

MCCA

Andre Cushing, President
Penobscot County

Robert Sezak, Vice President
Somerset County

Sawin Millett, Secretary-Treasurer
Oxford County

Richard Dutremble, Past President
York County



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Lauren Haven
Administrator

MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes December 10th, 2025 10:30 am Two Bridges Jail

1. Call to Order

President Andre Cushing called the meeting to order at approximately 10:35 am with the following directors and other participants in attendance:

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Jane Pentheny
Aroostook – Comm. William Dobbins
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Franklin – Comm. Bob Carlton
Hancock – Comm. Samuel DiBella
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Ed Glaser
Lincoln – Comm. David Levesque
Oxford – Comm. Sawin Millett
Penobscot – Comm. Andre Cushing
Piscataquis – Comm. Paul Davis
Sagadahoc – Admin. Amber Jones proxy for Comm. Todd McPhee
Somerset – Comm. Robert Sezak
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
Washington – Comm. David Burns
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Sagadahoc – Comm. Todd McPhee

OTHERS PRESENT:

Franklin – Comm. Fen Fowler, Admin. Amy Bernard
Kennebec – Comm. Joe Pietroski
Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
MMA –Director of Advocacy & Communications Kate Dufour
MSA – Sheriff Ken Mason
Oxford – Comm. Lisa Keim, Admin. Zane Loper
Penobscot – Comm. David Marshall
Piscataquis – Admin. Mike Williams
Sagadahoc – Admin. Amber Jones
Somerset – Admin. Tim Curtis
Two Bridges Regional Jail: Col. James Bailey
Verrill Dana – Lobbyists Jim Cohen and Sam Hamilton
Waldo – Comm. Kevin Kelley
Washington – Manage Renee Gray

2. Consent Agenda:

- 2.1. Approval of the Agenda
- 2.2. Approval of the Minutes
- 2.3. Financial Reports: Lauren Haven

Comm. Cushing requested a motion to move the consent agenda. *Comm. Dobbins made the motion which was seconded by Comm. Dutremble and the motion to approve the consent agenda passed with no changes.*

3. Committee Reports:

3.1. NACo Update: George Jabar and Robert Sezak

Comm. George Jabar reported on the 2025 National Association of Counties (NACo) Fall Board of Directors Meeting and County Storytellers Symposium which occurred in Wise County, Texas, from December 4-6, 2025. The meeting was hosted by NACo President and Wise County Judge J.D. Clark. County leaders gathered to conduct business, develop policy, and participate in storytelling sessions with authors and performers, focusing on strengthening county government and addressing local needs. A summary of the event was distributed to NACo board members. Both of MCCA's NACo representatives planned to attend the February Legislative conference in Washington, D.C. and hoped to meet with Maine's delegation schedules permitting

3.2. Events Committee - Lauren Haven

Admin. Lauren Haven reported that the Events Committee met in November to discuss plans for the 2026 conference. The group was actively looking for a host county for the event. Lauren reviewed the criteria for the venue such as having space for breakouts, seating for 150, hotel accommodations, and enough room for exhibitors, etc. She said the sooner that counties expressed an interest, the sooner the group would be able to get quotes and nail down the dates for the fall convention. Attendees talked about the possibility of organizing a joint convention with other associations. Lauren also mentioned that the date of April 10th had been secured for the Hall of Flags to celebrate County Day.

President Cushing reported on the prior day's tour of Two Bridges Jail, followed by a reception and dinner at Water's Edge Restaurant on the Sheepscot River in Edgecomb. The events were well attended, and participants found them to be a valuable opportunity for conversation and collaboration. He said the January Annual General Membership Meeting location would be announced soon. It would likely occur in Waldo County, and he was working with a couple of venues to work out the details. Future in-person meetings were planned for May, July, the convention in the fall, and December.

4. Legislative Policy Committee (LPC): Jean-Marie Caterina and Kevin Kelley, Co-Chairs

- 4.1. James Cohen, Verrill Dana
 - 4.1.1. Legislative Update
 - 4.1.2. Next Steps

Lobbyists Sam Hamilton and Jim Cohen walked the group through the carry-over bills and newly introduced bills that would be addressed in the next session. They talked about some of the topics which the LPC would be discussing in future meetings and bills they might take a position on. There was an LPC meeting scheduled for December 15th.

Kate Dufour from Maine Municipal Association (MMA) was invited to speak. She reported that MMA was following approximately fifty carry-over bills and another thirty to fifty new bills in the next coming

weeks. Kate explained some of the top issues for her group including the funding in the supplemental budget, housing legislation, county jail funding, increases in the general assistance reimbursement, and more. She mentioned the December edition of the Town and City Magazine would highlight the legislative preview. Sam said our association was well aligned with MMA on the topics she mentioned.

