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
September 23rd, 2026 4:30 pm
Sunday River Resort

1. Call to Order

President Andre Cushing called the meeting to order with the directors and other participants listed below in attendance.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:
- Aroostook – Comm. Danny Deveau proxy for Comm. William Dobbins
- Cumberland – Comm. Tom Tyler
- Franklin – Comm. Bob Carlton
- Hancock – Comm. Samuel DiBella
- Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
- Lincoln – Comm. David Levesque
- Oxford – Comm. Lisa Keim
- Penobscot – Comm. Andre Cushing
- Piscataquis – 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:
- Androscoggin – Comm. Jane Pentheny
- Aroostook – Comm. William Dobbins
- Knox – Comm. Ed Glaser
- York - Comm. Justin Chenette

OTHERS PRESENT:
- Aroostook – Admin. Justin Tibbetts
- Franklin – Comm. Fen Fowler
- Hancock – Admin. Mike Crooker
- Lincoln County – Comm. Evan Goodkowsky and Admin. Carrie Kipfer
- Oxford County – Comm. Sawin Millett and Admin. Zane Loper
- MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
- MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
- NACo – Associate Director of Membership Grace Dunlap
- Penobscot – Comm. David Marshall and Comm. Dan Tremble
- Piscataquis – Admin. Mike Williams
- Sagadahoc – Comm. Steven August
- York – Comm. Richard Clark

2. Consent Agenda:

2.1. Approval of the Agenda

2.2. Approval of the Minutes

2.3. Financial Reports: Lauren Haven

President Cushing highlighted several aspects of the convention and then welcomed Justin Tibbetts, the new Aroostook County Administrator, who introduced himself to the Board and other attendees. President Cushing requested a ***motion*** *to approve the Consent Agenda. Comm. Kelley made the* ***motion****, seconded by Comm. Pietroski. The motion* ***passed****.*

3. Committee Reports:

3.1. NACo Update: George Jabar and Robert Sezak

Comm. Sezak reported on NACo's successful advocacy for federal directives requiring states to suspend, rather than terminate, a person's Medicaid coverage upon arrest or incarceration, effective January 1, 2026. NACo supports Section 1115 demonstration waivers that allow incarcerated individuals to access Medicaid-funded health and behavioral health services for a period prior to release. Maine had been awaiting federal approval from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for its Section 1115 "Whole Person Care" demonstration waiver, which would allow the state to provide certain pre-release services using federal funding. Sheriff Mason reported that the waiver had been approved and said the Sheriff's Association had worked closely with Dr. Courtney Pladsen, Medical Director of MaineCare, toward that goal. Admin. Tim Curtis reported that Dr. Pladsen was meeting with the Professional Jail Standards Council to explain details of the limited rollout. A team including representatives of the Jail Council, Department of Corrections (DOC), and Department of Health and Human Services was being formed to develop an implementation protocol within 120 days. Some details, including the scope of services covered by the waiver, remained unclear. Mr. Curtis understood that implementation would begin within DOC, due to its electronic recordkeeping system, and subsequently expand to the counties.

Comm. Jabar emphasized the value of NACo as a resource and encouraged members to take full advantage of their membership. He then introduced Grace Dunlap, NACo Associate Director of Membership, and invited her to provide an update.

Ms. Dunlap highlighted three areas of interest. She discussed NACo's Rural Energy Academy (REA), a national program designed to help rural county leaders make informed, strategic decisions regarding local energy development. The program assists local officials in navigating siting, zoning, economic impacts, and community engagement related to modern energy infrastructure, including wind, solar, battery energy storage systems (BESS), nuclear energy, and data centers. She also discussed NACo's Opioid Solutions Center, which helps local leaders use settlement funds for effective prevention, treatment, recovery, and harm-reduction strategies and shares best practices developed through case studies. Ms. Dunlap also reported on a new NACo program designed to assist county law enforcement agencies with recruitment and retention.

3.2. Events Committee - Lauren Haven

Admin. Lauren Haven presented preliminary statistics for the 2026 convention, which included 30 exhibitors, nearly 200 participants, more than 50 sponsors, 15 educational sessions, activities, entertainment, and dining events. President Cushing commented on the quality of the Sunday River facility and noted that the Events Committee had incorporated feedback from the previous year's convention. Sponsorship revenue was estimated at approximately $73,000, with more, if not final convention profit and loss figures expected to be available in October. President Cushing reported that Penobscot County had agreed to host the 2027 convention and that the University of Maine was among the venues being considered.

4. Officer Reports

4.1. President Report, Andre Cushing

4.2. Vice President, Robert Sezak

4.3. 2nd Vice President, Kevin Kelley

4.4. Secretary/Treasurer, David Levesque

President Cushing said the Events Committee update provided a transition into a broader discussion about MCCA's programs and future direction. He noted that the Association had become more proactive during the past year, including scheduling additional in-person meetings to provide opportunities for counties to host and visit one another. He discussed opportunities to further enhance MCCA's programs, including the services offered through HR Data Labs, and said future expansion could include hiring an Executive Director. President Cushing reported that the Budget and Finance Committee had met the previous day to discuss the feasibility of an Executive Director position, including how the position might work with the current lobbying team and how it could be funded. Comm. Levesque said his takeaway from the discussion was that the Committee might support the concept if the position could be fully funded without increasing membership dues. He noted, however, that the Committee wanted guidance from the Board regarding the direction it wished to pursue so that the budget could be developed accordingly. Comm. Dutremble recommended that a decision be made as soon as possible to allow the Committee to complete its work. President Cushing said a packet of information would be distributed for review in advance of the next meeting.

Admin. Tim Curtis reported on the progress of the Title 30-A Committee. The group had been meeting to identify areas of common ground and had narrowed its focus to several opportunities to clarify statutory language on provisions where commissioners and sheriffs might reach agreement. He said this appeared to be a more practical approach than attempting a comprehensive revision of the statute, which would be unlikely to succeed. Mr. Curtis also noted that some counties had adopted home rule charters. Although the authority of a county home rule charter is limited, counties may use such charters to establish aspects of their internal governance structure, including the organization of departments, definition of officer roles, and selection of elected or appointed positions.

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

MACCAM: Tim Curtis announced that Franklin County had hired a new administrator, Carrie Castonguay, formerly Town Manager for Livermore Falls. She had previously served as Town Manager for New Gloucester and Belgrade.

MSA: Sheriff Ken Mason reported that the association planned to meet at Sunday River on Friday morning and was beginning work on its legislative priorities for the next session.

RISK POOL: Director of Operations Malcolm Ulmer reported that work was underway on 2027 renewals. Mr. Ulmer had participated in a panel discussion earlier that afternoon covering several insurance topics. He noted that the Risk Pool continued to offer training and professional development opportunities. Peter Marchesi was scheduled to present an educational session on supervisory personnel issues the following day.

6. Adjournment

President Cushing asked whether there were any additional comments for the good of the Association. Hearing none, he requested a motion to adjourn. Comm. Kelley made the motion, seconded by Comm. McPhee. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 p.m. to join the vendor reception scheduled for that time.

Respectfully submitted,

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MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven