

M.C.C.A.

Stephen Gorden, President
Cumberland County

Brian Hobart, Vice President
Sagadahoc County

Norm Fournier, Secretary-Treasurer
Aroostook County

Lauren Haven
Administrator



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

MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION Annual General Membership Meeting Minutes

MCCA Zoom Conference, January 13th, 2021

I., II. Call to Order and Roll Call Attendance

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 Erkinen
Sagadahoc – Comm. Brian Hobart
Somerset – Admin. Dawn DiBlasi proxy for Comm. Newell Graf
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
Washington – Comm. Chris Gardner
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

OTHERS PRESENT:

Hancock – Admin. Scott Adkins
Kennebec – Admin. Bob Devlin
Knox – Admin. Andy Hart
Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
Penobscot – Admin. Erika Honey
Piscataquis – Michael Williams
Sagadahoc – Admin. Pam Hile
MACT – Kathy Robinson
MARP – Kathleen Ayers
MSA – Sheriff Todd Brackett

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Noel Madore
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Somerset – Comm. Newell Graf

STAFF PRESENT:

Risk Pool Manager – Malcolm Ulmer
Administrator – Lauren Haven
Lobbyists – James Cohen and Clara McConnell from Verrill Dana

III. Approval of the Agenda

President Steve Gorden asked if there any additions to the written agenda. There were none. Comm. Gardner moved to approve the agenda seconded by Comm. Blodgett and the motion passed.

IV. Approval of the Minutes

Comm. Blodgett moved to approve the minutes from the Board of Directors' meeting on December 9th. The motion was seconded by Comm. Hobart and the motion passed with no revisions.

V. Legislative Policy Committee

- A. Legislative Activity – James Cohen and Clara McConnell from Verrill Dana
All legislative committees have been appointed. The four bill titles being introduced by MCCA have been submitted including language for all. Jim is going through incoming bills to see if there might be interest and/or will likely impact counties. He will forward these to be discussed at LPC meetings and alert the group to any scheduled meetings or hearings for bills we are following.
- B. Governor's Budget – By statute, the Governor's budget had to be revealed by midnight on Friday. Mr. Cohen shared the highlights. The group talked about the "rainy day" fund which is at the highest level it has ever been. Comm. Fournier said he was surprised at the amount of \$18,442,104 the Governor identified for jail funding in 2021, 2022, and 2023. This is much more favorable than getting the 15 million, and then having to beg for surplus funding every year. Everyone thanked Jim and Clara for their work in helping MCCA introduce their bills.

Comm. Gardner expressed a special interest in some law enforcement bills which may not seem applicable at first glance. He may bring these to the attention of the board for support. One upcoming draft he mentioned was LR 664 sponsored by Denise Tepler, "An Act to Require Utility Companies and Cable and Telephone Service Providers to Establish Permanent Liaisons with all County Emergency Management Agencies."

VI. President's Report:

President Gorden introduced and welcomed two new County Board nominees:

- Waldo County Commissioner Betty Johnson
- York County Commissioner Richard Dutremble

Both Comm. Johnson and Comm. Dutremble spoke for a moment and said they were glad to be on the Board of Directors representing their county.

President Gorden announced that MCCA had been invited to make a brief presentation at the State and Local Government Committee orientation scheduled to occur on January 25th or 27th. Also, he mentioned Senator King's office will remain closed until after the inauguration.

VII. Approval of the 2021 Maine County Commissioners Association (MCCA) Board of Directors

President Gorden invited a motion to accept the slate of county nominated directors with the addition of Comm. Vinton Cassidy as a proxy for Washington County. Comm. Hobart moved and Comm. Gardner seconded the motion which was passed with no opposition. Therefore, the 2021 Board of Directors are as follows:

Androscoggin	Commissioner Noel Madore; proxy Administrator Larry Post
Aroostook	Commissioner Norman Fournier; proxy Comm. Paul Underwood
Cumberland	Commissioner Stephen Gorden; proxy Comm. Thomas Coward or County Manager Jim Gailey
Hancock	Commissioner William Clark; proxy Administrator Scott Adkins
Kennebec	Commissioner George Jabar; proxy Comm. Patsy Crockett, Comm. Nancy Rines or Admin. Bob Devlin
Knox	Commissioner Sharyn Pohlman; proxy Administrator Andrew Hart
Lincoln	Commissioner William Blodgett; proxy Administrator Carrie Kipfer
Oxford	Commissioner Steven Merrill; proxy County Administrator
Penobscot	Commissioner Peter Baldacci; proxy Administrator Erika Honey
Piscataquis	Commissioner Wayne Erkkinen; proxy Manager Michael Williams
Sagadahoc	Commissioner Brian Hobart; proxy Administrator Pam Hile

Somerset	Commissioner Newell Graf; proxy Administrator Dawn DiBlasi
Waldo	Commissioner Betty Johnson; proxy Comm. William Shorey or Comm. Amy Fowler
Washington	Commissioner Christopher Gardner; proxy Comm. Vinton Cassidy, proxy Manager Betsy Fitzgerald
York	Commissioner Richard Dutremble; proxy Comm. Allen Sicard

VIII. Nomination and Election of MCCA Officers

As Chair of the Nominating Committee Norm Fournier was asked by President Gorden to present the Committee's recommendation.

