

# M.C.C.A.

Michael Cote, Vice President  
York County

William Blodgett, Secretary-Treasurer  
Lincoln County

Lauren Haven  
Office Manager



Maine County Commissioners Association  
4 Gabriel Drive, Suite 2  
Augusta, ME 04330  
207-623-4697  
[www.mainecounties.org](http://www.mainecounties.org)

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## MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

### Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

MCCA Zoom Conference, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

#### I. Introductions

MCCA Vice President/ Michael Cote called the meeting to order. Attendees announced themselves.

##### DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Noel Madore  
Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier  
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden  
Hancock – Comm. William Clark  
Kennebec – George Jabar  
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  
York – Comm. Michael Cote

##### OTHERS PRESENT:

Hancock - Comm. Antonio Blasi and Admin. Scott Adkins  
Kennebec – Admin. Bob Devlin  
Piscataquis – Admin. Mike Williams  
Sagadahoc – Admin. Pam Hile  
MACCAM – Admin. Bill Collins  
MARP – Kathleen Ayers

##### DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill  
Somerset – Comm. Newell Graf.

##### STAFF PRESENT:

Executive Director Charles Pray  
Risk Pool Manager Malcolm Ulmer  
Office Manager Lauren Haven.

## II. Executive Committee Officers

Comm. Norm Fournier on behalf of the Nominating Committee verified MCCA had received a formal letter of resignation from President Amy Fowler. Vice President Mike Cote agreed to perform the duties of the MCCA president until another president is elected by the membership. The group would likely wait until the gathering restrictions had been lifted so the meeting could take place in person rather than an online virtual meeting. The Nominating Committee would poll commissioners for anyone interested in being on the Executive Committee to serve out the term.

## III. MCCA Operations

Executive Director Charles Pray will complete his contract at the end of May. The group discussed different arrangements for MCCA staffing such as rehiring an executive director, hiring a part time executive director, hiring a lobbyist, and changing the office manager position. This subject will need to be addressed soon although it will be important to have the Executive Committee in place to help lead the Board of Directors.

Executive Director Charles Pray was asked to report on his research on hiring a lobbyist and who might be available; he was still working on this project. He recommended, as he had stated to the Executive Committee, MCCA not rehire an executive director, but rather hire a part-time lobbyist and change the office manager title to executive administrator with a commensurate salary increase. There are months in which a full-time lobbyist would have little to do.

Comm. Chris Gardner said need to develop a standard. What should the qualifications be for the position? What are we looking for? The group agreed at the June meeting Board members would need to be prepared to discuss the requirements. Comm. Cote said we need to maintain a united front and come to an agreement on four or five important issues on which the leadership can focus. Comm. Madore said the Androscoggin commissioners are in favor of hiring an executive director who would be able to do the lobbying, actively engage with the membership and develop long range planning strategies. Comm. Fournier said until a decision is made about the organizational structure, it would be hard to make any other decisions. Once the commissioners are polled about joining the executive committee, then we can talk about staffing and makeup of the organization. Admin. Pam Hile stated it would be more effective for thoughts to be sent beforehand and compiled. Otherwise, it could lead to more chaos instead of productivity. Admin. Bill Collins requested the group also look at the 2020 budget guidelines when considering the organizational structure.

## IV. Paycheck Protection Program

Executive Director Charles Pray explained the details of the Paycheck Protection Program. The application had been submitted with permission from the Executive Committee. If approved, the Board of Directors could decide whether to accept the loan or not. This 1% loan through Camden National Bank will be forgiven if the monies were used via the program specifications. This would make up for the expected loss of revenue from the convention and sponsorships from vendors. There were comments for and against taking the loan. After more discussion, Comm. Baldacci moved to ratify the Paycheck Protection loan seconded by Comm. Fournier. The motion passed via a roll call vote reflecting eleven counties for and three counties against accepting the loan.

