MCCA

Andre Cushing, President
Penobscot County

Robert Sezak, Vice President
Somerset County

Kevin Kelley, 2nd Vice President
Waldo County

David Levesque, Secretary-Treasurer
Lincoln County

Steve Gorden, Past President
Cumberland County

Lauren Haven
Administrator

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MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
York County Regional Training Center
July 8th, 2026 10:00 am via Zoom

1. Call to Order

President Andre Cushing called the meeting to order at approximately 10:15 am with the list of directors and other participants below in attendance. Comm. Richard Clark welcomed the group to York County and spoke for a few minutes about the new facility and other York County programs. Comm. Cushing also welcomed the new Aroostook County Administrator, Justin Tibbetts.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Jane Pentheny
Aroostook – Comm. William Dobbins
Cumberland – Comm. Tom Tyler
Franklin – Comm. Fen Fowler proxy for Comm. Bob Carlton
Hancock – Comm. Samuel DiBella
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Ed Glaser
Lincoln – Comm. David Levesque
Oxford – Comm. Lisa Keim
Penobscot – Comm. Andre Cushing
Piscataquis – Admin. Mike Williams proxy for Comm. Paul Davis
Sagadahoc – Comm. Todd McPhee
Somerset – Comm. Robert Sezak
Waldo – Comm. Kevin Kelley
Washington – Comm. David Burns
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble proxy for Comm. Chenette

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Piscataquis – Comm. Paul Davis
York - Comm. Justin Chenette

OTHERS PRESENT:

Aroostook – Admin. Justin Tibbetts
Hancock – Admin. Mike Crooker
Lincoln County – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
MSA – Sheriff Troy Morton and ED Mary-Anne Lamarre
Oxford – Comm. Sawin Millett
Penobscot – Comm. David Marshall and Admin. Blair Tinkham
Somerset – Comm. Don Skillings and Admin. Tim Curtis
Spirit of America – Bruce Flaherty
Unorganized Territories – Fiscal Admin Chip Jones
Verrill Dana – Lobbyists Jim Cohen and Sam Hamilton
York – Comm. Donna Ring and Comm. Richard Clark

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

Admin. Lauren Haven requested removal of the financial reports from the consent agenda to open a discussion about the recent audit and the Northeast Bank CD's.

Comm. Cushing requested a motion to move the agenda and minutes. *Comm. McPhee made the **motion** with the revision of adding Jessica Grey to the attendance of the June Board of Directors meeting. The **motion** was **seconded** by Comm. Levesque and the motion **passed**.*

Admin. Lauren Haven reported that RHR Smith & Company had completed the Association's audit for the two-year period ending December 31, 2025. She reported that the auditors issued an unmodified opinion, indicating that the Association's financial statements fairly present its financial position and that no material issues were identified during the audit. She further reported that the auditors encountered no significant difficulties during the audit, had no disagreements with management, determined that any minor audit adjustments were corrected and not material, and found the Association's accounting policies and financial statement disclosures to be appropriate.

Ms. Haven also reported that the accompanying management letter included recommendations to strengthen documentation of existing internal control procedures related to cash reconciliations, noting that such recommendations are common for organizations with limited staffing. She advised that copies of the audit report and management letter would be mailed to each member of the Board of Directors. No estimated mailing date was provided.

Regarding the Northeast Bank certificate of deposits, Lauren reported that the $50,000 CD was nearing maturity. Our representatives at Northeast Bank, Jason Simcock and Jonathan Marsh offered to combine the two CDs and apply one of the following rates: 3.7% for six months or 3.6% for twelve months. Ms. Haven requested the attendees discuss and vote on action to be taken. *Secretary/Treasurer David Levesque recommended the six-month CD at the 3.7% rate and made it a **motion** which was **seconded** by Comm. Kelley and the motion to approve the CD reinvestment **passed**.*

Comm. McPhee asked about the outstanding payments shown in the QuickBooks reports. Lauren explained that this anomaly occurred if a payment was issued and never completed. For example, one

of the payments to Sebasco Harbor was issued to them as a check. They ended up processing the transaction on our bank card, so the check was never cashed. It was months before the issue was realized. The auditors have been consulted on how to void the check without changing the QuickBooks reconciliations.