A. Nomination and Election of the MCCA Officers

Comm. Fournier stated Comm. Steve Gorden took over as MCCA President last spring and was eligible to be re-elected for that position. Vice President Mike Cote was not re-elected as a commissioner and no longer qualified to hold the position. Secretary-Treasurer William Blodgett had termed out of his position. In consideration of Commissioners who regularly attend and participate in meetings, the Nominating Committee composed of Comm. Bill Blodgett, Comm. Sharyn Pohlman, and Comm. Norm Fournier proposed the following slate of officers:

Comm. Steve Gorden, President
 Comm. Brian Hobart, Vice-President
 Comm. Norm Fournier, Secretary-Treasurer

Additionally, the Committee requested Comm. Blodgett and Comm. Baldacci remain on the Executive Committee.

Comm. Pohlman **moved** and Comm. Bill Blodgett **seconded** the motion to cease nominations. The motion passed. Comm. Baldacci **moved** and Comm. Gardner **seconded** approving the slate of officers as recommended by the Nominating Committee. The motion **passed**.

B. Nomination and Election of Two National Association of Counties (NACo) Representatives

Comm. Baldacci has been serving on the NACo Board of Directors and on their Policy Steering Committee. Peter still had another year as the Board voted last year and this position was a two-year term. Comm. Baldacci stated that we only have one NACo Board seat because Maine is no longer a 100% membership state, but we can still have one representative and an alternate. After some discussion, Comm. Baldacci made a **motion** to elect Comm. Sharyn Pohlman to serve as the second NACo representative and as an alternate. Comm. Erkinen seconded the **motion** and it **passed** with no opposition.

C. Bylaws Policy Committee Chair Appointment

Comm. Fournier has been asked to look at and modify documents. There was a request for volunteers. Comm. Gorden agreed to help along with Comm. Johnson, Comm. Gardner, Comm. Dutremble and Admin. Scott Adkins. President Gorden thanked everyone for being willing to participate in the process.

D. 2021 County and Municipal Detention Facility Advisory Committee Member - those interested please indicate to be considered.

Comm. Mike Cote had served on this committee and the Board of Directors needed to recommend a replacement. Jail standards were discussed. President Gorden asked if anyone was interested in volunteering. Comm. Baldacci nominated former Jail Administrator Bill Clark, but he declined. Admin Dawn DiBlasi suggested Comm. Gardner who accepted the after some discussion about the details of the position. Comm. Blodgett **moved** to approve Comm. Gardner for the seat on the Advisory Committee. The **motion** was seconded by Admin. DiBlasi and the **motion** passed.

IX. Officer Reports:

A. Finance-Treasurer: Bill Blodgett - Comments about the state of MCCA finances

Comm. Blodgett commented MCCA was in a good position at this point. Cutbacks in costs and the PPP loan boosting the budget, put us in a strong position for the year.

- B. Financial Report - Lauren Haven
President Gorden invited a motion. Comm. Baldacci moved to accept the financial reports as written, seconded by Comm. Erkinen and the motion was passed.
- C. NACo: Peter Baldacci – Updates on Federal legislation, national programs and resources
Comm. Baldacci said NACo has scheduled a virtual legislative conference in March. One registration for each association will be at no charge. They are currently fighting for funding for counties. He said he would forward NACo information to his new alternate, Comm. Pohlman.

X. Committee Reports

A. Standing Committees:

1. Budget and Finance Committee – Norm Fournier, Chair
Approval of the 2021 Budget

Comm. Fournier spoke on behalf of the Budget and Finance Committee. He summarized the proposed budget which was 8.53% less than 2020, and highlighted the approximate 11% decrease of membership dues from 2020. The approved membership dues formula remains the same with an 80% base amount, plus 10% valuation, and 10% population. The total membership dues amount proposed was \$148,354 which was a decrease of \$18,336. Every county will see at least a thousand dollar decrease. No changes had been made since the budget was proposed and approved at the December meeting to be brought forward to the annual general membership meeting. Comm. Chris Gardner thanked the Committee for their efforts, saying the budget was moving in the right direction. Comm. Gardner moved to accept the 2021 budget as was approved and recommended by the MCCA Board of Directors at their December 2020, meeting. The motion was seconded by Comm. Baldacci and passed with a unanimous vote.

2. Legislative Policy Committee (LPC) Updates:

President Gorden stated the previous LPC chair, Comm. Fowler, was no longer on the Board of Directors and asked if anyone had an interest in the position. There were no volunteers.

- a. Supplemental funding and 2021 Jail Funding Bill
(An Act to Stabilize County Corrections) Copy of Bill enclosed.

Sheriff Todd Brackett explained the details of the new bill (LR 967 which is the revised version of LD 973). Fortunately, Charlotte Warren was still on board as a sponsor for the bill. They met with Mary Anne Turowski, Senior Policy Advisor/Legislative Affairs on the staff of Governor Mills. The main issue in the bill had been the coordinating council oversight would have been too much like the former Board of Corrections (BOC). However, the language had been changed and the groups involved were satisfied with the wording. At the request of MSA, Sheriff Brackett sought to clear this point with Ms. Turowski. However, Sheriff Brackett says, "It's a big deal to them, so the language is likely to come back in some form." We need to consider what we could propose as a compromise. We should be leading the discussion instead of waiting to react to it. It was a positive meeting overall. Comm. Gorden said having the three organizations working on LR 967 (973) MACCAM, MCCA, MSA was a step in the right direction while we work on the language and work out the details. The LR has been sent to the revisor. The group agreed we need to bring the committee a solution. Admin. Pamela Hile commented we've been working on jail funding for ten years and this is the closest we've been to having some solution and support to it. Sheriff's it would behoove us to explore it. Hate to see it collapse because we didn't attempt. Admin. Carrie Kipfer mentioned the 25% quarterly payment idea was not MSA's suggestion.

Comm. Fournier made a motion to propose a committee including two MCCA representatives, two MSA representatives, two MACCAM representatives. The motion was seconded by Comm. Baldacci. President Gorden said they would meet within a week and a half with Commissioner Liberty. The motion passed with one abstention. The group decided to meet on Friday to discuss it more. Admin. Dawn DiBlasi suggested we have representatives with both large and small jails. Norm and Steve agreed to represent MCCA.

- b. MACCAM recommendations – Comm. Fournier asked what MACCAM was proposing. Admin. Kipfer said the group met last week with a good turnout. They looked at LR 967. As a group they supported eliminating the Coordinating Council. They preferred annual funding rather than quarterly. If this was not possible, they would work towards biannual payments with half of the funding. They want the tax cap 4% or LD 1 "whichever is less" line eliminated. They want the Department of Corrections (DOC) to be removed as it's not appropriate for the DOC to deal with the tax cap for the counties. They are very pleased the conversation is continuing.

The group talked about the per diem charge and discussed \$50 as the amount. A State sanction prisoner would be paid for by the state, (analyst language). There is a standing issue of the amount of time a person is held in a County jail.

3. Risk Management Pool Agency - Norm Fournier and Malcolm Ulmer
Comm. Fournier stated there was nothing else to report.

4. Affiliate Organization Committee Reports:

MACCAM (Maine Association of County Clerks, Administrators and Managers)

MACT (Maine Association of County Treasurers)

MARP (Maine Association of Registers of Probate)

Kathy Ayers mentioned several bills being presented which the LPC should be watching and be ready to be involved. The group is already working on the bill 736 to increase probate fees. Additionally, many of the bills need fiscal notes. LD 646 same entitlement adult guardianship was proposed last year with no monetary amount in the fiscal note which was causing a lot of new cases and more attorneys were needed to handle the cases. The board needs to be aware there is a constant effort for the state to take over the probate courts. Comm. Gorden mentioned there is faster service in probate court than in district courts. Ms. Ayers is working with MCCA Lobbyist Jim Cohen and the LPC to keep MCCA up to date on bills we should support or oppose.

MECCA (Maine Emergency County Communications Association)

MRDA (Maine Register of Deeds Association)

MSA (Maine Sheriffs' Association)

5. Ad Hoc Committees - none at this time

XI. New Business – Is there any new business to come before the Board?

Comments for the good of the Organization: Does anyone wish to present any comments at this time?

Comm. Fournier asked about an update on the jail standards? Reproductive health? There was no update. Scott Ferguson was waiting for county requests for supplemental jail funding.

XII. Adjournment

MCCA President Steve Gorden invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 11:45 a.m. Comm. Baldacci made the **motion** seconded by Comm. Hobart, and the **motion** was **approved**.

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, Comm. Norm Fournier