Sam further reported that his team was getting back in the swing of distributing materials such as new versions of the bill tracker, the rule making tracker and legislative updates prior to the LPC meetings. The group talked about the County Corrections Professional Standards Council LD 719 Report that was expected to be released soon. This report was being developed in response to the Resolve created by the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee and would give detailed information on jail audits, financial reporting and issues related to unfunded mandates. The group talked more about the jail audit issue, regionalizing services for municipalities, Medicaid coverage upon jail release, and more.

5. Officer Reports

5.1. President Report, Andre Cushing

5.1.1. Maine State Archives Advisory Board Appointment

President Cushing announced that the Maine State Archives Advisory Board required an appointment recommendation from the Maine County Commissioners Association. York County Admin. Greg Zinser had served as the representative on the board for years and had recently requested a replacement. Mr. Zinser recommended nominating Andrew M. O'Neill, York County's Records Management Specialist. After a brief discussion, Comm. Cushing *Comm. Sezak made the motion which was **seconded** by Comm. Burns and the motion to approve the appointment of Andrew O'Neill **passed** unanimously.*

5.1.2. MOU between the Geo-Lib and MCCA

Comm. Steve Gorden said the Geolibrary is a state function responsible for maintaining and managing data related to land and geographic information for the state. The committee has a representative on the Geolibrary, Walter Anderson, who was appointed several years ago. Mr. Anderson previously served as the State Geologist and has extensive knowledge of the Geolibrary and its operations.

Mr. Anderson has been working to establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the committee and the state in order to allow the committee to better utilize Geolibrary programs and resources. A draft MOU was provided; however, it was not acceptable and was returned for revision. A revised draft is expected to be presented at a future meeting, likely the next one.

If finalized, the MOU would allow the committee to take advantage of services such as the state's GIS flyover and other geographic data resources, which are currently paid for by counties. This update is provided for informational purposes only at this time.

5.1.3. Abandoned Roads Commission Appointment

President Cushing announced that Aroostook Admin. Ryan Pelletier had been serving as a member of the Abandoned Roads Commission representing MCCA. As he was moving into municipal government, he had asked the board to appoint a new representative. Andre said he had taken the liberty of reaching out to Tom Skolfield, who had formerly worked in the Department of Conservation. Mr. Skolfield was amenable to serving in that position. After a brief discussion, President Cushing entertained a motion to submit his name for the abandoned roads commission on

behalf of MCCA. Comm. Pentheny made the **motion** which was **seconded** by Comm. Gorden and the motion to approve the appointment of Tom Skolfield **passed** with no opposition.

5.1.4. Consideration of a Proclamation for Sheriffs

President Cushing said the proclamation for Sheriffs had been addressed at the last meeting. At that time, attendees requested more time for review. There had been a recommendation for a minor amendment related to fiscal authority, which was made. The group discussed the document included in the agenda packet. There was a question about Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainees, and it was determined that there was no policy that conflicts with this proposed proclamation. However, it was decided to revise the language to include the wording, “except all persons lawfully arrested and charged”. Comm. Sezak made the **motion** which was **seconded** by Comm. Pentheny and the motion to adopt the proclamation with the amended language **passed** **unanimously**.

5.2. Vice President, Robert Sezak

5.2.1 Presentation of Proposed Bylaw Changes

Vice President Robert Sezak reviewed the highlights of the proposed bylaw amendments. In addition to clarifying and updating the language, a key change includes the creation of a second vice president position. This position may be filled by an individual elected from among all county commissioners, rather than being limited to current board members.

To maintain the principle of one vote per county, the second vice president—if not serving as a board member—would be permitted to vote only on matters related to the Executive Committee. Commissioner Sezak thanked the members of the Bylaw Review Committee for their time and effort in developing the proposed amendments.

The amended bylaws will be presented for a vote at the General Membership Meeting in January.

5.3. Secretary/Treasurer, Sawin Millett

5.3.1 Presentation of the 2026 Budget Draft

Secretary/Treasurer Sawin Millett referred to the 2026 Budget Draft included in the meeting agenda packet. Comm. Millet said that the Budget and Finance Committee consisted of Comm. Bob Carlton from Franklin, Comm. Betty Johnson from Waldo, Comm. Joe Petroeski from Kennebec, Comm. Richard Dutremble from York, Robert Sezak from Somerset and Admin. Ryan Pelletier. He said the committee met on November 24th in person and on Zoom.

During their committee meeting, the group deliberated the 2026 projected amounts line by line with consideration given to the actuals from 2025 and goals for 2026. Notably, the committee recommended a two percent reduction in membership dues. One of the reasons for this adjustment was the increased travel expected for the five in-person MCCA meetings planned for 2026. One new line item was proposed to track event sponsorships for the in-person meetings. Comm. Gorden asked if there was a fund balance requirement to cover costs for a certain period of time. Admin. Lauren Haven said that according to MCCA’s Financial Policy, we are required to keep two months of expenses in the checking account. That was approximately \$40,000.

On the expense side of the draft budget, a couple of line items were added to better track convention expenses, Marketing/Promotion for signage, etc. and Sponsored Event Attendees which would track the incentive given to counties for helping to acquire event sponsors. The other new expense line item was for the President's travel. The board voted in 2025 to allow \$3,000 to be reimbursed for travel expenses for the president. Comm. Cushing petitioned the committee to add another \$2,500 to be able to attend other meetings such as the NACo meeting for state association presidents. Comm. Sezak recommended the funds be transferred to the NACo expense line. However, that would limit the choice to only NACo events and the president might find a more beneficial meeting to attend in the future. The group also discussed the future lobbying contract with Verrill.

Comm. Millett reminded the group that the 2026 budget draft would be presented for a vote at the Annual General Membership meeting in January. Secretary/Treasurer Millett made the **motion** to recommend the proposed 2026 for adoption at the General Membership meeting. The **motion** was **seconded** by Comm. Jabar and the motion **passed** with one opposed.

6. Nominating Committee, Steve Gorden

Comm. Steve Gorden reported that the members of the Nominating Committee which included Comm. David Marshall, Comm. Paul Davis, Admin. Amber Jones and himself had not yet met. However, the understanding was that the proposed slate of officers for 2026 was Comm. Cushing as President, Comm. Robert Sezak as 1st Vice President, Comm. Kevin Kelly as 2nd Vice President - if the bylaws were amended, Comm. Richard Dutremble as Secretary/Treasurer and himself as the Past President. These would be the members of the Executive Committee. The President opened the floor for discussion. Seeing no further nominations Comm. Cushing requested a motion to accept the slate of officers and present the list of candidates at the General Membership meeting for an official vote. Comm. Sezak made the **motion**, **seconded** by Comm. Millett and the motion **passed**.

7. Association Reports - MACCAM, MARP, MRODA, MSA, others

Register of Deeds Cherri Crockett reported on the updates for the Maine Registers of Deeds Association. Cherri submitted the update as a document to be added to the meeting minutes. Please see the attached.

8. Adjournment

President Cushing asked if there were any other comments for the good of the association. Seeing none, President Andre Cushing invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 12:45 p.m. Comm. Pietroski made the **motion**, **seconded** by Comm. Davis, and the motion to adjourn was **passed**.

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

MCCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING; December 10, 2025 @ 10:30 AM VIA ZOOM

MRODA Members in Attendance: Cherri L. Crockett, Oxford

Maine Registers of Deeds Association Outline of Updates

Thank you for your continued collaboration and for the opportunity to hear from the members of the MRODA.

Our current members represent all 16 counties and are listed below:

(*) Denotes registries with regularly participating Deputy Registers

Androscoggin, Tina Chouinard	Aroostook North, Amy Ouellette
Aroostook South, Melissa Richardson	Cumberland, Jessica Spaulding*
Franklin, Susan Black*	Hancock, Julie Curtis
Kennebec, Matthew Boucher	Knox, Madelene Cole
Lincoln, Rebecca Wotton*	Oxford, Cherri Crockett*
Penobscot, Susan Bulay*	Piscataquis, Gail Clark
Sagadahoc, Lynn Moore	Somerset, Tanya Belanger
Waldo, Stacy Grant	Washington, Tammy Gay
York, Nancy Hammond*	

Outline of Updates

- Flat Rate Fee Effective Date
- Maine Revenue Updates
- Community Outreach
- Daily Operations and Educational Value
- Meetings and Recognition
- Registry Tours and Best Practices
- MCCA Convention

Flat Rate Fee Effective Date

Thanks to the efforts of all MRODA members during the First Session of the 132nd Legislature the Flat Rate fee will be effective on January 1, 2026. All counties began extending notice to document submitters in June of the upcoming change. Computer systems have been programmed, websites are being updated, notices have been posted and each office is ready for the switch in the new year.

Maine Revenue Updates

The association has seen a significant decrease in issues with the operation of the Tax Portal over the last year. Switching from the State 90%/County 10% ratio to the 90.8/9.2 created a mathematical challenge for October and November reporting for some Registries but those issues have since been resolved. The implementation of the Mansion Tax on November 1st was seamless. A few Registries have faced challenges in collection of Controlling Interest and Transfer Tax rates, and Peter Lacy provided guidance on how the State preferred collection. Registries remain in close contact with Maine Revenue to ensure any issues with functionality of the portal or collection discrepancies are immediately addressed.

Community Outreach

- Deed Fraud; MRODA remains knowledgeable of all legislation and current events that have the potential to impact our landowners. Deed Fraud remains the most prevalent issue. Our York County Register of Deeds, Nancy Hammond, currently represents us on the Deed Fraud Commission with Senator Ingwersen and other industry leaders across the state. Our Education Committee created a Deed Fraud Awareness Brochure and distributed it between all offices. This can be printed at each Registry and made available to the public.
- Maine Municipal Association Conference; In October, Nancy Hammond of York County and Cherri Crockett of Oxford County prepared for and hosted a Land Records session. Tonya Lewis, Woodstock Town Manager and Bill Hall, Buxton Treasurer also served on this panel. The session was reported as a success by MMA and the MRODA looks forward to having this opportunity to expand on the topic in 2026.

Daily Operations and Educational Value

The MRODA continues to find value in the education provided for best practices from PRIA (Property Records Industry Association), of which we pay membership. Several Registries take advantage of the monthly free webinars offered, and that information is brought back to the MRODA meetings for discussion. Several Registers also offer the information to their teams for continued growth and education within each office.

Daily contact is made between Registries for assistance in types of filings being received, Sovereign Citizen dealings, challenges with collection of proper funds in the wake of transfer tax rate changes, preservation practice and other topics.

Meetings

MRODA meets monthly from January through June, and then picks back up for September, October and November. Our meetings are held in-person and ONLINE at one of our Registry offices, apart from our June, September and November meetings.

June is our team building and recognition outing (held in Greenville 2023, 2024 and 2025), while September is our annual meeting and corresponds with MCCA Convention, and November is our Freeport Meeting and Holiday Luncheon. Our group discusses recent topics, makes plans for future projects and training and we aim to host special guests during our June and November meetings, but also invite them throughout the year. Special guests in 2025 were Peter Lacy, Maine Revenue, and Christian Kotz, Maine Archives. We are looking forward to welcoming the team building expertise of Maine Development Foundation to an upcoming meeting in 2026, as well as a tour of the remodeled Cultural Building at Maine Archives.

2026 Meeting Locations:

January-	Augusta, Maine Archives
February-	To Be Announced
March-	Lincoln County Registry of Deeds
April-	Cumberland County Registry of Deeds
May-	Penobscot County Registry of Deeds
June-	Greenville Inn
September-	MCCA Convention (Location to be Announced)
October-	Augusta, MMA Convention
November-	Freeport, Harraseeket Inn

Recognition

The MRODA appreciates each member regardless of their experience or time dedicated to their office. Our members feel strongly that recognizing individual and team efforts is important for morale and helps build the leaders our counties expect us to be.

As a group, we appreciate strong communication and leadership skills and empower growth through team building activities.

During our September meeting we recognized Penobscot County Register, Susan Bulay, with our TEAM award for 2024-25, for her efforts as our Tenacious, Empowering, Adept Mentor. We also recognized Susan Black of Franklin County and Tina Chouinard of Androscoggin County for their 40 Years of Service to their counties and the MRODA. Each association member also received commendation for their active role in following legislation and supporting those Registers and Deputies who were active in drafting and speaking during sessions.

Members also receive sentiment cards, gift cards and tokens of appreciation throughout the year.

Registry Tours and Best Practices

Having such a strong membership we rely on the best practices and processes of one another to explore what will work best for each of our offices. Making the time to visit each county Registry has added such a benefit to members. Not only do we have the opportunity to witness firsthand the office structure and layout, but we are able to see the day-to-day procedure and business function. We all walk away with a new idea to implement with our teams or with our own process. Efficiencies have been discovered during these visits, along with deeper insight into why each office does operate a bit differently. Given the varied size of our counties, both by population and by area of land, it has been insightful to witness operations among all offices.

MCCA Convention

MRODA met during convention in Phippsburg. Attendance was low for the two-day event due to the increase in cost and non-Registry related agenda items.

We appreciate the time and effort that goes into planning the event, as this is a great opportunity for connection and to learn from one another and develop leadership. Leadership and connection really are all about the people, and with the opportunities we have to spend time with vendors, as well as county and state guests, we gain greater appreciation and insight to how we can improve personally, as well as how to help our county teams.

Invitation and Contact Information

As members of the Maine Registers of Deeds Association and proud officials of the 16 counties of the State of Maine, we thank you for this time.

We invite you to communicate with each of us at your convenience and welcome you to attend one of our monthly meetings.

To request time on our agenda at a regular monthly meeting, please contact Jessica or Cherri at the information listed below:

Jessica Spaulding

1.207.871.8399

spaulding@cumberlandcounty.org

Cherri Crockett

1. 207.743.6211 x1401

ccrockett@oxfordcounty.org