

MCCA

Andre Cushing, President
Penobscot County

Robert Sezak, Vice President
Somerset County

Sawin Millett, Secretary-Treasurer
Oxford County

Richard Dutremble, Past President
York County



4 Gabriel Drive, Suite 2
Augusta, ME 04330
207-623-4697
www.mainecounties.org

Lauren Haven
Administrator

MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes August 13th, 2025 at 10:00 am via Zoom

1. Call to Order

President Andre Cushing called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 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. Fenwick Fowler proxy for Comm. Bob Carlton
Hancock – Comm. Samuel DiBella
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Oxford – Comm. Sawin Millett
Penobscot – Comm. Andre Cushing
Piscataquis – Admin. Mike Williams proxy for Comm. Paul Davis
Sagadahoc – Comm. Todd McPhee
Somerset – Comm. Robert Sezak
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
Washington – Manage Renee Gray proxy for Comm. David Burns
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Franklin – Comm. Bob Carlton
Knox – Comm. Ed Glaser
Lincoln – Comm. David Levesque
Piscataquis – Comm. Paul Davis

OTHERS PRESENT:

Androscoggin – Admin. Jeff Chute
Cumberland – Comm. Tom Tyler
Franklin – Manager Amy Bernard
Hancock – Admin. Mike Crooker
Kennebec – Admin. Scott Ferguson
Lincoln – EMAD – Emily Huber
MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
MRODA – Registrar, Cheri Crockett
MSA – Sheriff Ken Mason
Sagadahoc – Admin. Amber Jones
State of Maine – UT Admin. Harold Chip Jones
Verrill Dana – Lobbyists Jim Cohen and Sam Hamilton

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. Dutremble made the motion which was **seconded** by Comm. Fowler and the motion to approve the consent agenda **passed**.

3. Committee Reports:

3.1. NACo Update: George Jabar and Robert Sezak

NACo representative Comm. George Jabar said that there was a learning curve with NACo and he was getting more, and more up to speed with every NACo event he attended. He said that NACo does amazing work fighting for counties every single day down in DC using the vast connections that they have. The theme of the weekend for the last convention was called the “Big Shift” and they were talking about the Big Beautiful Bill. They are still interpreting much of it, but the concern is that many of the federal cuts will shift the responsibility to states, counties and finally trickle down to towns. There was a worrisome healthcare prediction that probably 11.8 million people will be uninsured by 2034. He said it was to our advantage that Matt Chase, the CEO of NACo, would be coming to the convention to speak to us. Not only is he a very impressive person, but he's been with NACo for a long time which has allowed him to accumulate a wealth of knowledge and understanding that he uses to help NACo promote county government. Comm. Sezak reported that he had joined the Healthy Counties Committee and the Rural Action Committee. Comm. Cushing said that NACo Membership Director Grace Blanchard has agreed to be a sponsor at the \$1,500 level for convention, as well as provide materials to hand out to attendees.

3.2. Events Committee - Lauren Haven

Administrator Lauren Haven reported that the Events Committee had met on August 8th and were scheduled to meet one more time before the convention on August 29th in Augusta and on Zoom. The group was continuing to finalize the many details regarding educational sessions and speakers, etc. They were gathering items for the welcome bags. Registrations for attendees, sponsors and vendors were being processed. She reminded the group that the hotel reservations needed to be made by August 17th to take advantage of the group discount using the discount code “MCCA”. President Cushing walked the group through the conference schedule in detail talking about the wonderful set of speakers who would be presenting and the entertainment and activities lined up for the event. He said there was still room to sign up for the golf tournament. He encouraged everyone to register and asked directors to support sending department heads and other employees to the conference.

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

Lobbyist Jim Cohen said that we covered a broad range of issues during the Franklin County meeting in July. The legislature remains adjourned, which seemed likely but was not a certainty. He said he would touch on the most important things for us to continue working on over the course of the next few months. One is the work of the Professional Standards Council which includes members of our association, the Sheriff's Association, the Maine Municipal Association, along with the Department of Corrections. The group has an opportunity to prepare and submit a report to the Criminal Justice committee, which will help us answer a number of questions that were asked by the legislature. Our hope is that it will provide a good foundation for further action in the legislature. Jim said there's money still on the table in a figurative sense, that we might be able to tap into. He said he was working with Tim Curtis, Amanda Campbell and others on getting prepared so that when the council meets they can discuss some of these issues further.

