019. The transfers were not made to the income lines in the 2019 budget and the practice was phased out completely in the 2020 budget. Lauren will find out what needs to be done to correct the misstatements created by the practice. She invited questions. *As none were posed, Comm. Baldacci moved to accept the financial reports, seconded by Comm. Gorden and it passed unanimously.*

## **C. Association Reports**

*MECCA*: Communications Director Owen Smith reported the stakeholders group discussed whether there was interest in adopting Police protocols. The resounding answer was no, not at this time if ever. The second group was about the current fire protocols. There was a mixed reaction to these with most not wanting to continue the mandatory use of these. One of the big points was the time and cost of QA on both. There was discussing on reducing the total numbers for both. Also, there was some talk about maybe providing financial help with the QA cost. The report from the PUC went to the legislature with only remarks and facts. No conclusions. He also reported there were conflicts every month and a high turnover of directors. Mr. Smith testified to the reduction of rural patrol by approximately 50% as documented through call centers.

*MSA*: Sheriff Troy Morton spoke earlier in the meeting about the MSA conference and the invitation for MCCA to have their monthly meetings at the event. The decision had already been made by the Executive Committee to accept the invitation. Sheriff Morton recommended MCCA change the meeting day from Wednesday to Thursday to coincide with the Risk Pool training. *Comm. Gorden moved to hold the MCCA meetings on March 26<sup>th</sup>, seconded by Comm. Cote and it passed unanimously.*

Sheriff Morton led a discussion about call sharing agreements, outlining the history and the repercussions of the present shortage of officers available for rural patrol. Additional positions have been requested in recent years for better coverage, but the last time additional positions were filled, the jobs were diverted to cyber security instead of patrol. We need to be very clear about the present need. Admin. Dawn DiBlasi stated residents in some unorganized territories won't bother to call 911 because help is three hours away. Admin. Bill Collins said the Governor needs to recognize MCCA supports the initiative. E.D. Pray said the Appropriations Committee must be confronted with these facts immediately. They will decide, but we need to be part of the decision-making process. Sheriff Morton suggested we also follow up with Department of Public Safety Commissioner Michael Sauschuck and Maine State Police Colonel John Cote who spoke at a prior meeting. Comm. Fournier moved to send a letter to Appropriations, seconded by Comm. Cote. After more discussion, Comm. Fournier amended his motion to include language that MCCA supports adequate funding for Maine State Police to assist with rural patrol. We might add the cost shift negatively impacts county budgets and more importantly presents a prominent safety issue. Comm. Fowler and E.D. Pray could draft the letter and send it upon review. Comm. Gorden seconded the motion as amended. The motion passed with no opposition.

#### **D. Annual Convention Report**

Office Manager Lauren Haven reported the Convention Planning Committee met on January 24<sup>th</sup> and plan to meet again on February 21<sup>st</sup> to continue developing the event outline, activities, food and educational sessions for the 2020 convention taking place on September 25, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> at Sunday River. Minutes from the last meeting were included in the agenda packet.

#### **E. NACo Report**

Comm. Baldacci reported he plans to attend the National Association of Counties Legislative Conference taking place in Washington DC on February 29<sup>th</sup> through March 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **XI. Other Business**

Office Manager Lauren Haven reminded the group Dr. Hannah Carter from the U-Maine Cooperative Extension would be speaking at the conclusion of the meeting. President Amy Fowler suggested a ten-minute break.

Special guest Dan Jenkins, District Representative from Congressman Jared Golden's office presented information about the US Census early in the meeting. Field agents were being hired locally to visit residents. First a postcard would be sent to each house, and hopefully residents will complete an online form. If the form is not submitted, a letter will follow. As a last resort a field agent will visit with a paper form to be completed on site. Mr. Jenkins left business cards and asked participants to spread the word about the importance of the census.

#### **VII. Adjournment**

MCCA President Comm. Amy Fowler invited a motion to adjourn at approximately 1:05 p.m. Comm. Cote made the motion seconded by Comm. Fournier, and the motion was approved. The group adjourned to lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

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MCCA Office Manager, Lauren Haven

Attested:

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MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, Comm. William Blodgett