## V. Stakeholders Advisory Group

On May 6<sup>th</sup>, Acting Chief Justice Hon. Andrew Mead requested an MCCA member participate in the Stakeholders Advisory Group which would provide information and assistance to the court as it continues to formulate plans to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on court operations. In response, MCCA staff requested volunteers and relayed the list to the Executive Committee for their recommendation. Time was short as the first Zoom meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 14th. Commissioner Cote selected

from the list submitted, Piscataquis County Commissioner Wayne E. Erkkinen, to represent MCCA, as well as Greg Zinser, York County Administrator chosen by MACCAM. Acting Chief Justice Mead has also allowed Executive Director Charles Pray to listen in on the call.

#### **VI. Archives Advisory Board Representative**

Kate McBrien, Deputy Secretary of State for Archives is assembling the Maine State Archives Advisory Board which serves to advise the Maine State Archivist of proposed records retention schedules and related policy issues. The MCCA has been asked to nominate a member for the board. This person could be a commissioner, county manager or other county employee. An email had been sent to the MCCA membership with a request to reply if interested in being nominated. Ms. McBrien expects to have the group meet at the end of the summer.

#### **VII. Consider Partnering with RALI Maine (Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative)**

Executive Director Charles Pray explained MCCA was contacted by a representative at RALI. This company works with local organizations to help fight opioid addiction. RALI already promotes the drug takeback initiative through law enforcement like the program through the sheriff's offices. There is no fee or other monetary investment required to be a partner. They would add MCCA to their list of partners in publications and would send helpful materials for MCCA to share with counties and the public. *Comm. Fournier moved to partner with RALI, seconded by Comm. Baldacci. The motion passed via a roll call vote reflecting thirteen counties in favor and no counties in opposition.*

#### **VIII. Governor's Four Stage Plan to Reopen Business**

The group referred to the handout included in the agenda packet concerning the plan to restart Maine's economy. The document clearly states the guidelines for target dates are flexible and will be subject to change as information on the pandemic progression of cases for Maine becomes available. The group discussed how counties were planning to open public access and employee safety precautions.

It was decided June Board of Directors' meeting will need to be online via Zoom as there is no way to social distance in the Farm Bureau conference room.

#### **IX. Number of Votes Per County**

This topic was expected to be debated during this meeting. Vice President Cote recommended the subject be revisited later in the year. *Comm. Gorden moved to postpone the discussion, seconded by Comm. Blodgett. The motion passed with no opposition.*

#### **X. Financial Reports**

Office Manager Lauren Haven presented the April financial reports. There was not much to note aside from the application for the Paycheck Protection Program. All income and expenses reported were attributed to normal office operations. Lauren was presently working with Bangor Payroll and MainePERS to wrap up the end-of-contract paperwork for Charles Pray. She invited questions. *As none were posed, Comm. Fournier moved to accept the financial reports, seconded by Comm. Baldacci and it passed unanimously.*

#### **XI. 2020 Convention of Maine Counties**

Office Manager Lauren Haven described the results of the opinion poll on the 2020 convention. Some answered the attendee numbers could be low due to the loss of revenue. A few thought we could try to make the best of the situation. Most survey participants thought it would not be in MCCA's best interest to continue

planning the convention. Lauren suggested if it was not wise to have the conference in person, the Convention Planning Committee could organize a virtual conference with online educational sessions, raffles and points for prizes to make the event fun. After some discussion, Comm. Fournier **moved** to cancel the 2020 convention, **seconded** by Comm. Baldacci. The motion **passed** via a roll call vote reflecting fourteen counties in favor and no counties in opposition. Lauren will find out if any payments can be refunded for our deposit on the venue and the band which was hired for entertainment.

## **XII. Other Business**

The group discussed COVID-19 testing in county jails and issues around treatment. Directors would talk to their EMA staff about procedures in the event of an outbreak and share information among counties.

Vice President Mike Cote noted this would be the last meeting Charles Pray would attend as MCCA's Executive Director. He and all the meeting attendees thanked him for his service to MCCA and member counties.

## **XII. Adjournment**

MCCA Vice President Comm. Cote invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 12:05 p.m. Comm. Baldacci made the **motion** seconded by Comm. Hobart, and the **motion** was **approved**. The group adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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MCCA Office Manager, Lauren Haven

Attested:

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MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, Comm. William Blodgett