Another goal is to assemble a group of local government agencies to set up a meeting together to discuss issues like unfunded mandates and brainstorm ideas on what can be done about them. We might be able to find common ground that will encourage the cooperation of all of these local government agencies so they can collectively move the needle effectively in Augusta.

Lobbyist Sam Hamilton flagged Thursday, September 26th as the cloture date for the second regular session. Therefore, if people have any bills or after deadline requests that they want to get in, that is the deadline for submissions.

President Cushing mentioned that the LPC would be meeting on Friday, September 19th at the convention. The group would likely discuss jail funding, MAT (medically assisted treatment) and rural patrol. He reminded attendees that MSA had extended an invitation to their retreat in Old Orchard Beach. Sheriff Mason confirmed this and spoke about their plans for the breakfast meeting.

5. Officer Reports

5.1. President Report, Andre Cushing

President Cushing reported that he had distributed his newsletter for July/August yesterday in part promoting the convention. He said he had put a little competition together to give counties "bragging rights" for getting the most points which are accumulated by getting sponsors, etc. The county with the highest number of total points will receive a very nice trophy that they can take home and bring to meetings to show their support of the convention and the association. He said to stay tuned for an update on that project.

5.2. Vice President, Robert Sezak

Vice President Sezak reported that the Bylaws Review Committee had convened at the Franklin meeting day and planned to meet again at the convention. He said the group had a draft of revisions and they would be happy to receive any constructive criticism other board members might have.

5.3. Secretary/Treasurer, Sawin Millett

6. Consider Adoption of the Non-Employee Purchasing Policy and Approval Process

Secretary/Treasurer Millett referred to the draft of the Non-Employee Purchasing Policy included in the agenda packet. Comm. Millett said that the policy had been reviewed at the Franklin meeting and that the two questions raised have since been addressed. One was the question of email or electronic consent for purchases. The language in the policy had been revised to include this for ease of use. The

second point of clarification was for the president and whether this policy would cover overnight accommodations if needed. The answer was that this contingency has already been provided for in the new budget line item created for the president's travel expenses. He/she could utilize the \$3,000 set aside for this purpose without any other authorization. The only requirement would be to submit documentation such as receipts for auditing purposes.

Comm. Sezak requested sharing the document on the Zoom. Lauren also posted the link to the agenda packet document in the chat. The group reviewed the policy. Comm. Millett stated that he thought this was a healthy step forward for the association to make provisions for people outside the organization to make purchases when promoting MCCA. This would create a mechanism for other groups to facilitate events, etc. without them having to carry the costs that would be associated with it. Comm. Millett made the **motion** to adopt the Non-Employee Purchasing Policy and Approval Process which was **seconded** by Comm. Dutremble. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to adopt the policy **passed** with a unanimous vote.

President Cushing asked if Comm. Millett had any other comments. Sawin said he just wanted to highlight the value of the thorough financial reports Lauren puts together every month. Particularly, last month it was very interesting to see the income and expense numbers being tracked at the half year mark since we will soon be working on the 2026 budget.

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

MSA: Sheriff Ken Mason said he didn't have anything else to report. He said he appreciated the opportunity to meet in Franklin County. The conversations were productive, and it was great to be able to see Franklin's new building. He mentioned that the sheriff's would have golfers in the convention tournament, but regrettably he would not be able to attend the conference as it was scheduled during his vacation in Spain.

Unorganized Territories: Chip Jones reported that he would have updates soon. He said he was currently working with the Department of Education and DHHS on ratifying some of the old ways that we have done things and hopefully saving the counties a lot of money by doing this.

8. Adjournment

President Cushing asked if there were any other comments for the good of the association. Admin. Lauren Haven reminded the group that the next board meeting will occur in person at the convention on September 18th. President Andre Cushing invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 10:50 a.m. Comm. Sezak made the **motion**, **seconded** by Comm. Dutremble, and the motion to adjourn was **passed**.

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven