

M.C.C.A.

Stephen Gorden, President
Cumberland County

Brian Hobart, Vice President
Sagadahoc County

Norm Fournier, Secretary-Treasurer
Aroostook County

Lauren Haven
Administrator



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MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes MCCA Zoom Conference, February 10th, 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:

Androscoggin – Comm. Noel Madore
Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Hancock – Comm. William Clark
Kennebec – Admin. Bob Devlin proxy for Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman
Lincoln – Comm. William Blodgett
Oxford – Admin. Donald Durrah proxy for Comm. Steven Merrill
Penobscot – Comm. Peter Baldacci
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
Lincoln – Admin. Carrie Kipfer
Penobscot – Admin. Erika Honey
Sagadahoc – Admin. Pam Hile
MARP – Kathleen Ayers
MSA – Sheriff Troy Morton

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Piscataquis – Comm. Wayne Erkkinen
Somerset – Comm. Newell Graf

STAFF PRESENT:

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

III. Approval of the Agenda

President Steve Gorden asked if there any additions to the written agenda. There were none. Comm. Gorden stated the agenda was approved.

IV. Approval of the Minutes

Comm. Hobart moved to approve the minutes from the Board of Directors' meeting on January 13th. The motion was seconded by Comm. Gardner and the motion passed with no revisions.

V. Officer Reports

A. Finance

1. Lauren Haven presented the monthly Financial Reports. Lauren mentioned she was receiving payments for membership dues. Also, she was taking orders from vendors for advertisements in the 2021 Directory of Maine Counties and estimated a total of almost \$5,000 in additional income. Comm. Gardner moved to approve the financial reports seconded by Comm. Blodgett and the motion passed with no opposition.
2. Treasurer: Norm Fournier – Comments about the state of MCCA finances. There was not much to report only being one month into the year. MCCA did realize a cost savings as the annual general membership meeting was conducted online via Zoom.

- B. NACo: Peter Baldacci - National Legislation, Comm. Baldacci mentioned NACo's Live Healthy program. Some directors responded they already participate in the program. Lauren said she would send out information again, and the link to sign up.

Comm. Fournier asked about COVID related legislation and President Biden's plan to move forward. Comm. Baldacci indicated funding numbers for local government are not out yet. He said a lot of hate mail is being received due to limited access to county buildings, mask mandates, etc. Counties are an easy target.

- C. President: Comm. Steve Gorden welcomed the new Oxford County Administrator Donald Durrah who was already employed as the Communications Director for the county.

President Gorden reported the Executive Committee met on Monday, February 8th. During that meeting the Committee voted to recommend postponing the annual convention. He invited like to make a motion to postpone the convention. Comm. Fournier made the motion to postpone the convention another year seconded by Comm. Gardner. The discussion commenced including comments about the uncertainty of COVID vaccinations, the potential lack of participation from attendees, speakers and vendors which are necessary to make the event successful. Everyone would need to commit early in the year. Additionally, we could lose more money by making arrangements that are cancelled later. The group was not in favor of a virtual conference as the most important aspect of the convention is having all the commissioners gather for activities which would be difficult to enjoy while practicing social distancing. President Gorden requested a roll call vote. All counties represented at the meeting voted to ratify the Executive Committee's decision to postpone and the motion passed.

President Gorden announced Brian Hobart agreed to Chair the LPC Committee. He also mentioned speaking at the Judiciary Committee orientation and reported on what was discussed at the meeting.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Standing Committees

1. Budget and Finance Committee – Norm Fournier, Chair
Comm. Fournier reported there was a second round of paycheck protection program loans (PPP) available. However, the guidelines required a significant loss of income, more than 25% when compared to the previous year. Therefore, MCCA did not qualify for this second loan. He suggested sharing the information with organizations able to benefit from the second round of PPP loans. The window of opportunity to apply for the loan would be open until end of March.

2. Legislative Policy Committee – Brian Hobart, Chair
(Note: this section was taken out of order, but the notes were placed here for the sake of readability.)

The group thanked Comm. Hobart for taking on the added responsibility of chairing the committee. Comm. Hobart turned the update over to Jim Cohen.

Many bills were talked about to develop a position for our lobbyists. A few points that came up during this portion of the meeting were as follows:

LD 214 "An Act To Eliminate Qualified Immunity for Police Officers". This could cause the resignation of acting police officers if they feel unprotected by law. Already there are exceptions to immunity as stated in the Maine Tort Claims Act. Comm. Gardner said the bill is malicious and dangerous. MSA has asked for our support of this bill.

Mr. Cohen mentioned there is now an automatic referral of bills to legislative committees based on content.

Comm. Gardner brought up LD 272, "An Act To Establish Separate Prosecutorial Districts in Downeast Maine" which has a public hearing scheduled for February 19th. Judiciary realized there had been no change since 1974. This uncovered a bigger issue and might be more inclined to advance that bill. Washington County is in favor, even to the point of picking up cost on the fiscal note and would like MCCA's support. Comm. Fournier moved to support LD 272, seconded by Comm. Hobart and opened the floor for discussion of the motion. Comm. Baldacci asked what the bill would change. This would add a new district splitting Washington from Hancock County District 7 as the geographic size justifies the need for another district attorney. This is not a reflection on Matt Foster. They would augment the salary to a full-time position.

Some attendees commented this bill only involves two counties and the organization should, therefore maintain neutrality. Norm Fournier withdrew his motion. Comm. Johnson moved to take the position of "Neither for nor against" LD 272. The motion was seconded by Comm. Baldacci and the motion passed.

An LPC Zoom meeting was set for Monday, February 22nd at 9:00 am due to the February 15th holiday.

3. Risk Pool Agency - Norm Fournier and Malcolm Ulmer– Comm. Fournier said there was nothing to report.
4. Affiliate Organization Committee Reports

MACCAM – Admin. Carrie Kipfer said the group had not met since the last MCCA board meeting.

MARP – Kathy Ayers reported at a meeting in January appearing in front of Judiciary regarding confidentiality issues with guardianships. Federal rules are expected to have a negative impact with electronic filing. The association does not want to see that happen. We need to strongly object to this. She will keep the group posted and will continue to work with Jim on this and other probate bills.

MSA – Sheriff Troy Morton reported the group was meeting weekly on Friday to finalize the rewriting of the jail funding bill. They are particularly concerned with the County Coordinating Council language.

The Sheriff's are adamantly opposed to LD 214, "An Act To Eliminate Qualified Immunity for Police Officers". MSA is drafting testimony to oppose. They believe the passing of this bill would cause mass exit of the profession in Maine and asked for MCCA's support in their position. Comm. Fournier moved to oppose LD 214 seconded by Comm. Gardner and the motion passed with a unanimous vot.

5. Other

B. Ad Hoc Committees -

1. Bylaws and Policies Committee – Norm Fournier, Chair

Comm. Fournier thanked members who volunteered to serve on the committee. He plans to schedule a meeting in the next month. They would work on the bylaws first which have not been updated since 2016. Upon completion, they will work on the following policies: financial/investment, purchasing, and the personnel policy. Each document will be brought to

the Board of Directors to consider the changed language. Any revisions will be made and circulated before a vote to adopt the amended documents.

- C. MCCA Staff Reporting – Admin. Lauren Haven said there was nothing significant to report beyond normal operations. She planned to mail out copies of the 2021 Directory of Maine Counties prior to the next board meeting.

VII. New Business

VIII. Adjournment

*MCCA President Steve Gorden invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 12:10 p.m. Comm. Hobart made the **motion** seconded by Comm. Baldacci, and the **motion** was **approved**.*

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, Comm. Norman Fournier