*President Cushing requested a motion to accept the financial reports. Comm. Levesque made the **motion** which was **seconded** by Comm. McPhee and the motion to approve the financial reports **passed** with no opposition.*

3. Committee Reports:

3.1. NACo Update: George Jabar and Robert Sezak

Comm. Sezak reported that the National Association of Counties (NACo) urged the federal government to extend the public comment deadline for the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) sweeping proposed rewrite of federal grant regulations (2 CFR Part 200 Uniform Guidance). Alongside other local government groups, they requested more time to evaluate rules affecting local compliance and funding timelines. NACo was requesting that members submit comments by the July 13th deadline and contact their representatives to do so as well.

NACo had reported that the U.S. Department of the Interior distributed $733 million in Fiscal Year 2026 PILT payments to over 1,900 local governments. NACo continues to urge Congress to enact permanent, mandatory full funding to replace the current discretionary appropriations process.

Among others, both MCCA NACo representatives and President Cushing planned to attend NACo's upcoming Annual Conference in New Orleans.

Admin. Tim Curtis reported that FEMA (trickling down to NEMA and then county EMA departments) has requested data on all stakeholders (Commissioners, Administrators and EMA staff) by this Friday, July 10th. The information submitted can include bio's and resumes as a form of legal verification. This appears to be one of the last hurdles prior to the long-awaited release of 2025 funds.

President Cushing reported that the NACo will be participating in the MCCA Annual Convention. He noted that NACo plans to host an exhibit booth, provide a speaker, and may also participate in a panel discussion.

3.2. Events Committee - Lauren Haven

Admin Lauren Haven reported that the Events Committee met on June 26th and was scheduled to meet again on July 24th. Registration for the Convention of Maine Counties occurring September 23rd to 25th was open for both vendors and conference attendees. She said she would be sending out periodic reminders to register. The program was still being developed for the educational sessions. Other details such as entertainment and meals were already set.

Comm. Cushing said Penobscot County will be happy to host the 2027 convention. He said he was talking to two venues as potential locations, Hotel Ursa at the University of Maine in Orono, and the Hollywood Hotel and Casino in downtown Bangor. Both venues offer the type of meeting space, meal catering and hotel accommodation that are ideal for our convention.

President Cushing walked the group through the overall conference schedule mentioning golf and county scholarships for those who help MCCA secure sponsors. Friday September 25th will feature a candidate breakfast as an opportunity to ask questions and impress upon candidates some of the top issues for counties. USDA Director for Maine, John Butera, was scheduled to speak. Thursday at lunch the entire group will have an opportunity to participate in the legislative discussion. There was a panel discussion for builders, another for substance abuse crisis. Lauren mentioned the education session survey results would be able to fill in any empty session slots that were still available.

Comm. Cushing introduced Bruce Flaherty from the Spirit of America Foundation which honors local volunteers at the municipal, county and state level. Mr. Flaherty explained that the "Maine Terrific Ten Broadcasters" were chosen for their exceptional community service. His hope was that MCCA would do something, perhaps certificates signed by commissioners, awarded at the convention to honor the group. He said this would be a golden opportunity for positive media exposure. Attendees discussed the selection process. President Cushing said he would send out a memo so that the topic could be discussed at the next board meeting.

4. Legislative Policy Committee: Jean-Marie Caterina and Kevin Kelley, Co-Chairs
    4.1. James Cohen, Verrill Dana
        4.1.1. Legislative Update
        4.1.2. Next Steps

MCCA Lobbyist Jim Cohen said there were no significant changes to report. Jail funding continues to be our main focus. The County Corrections Professional Standards Council had a retreat that produced a work plan to address substantive areas about how counties can collaborate. They were also able to work through and disregard some ideas. There would be a request made to the Governor to include more jail funding. Lobbyist Sam Hamilton added that the Council was working diligently on budget requests to make their recommendations. Comm. Cushing said right now we secured an extra eight million through the supplemental budgets. However, we need to keep fighting for this amount rather than raising the baseline which is the ultimate funding goal.

