

M.C.C.A.

Stephen Gorden, President
Cumberland County

Brian Hobart, Vice President
Sagadahoc County

Norm Fournier, Secretary-Treasurer
Aroostook County

Peter Baldacci, Past President
Penobscot County

William Blodgett, Emeritus
Lincoln County



Lauren Haven
Administrator

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MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Board of Directors' Meeting
October 12th, 2022, 10:00 am via Zoom

1. Call to Order: Roll Call - Phone attendees will be requested to introduce themselves.

MCCA President Steve Gorden called the meeting to order at approximately 10:00 am. Attendees announced themselves.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Hancock – Comm. William Clark
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman
Lincoln – Comm. William Blodgett
Penobscot – Comm. Peter Baldacci
Piscataquis – Comm. Wayne Erkkinen
Sagadahoc – Comm. Brian Hobart
Somerset – Dawn DiBlasi
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
Washington – Comm. Chris Gardner
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. John Michael
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Somerset – Comm. Newell Graf

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kennebec – Admin. Scott Ferguson
Knox – Admin. Andy Hart
Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
MSA – Sheriff Dale Lancaster
Piscataquis – Manager Mike Williams
RHR Smith – Auditors Ron Smith and Kyle Cole
Verrill Dana – Lobbyists Clara McConnell and Jim Cohen

2. Approval of the Agenda

President Steve Gorden requested a motion to move the audit agenda item C.1. to the top of the reports and presentations. Comm. Gardner **moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was **seconded** by Comm. Hobart, and the motion **passed with no objections.****

3. Consent Agenda: Additions, Changes or Deletions?

- A. Approval of the Minutes
- B. Administrative Reports:
 - 1. Finance:
 - a. Financial Report - Lauren Haven

President Steve Gorden requested a motion to move the consent agenda. Comm. Fournier **moved to approve the consent agenda which included the minutes, the financial report and the Treasurer's report. Comm. Baldacci **seconded** the motion, and it was **passed with no further comments.****

*NOTE: The audit presentation took place at this point in the meeting.

4. Reports & Presentations:

- A. Legislative Policy Report – Brian Hobart, Chair
 - 1. Legislative Update, James Cohen, Verrill Dana
 - a. Potential Legislation: Rural Patrol, 911 Fees, Mental Health in Jails, MSA

Comm. Hobart announced that this would be his last meeting as the Vice President of MCCA and as a Director on the MCCA Board representing Sagadahoc County. Jim Cohen said we all wished him well and the group agreed.

Jim reported that after elections the new members would be sworn in and then we can look for bill sponsors in December. The matter of Rural Patrol is currently in a holding pattern. Comm. Gorden asked when we needed to have legislation submitted. Jim said the date is not set, but it would be around the inauguration time in December when they would adopt rules and set cloture. We should estimate the middle of December. We should know at that time what legislation we want to put forth and who should submit it. Comm. Hobart said prior legislators are running for county commissioner positions and we should keep on the radar who will be able to help us.

Comm. Fournier asked if we had a list of bills that MSA planned to submit. Sheriff Dale Lancaster reported their monthly meeting will be dedicated to legislative matters. As proxy for Sheriff Ken Mason, he said he spoke with President Gorden and plans to meet with him on Friday to find common initiatives to move forward. The MSA meeting was scheduled for October 20th. MSA would be more focused on legislation after that.

Comm. Gorden said one of the drives he was beginning to see was initiating legislative cost to move from property tax based to user-based funding. Jim Cohen reinforced Comm. Gorden's remarks saying these were complex issues, and lessons have been learned from the jail funding legislation. There was an opportunity for success and continuum for success will be working with stakeholders. Whatever the agenda would be, financial burdens will meet opposition. The sooner we know what our objectives are, the sooner we can decide how to approach it. Jim inquired about remote participation in meetings. Several attendees made positive comments such as it is working well for them, the public can make comments by zoom which is helpful, remote meetings allow greater flexibility, etc. Mr. Cohen said the biggest concern is that in-person meetings also have some benefits.

B. Administrative Report – Lauren

Lauren reported that MCCA was running business as usual. After finalizing the last audit, she was beginning to gather preliminary numbers for the 2023 budget. She then said she wanted to bring up the topic of the 2023 annual convention. As Sunday River was no longer a viable venue due to the exceptionally high cost of their last proposal, we would need to look for another venue or discuss changing the convention format somehow to lower the overall costs. Oxford County didn't have another suitable venue, so we might need to look for another host county, although we could see similar price increases at other venues everywhere. Comm. Pohlman asked what was involved with hosting the conference. Lauren said MCCA had a Convention Planning Committee, and the host county also would have a committee that helped make important decisions about the educational sessions, food and entertainment. The two committees worked together to coordinate the activities at the event.

C. Budget and Finance Committee - Norm Fournier, Treasurer

1. 2020/2021 Audit Report, RHR Smith

Comm. Fournier welcomed RHR Smith representatives Ron Smith and Kyle Cole. Mr. Smith shared his screen with the group and explained their audit findings. He commented that they gave MCCA the highest opinion possible, primarily because of the way Lauren managed the project presenting the information, providing the facts in a timely manner, and responding to requests during the audit process. Mr. Cole agreed, saying it was a treat to work on the MCCA audit. Comm. Fournier reported that the Budget and Finance Committee voted on October 5th to accept the audit documents as presented. Comm. Hobart **moved to accept the 2020/2021 audit findings as reported by RHR Smith.** Comm. Baldacci **seconded the motion, and the motion passed.** Comm. Richard Dutremble asked why we did the 2020 and 2021 years together. Comm. Fournier responded the MCCA bylaws require a biennial audit every two years.

2. 2022/2023 Ratification: Biennial audit proposal as approved by the budget committee

Secretary/Treasurer Norm Fournier reported that Admin. Lauren Haven had requested a proposal from RHR Smith for the next biennial audit 2022/2023. The Budget and Finance Committee reviewed the three bids they had gathered for the current audit, \$5,000, \$7,000, and \$12,000 respectively. RHR Smith had given us the lowest bid. Norm mentioned he was on other boards that were currently going through the bidding process and were getting zero response. Auditors wouldn't even bid. RHR Smith responded with a proposal of \$7,000 for the next audit. At the October 5th Budget and Finance Committee meeting, the group voted to recommend the Board of Directors accept this proposal. Comm. Blodgett **moved to accept the audit proposal from RHR Smith as recommended by the Budget and Finance Committee. The motion was **seconded** by Comm. Baldacci, and the motion **passed.****

3. 2023/2024 Ratification: Biennial Legislative Services Contract as approved by the Executive Committee/ Jim Cohen's Group

As Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee and Treasurer of MCCA, Norm Fournier discussed the terms of the next lobbying contract with Jim Cohen. Mr. Cohen said he would agree to a \$5,000 increase in 2023, from \$60,000 to \$65,000. Additionally, he said he would be willing to sign a two-year contract with the second year being \$67,500 for 2024, an increase of \$2,500. MCCA would continue to pay for lobbyist registration. Mr. Fournier solicited a response from the Executive Committee. This seemed to be a fair increase and would include the long and the short session. The total would be \$132,500 for

lobbying services over the next two years plus registration. Comm. Gardner moved to accept the lobbyist proposal from Verrill Dana as recommended by the Executive Committee. The motion was seconded by Comm. Baldacci, and the motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Comm. Baldacci asked if the Budget and Finance Committee would please leave money in the 2023 budget for future NACo meetings as the past couple of years had not been typical and our representatives did plan to attend future conferences in person. Comm. Pohlman thanked him for bringing this to the committee's attention and said she was looking forward to attending the Legislative Conference in February of 2023.

5. Governmental Committee Reports:

A. Blue Ribbon Commission for EMS Services - Interim Information - Carrie Kipfer

Admin. Carrie Kipfer reported about LD 1988 "An Act To Establish That the Provision of Emergency Medical Services by an Ambulance Service Is an Essential Service and To Establish the Blue Ribbon Commission To Study Emergency Medical Services in the State". The crises involved the lack of revenue, transport costs, declining volunteerism, and more. The committee was looking at service providers. Not all counties would be willing to take on this roll as it would need an additional layer of oversight and had a lack of funding. It would be important to determine where the money would be coming from, the State or municipalities. Ms. Kipfer planned to meet with Rick Petrie, the Chief Operating Officer of North East Mobile Health Services who may have a proposal. The group would be meeting in a couple of weeks. Comm. Gardner said if the commission moves forward with this, it could be millions of dollars to put a new ambulance system in place, or millions of dollars to fix the broken system that's in place now. This is an animal that could engulf us. And it makes sense depending on location within the state and the county population, but one size doesn't fit all for the entire state. Unfortunately, we have a history of trying to put a system in place that works for the whole state. The group continued to discuss different situations among counties. Ms. Kipfer said the committee will ultimately issue a report and it will go to the legislature. Comm. Gardner said the fire department conversation will come right behind this issue. There are more ambulance calls than fire calls that's why it came up first, but fire departments will come right behind.

- B. **1st meeting of the County Corrections Professional Standards Council**, LD 1654, will occur Oct 13th. Members: MSA: Sheriffs Dale Lancaster & Scott Nichols, DOC: Com. Randy Liberty & Ryan Anderson, MMA: Rebecca McMahon, MCCA: Norm Fournier & Steve Gorden, Chr. (See enclosed notated law)
Comm. Gorden reiterated that the council included two members from county government, one representative from Maine Municipal Association, two sheriffs and two people from the Department of Corrections.

6. President Report:

- A. **We need to create an Officer Nomination Committee**, I'm appointing Norm Fournier, Chr; he will be tapping individuals for the Committee after the November election.
- B. **Legislation for the next Biennial Session?** Considerations: Rural Patrol funding, Mental Health Programs - diversion &/or assessment Funding (Jails treated a "Public Service of Last Resort"); Broadening PSAPS Funding coverage with 9-1-1 Fee increase; Other considerations? Do we wish to fund a Legislative Breakfast of some sort w/Leadership of pertinent Committees & Leadership? We can try, it will mean the Board must attend and participate w/ personal interaction.

Comm. Gorden requested attendees to contact him with any additional ideas for legislation.

7. Affiliate Organizational Committee Reports - recognize those in attendance or who submitted Information: MSA, B. MARP, C. MACCAM, D. Others

MSA – Sheriff Dale Lancaster said he was looking forward to working with Steve on the council. He wanted to guard against this council evolving into something that would hinder progress or create issues for counties. At MSA’s Sept 27th meeting the group discussed new members, EMS commission, jail standards, and abandoned roads. He mentioned the auditor pulled out of the agreement which meant they needed to start the process over again from scratch. There was no date set for the next meeting.

Comm. Fournier said MACCAM had a change of leadership with Scott Adkins of Penobscot as the new president and Andy Hart as the new vice president.

8. Other Business

President Gorden said on behalf of MCCA he thanked Comm. Brian Hobart for his dedicated service to MCCA and Sagadahoc County. Attendees agreed and wished him well.

9. Adjournment

Comm. Steve Gorden asked if there were other comments for the good of the organization. Hearing none, President Gorden invited a motion to adjourn at approximately 11:20 a.m. Comm. Hobart made the **motion to adjourn seconded by Comm. Fournier, and the motion was **approved.****

Respectfully submitted,

MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, Norman Fournier