5. Officer Reports
    5.1. President Report, Andre Cushing
    5.2. Vice President, Robert Sezak
    5.3. 2nd Vice President, Kevin Kelley
    5.3. Secretary/Treasurer, David Levesque

6. Consideration of HR Data Labs Proposal

Comm. Kevin Kelley explained his viewpoint on the value of the combined counties using the services of HR Data Labs to reduce man hours and money spent on wage and salary research. Several other commissioners and admin spoke for and against the proposal. Some attendees didn't think the areas the service covered met their needs. Some counties need to look at New Hampshire for example. Also, many of the jobs were difficult to compare. Another concern was committing to an annual expense for a service they may not need annually. It was suggested that the $4,000 that would go to MCCA was not appropriate. Additionally, staff would need to submit the data on a regular basis which would be an ongoing cost. One idea was to have HR Data Labs offer services to individual counties rather than all counties collectively.

President Cushing said that since it was clear the group could not come to an agreement, the topic would be tabled.

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

MSA: Sheriff Troy Morton reported that Cumberland County Sheriff Kevin Joyce and he had been appointed to the Board of Directors of the National Sheriffs Association. It has been extremely beneficial to the Maine Sheriffs Association. In recent meetings, there have been discussions around the FCC ruling regarding inmate phones and websites. There were updates on immigration laws that are specific to our state as well as across the nation. MSA has hired their own legal counsel to prepare a legal brief to summarize the immigration law points in an easy-to-understand format. Upcoming events are Friday Night Lights, to recognize the anniversary of September 11th by observing a moment of silence at public events. MSA has a legislative meeting scheduled for August 20th in Cumberland County in which the group will develop a list of priorities for the next legislative session. He said a Declaration of Independence tour across all sixteen counties would be starting next week in Portland arranged by the Historical Society. Representative McIntire and others from the Criminal Justice Committee came forward and provided a Legislative Sentiment for the MSA as it is their 50th anniversary as an association. Copies were made for all sixteen counties. A highway safety event was scheduled at the Speedway. August 19th MSA and MCCA were planning to host a "Candidate Meet and Greet" at the Community Center auditorium in Brewer. Invitations have been sent. He said he hoped many MCCA and municipal officials would attend.

Sheriff Morton said that three sheriffs are retiring this year and other counties expected to change leadership. There was an issue currently on eligibility requirements to run as a candidate for sheriff and the interpretation of those requirements. MSA has consulted with their legal counsel to make sure that they express their interpretation of the supervisor piece of the requirement. He made it clear that MSA was only involved in this one aspect and was not, nor would they in the future be part of the petitions in any way.

Sheriff Morton reported that Maine has set up a victim electronic notification system based on a pilot project conducted by Vine (Victim Information and Notification Everyday) system which provides free, anonymous, and confidential electronic notifications regarding an offender's custody status changes, such as release, transfer, or escape in four counties. Participants can sign up online anonymously. Grant funding was secured for most counties to participate in the program. Some counties have tech issues that currently prevent state-wide participation, but full participation in Maine is the goal.

UTS – Fiscal Admin. For the Unorganized Territories, Harold (Chip) Jones, reported on the first annual meeting of the UT managers held recently in Brewer. One issue they discussed was managing emergency service coverage in unorganized territories. Going forward, the group planned to meet quarterly at least via Zoom and then annually in person. President Cushing invited the group to meet at MCCA's convention if that would be beneficial.

8. Adjournment

President Cushing asked if there were any other comments for the good of the association. Hearing none, *President Andre Cushing invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 11:57 a.m. Comm. Tyler made the **motion, seconded** by Comm. Kelley, and the motion to adjourn was **passed**.*

Respectfully submitted,

MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven