

## MCCA Organizational Structure Survey

**Should MCCA  
hire a full-time  
executive director?**

**Comments:**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| No    | Not at this time. Available funding and disagreement/lack of cohesion among the membership do not make this advisable without serious discussion and consensus between the members.   |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| Yes   | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| Maybe | Hiring a Director would be my preference. However I am very concerned that MCCA will adequately fund the ED Position. Recent history demonstrates adopting a Budget that adequately Funds MCCA.   |
| Yes   | I think the best option is to have a full time (or nearly full time) Executive director. A correct hire could enhance our visibility, and work with needed stake-holders and others to advance the interests of County government as a whole.   |
| Maybe | part time when leg is in session?<br>it's no good to hire part time if it is really needed to be more   |
| No    | See comments below on office manager  |
| No    | How we structure our organization will dictate what we do   |
| Maybe | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| Yes   | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| Yes   | While I offer a "yes" vote on this matter, here are my thoughts which would follow through the rest of the survey.<br>MCCA needs to first and foremost figure out what it is willing to spend. Not just today, but for the future. If we have a full-time ED, then our annual increase is going to be that much more, but we should truly expect 2 - 3% annually at minimal.<br>If not, then the ED is a moot point and one that will not be likely to succeed. |
| Maybe | Depends on budget constraints.  |
| No    | How we structure our organization will dictate what we do   |
| No    | Base on present budget cannot support a full time Executive Director. Dues would have to be increased to go this route.   |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| Yes   | We need a leader to represent us.   |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| No    | We would like a lobbyist for sessions only.   |
| No    | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |

**Should MCCA  
hire a part-time  
executive director?**

**Comments:**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| Maybe | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |
| No    | Not at this time. Available funding and disagreement/lack of cohesion among the membership do not make this advisable without serious discussion and consensus between the members. |
| Yes   | The primary focus of the Exec Dir is lobbying. The organization is not big enough to have a full time director and administrative asst.   |
| Maybe | (There was no comment from this person on this topic.)  |

No	I would prefer MCCA hire a Lobbyist then a Part Time Executive Director. The needs of Counties are 24/7, 365. How can a "Part-Time" Executive Director provide adequate services to meet the demands of each/every County
Maybe	In lieu of a full-time Exec. director, a part time persons would be essential.
Maybe	see above
No	The President and executive officers have the oversight of the office Administrator who completes all official required duties and paperwork of the organization which is extensive and essential for the association to function as a collective governmental organization as our sister municipal and state governmental organizations. (See comments below on Office Manager / Executive Administrator
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	If FT is not affordable, then we need to figure out the next step down. The other aspect which is crucial to the success of MCCA is the future leadership!!! Without strong leadership ... Well, I don't have to tell anyone, right ?? :)
Maybe	Depends on budget constraints.
Yes	Only if individual has legislative experience like a former legislator that has knowledge and respect from both sides of the aisle. Individual can be full time when Legislature in session and a day a week or so when Legislature not in session, to strategize Legislative requests and gain support for the Counties priorities.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	It is a full time job. A part time person could not due the job competently.
Maybe	Depending on the work ethics and skills a candidate possesses . If a position can be combined with a lobbyist then perhaps f/t .
No	Lauren should be the director with a lobbyist working during legislative sessions.
Yes	To work with the BOD to set policy, goals, and objectives and make decisions on which proposed legislative bills to lobby on with a more narrow focus. We cannot afford to spread our resources too thin.
<b>Should MCCA hire a full-time lobbyist?                      Comments:</b>	
Maybe	Depends on the work level during the beginning of the biennium.
No	Not at this time.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	If MCCA were to choose not hiring a Full Time Executive Director, then Yes, I am all in Favor or Hiring a Full Time Lobbyist. This does mean that the Lobbyist/Firm in my Opinion works for MCCA Solely. What this means to me is they are the Face of County for all Lobbying needs in front of the Legislature. Does this mean they work 40 hours or more per week for County...â€¦â€¦No. However it could mean they work 50 hours some weeks and 0 hours for other weeks.
Maybe	Depends upon whether the executive director is effective in this role.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)

No	Since the overall MCCA board lacks a willingness to cover the expense of a fully functioning association, a lobbyist is the second most important position behind the Executive Administrator. Since the thrust of legislative coverage occurs while the legislature sits in session which runs, normally for six months in its first year and four months in the second year, I believe, as a fiscally constrained organization MCCA could best be served by employing an individual to cover The legislature and executive branch on a somewhat flexible / as needed schedule. This would include coverage of out-of-session meetings of the legislature, departments of state related to County operations as well as the MCCA itself.
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	Representing counties at the legislature is a full time commitment. We need a professional not some inexperienced wannabe lobbyist.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	FT lobbyist is not affordable along with any type of ED. Not unless Counties are willing to open up their pocket book and I haven't witnessed that option to date. We should consider Travis / Cumberland with some type of agreement??
Maybe	Depends on budget constraints.
Maybe	Think affordability, might be an issue. Fear if we go with a lobbying firm with numerous clients will not get the necessary attention that will be crucial in the upcoming January session with the State financial crisis. Counties need to be at the table to preserve the gains we have made such as jail funding. More attention needs to be given to the Probate system.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	I'd like the Executive Director to handle that responsibility.
Maybe	Our track record thus far has been to work collectively with other organizations, example MSA or MMA .
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	Not with MCCA's budget constraints.
<b>Should MCCA hire a part-time lobbyist?</b>	
<b>Comments:</b>	
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	This should be a contracted position (avoiding the need to pay benefits) with a professional lobbyist who is effective, articulate and knowledgeable as to how the legislature works. It might be an 8 or 9 month contract during the first biennial session, and possibly a bit less time in the second year. The lobbyist should be responsible for keeping the LPC updated on all facets of legislation that can possibly affect counties, writing and presenting testimony, and tracking the status of bills in committee, etc.
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	See Answer Above
Maybe	Depends upon the Executive Director.
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	See above
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	maybe a former legislator. form the augusta area, so as to be closer to the action....
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)

Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	We definitely need representation under the dome and Charlie surely proved that. Amy and others did a great job while he was out, but not the same connections / access. Along that theme, Commissioners and / or Administrators can help fill this void as well if true representation is desired.
Maybe	Depends on budget constraints.
No	We need somebody full time when the Legislature in session. Things on the 3rd floor change by the hour. Lobbyist a couple of days a week not in County's best interest. Need somebody present in the halls of the Legislature when they are in session because things can change in a moment's notice. Legislators need to be talked to and often cajole.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	we would like a lobbyist for sessions only.
Yes	For matters deemed to be of the utmost importance.
<b>Should the Office Manager's position be changed?</b>	
	<b>Comments:</b>
Yes	Depends on the work level
Maybe	Lauren is already doing the job; in fact, an effective lobbyist should ease some of her work load by taking care of all of the tracking, web postings, emails related to legislative matters. Lauren should not have a need to be the primary lead on this. In addition, the group might consider the need/benefit of continuing the annual conference in the same way. A one day-long session of educational meetings followed by dinner and awards would require tremendously less planning and effort than putting together a three-day session. Although some revenue would be lost, a reduction in other expenses could offset this.
Yes	I would question the number of hours that MCCA really needs office help. I know as one county, I never contact MCCA or ask for any help doing anything. My Executive Admin does a whole lot of coordination in 32 hours a week, which is plenty of time.
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	Lauren don't you like this question? Candidly you are glue that has held the Newest Iteration of MCCA together since the Commissioners ended their relationship with Howe & Associates. I am All In Favor of What you personally feel is the Best Reflection of your Responsibilities today and going forward into the future.
No	Current OM is doing a stellar job. Should not be asked to do more.
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	Executive Administrator Oversees all office operations and functions as Prescribed and assigned by the President and the executive officers. (see current office responsibility)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	could take on a little more management
Yes	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
Yes	This position has to be adjusted in order to tie into the other options.
Maybe	Lauren does a great job and if the budget permits, I would recommend giving her a raise, a new title, and more responsibility.
Maybe	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)
No	(There was no comment from this person on this topic.)

No	I feel Lauren is doing a great job.
No	Currently our office has been very quiet .( Even prior to Covid ). With exception of convention planning the concern is whether this is even a full time position . For the current salary of said
Maybe	To be most effective the scope of work may need to be modified.
Yes	Make her the director.
Maybe	Lauren is a very dedicated, hard working, committed individual and position could change based on Board's decision on full/pt Executive Director or lobbyist.

**General Overall Comments:**

The MCCA might consider creating an organizational chart of committees and develop their charges and memberships. be they assigned /volunteer. It's my belief that for too long most of the required work has fallen to the few; thus, there is not the commitment to the organization and the Counties' reputation with the State and other political structures. It may, also, allow better coordination with other State professional organizations.

Sagadahoc County's overriding priority is the need to preserve MCCA so that the Risk Pool can continue. To accomplish this, the Association needs develop an operational plan that has the flexibility to retain all of our current members. We also see great value in lobbying as a united group when the opportunity arises. Finally, we believe the group needs to reach a consensus as to its future. The steps outlined in the above responses will reverse our progress towards meeting previously approved goals; however, while there could be great value in having the robust organization that was envisioned, the current atmosphere is not conducive to continuing on that path without a true consensus of the membership.

There needs to be a thorough review of all aspects of MCCA from the staffing levels needed (hours per week) to the office space currently in. Can MCCA have smaller office space and have their meetings at Kennebec County's conference room? Or another conference room in a public building somewhere?

I think my first paragraph summed up my thoughts. The struggle as I see it is that even though we are All County Government the needs and wishes are as Different the Geography for each of our Counties. Hence the Large vs. Small County thinking and financing of MCCA. MMA has addressed this concern by having the Service Center Coalition Group and the Rural Caucus. They each can have a position which is in opposition to one another. That is not a Bad thing it just represents the differences between the Two points of view.

MCCA could do a lot more than it does. We should be trying to raise the standards for all counties. We could be offering regular training programs, for instance. We do a good job with things we have historically done (Annual convention is a good example) but we have not been willing or able to look father afield. We had been beginning to build partnerships with other critical organizations (MMA, Sheriffs Association, for example) but these efforts appear to be abandoned at the present time.

A lot of this hinges on what we get for leadership on the executive board and how much time they can dedicate to MCCA

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- > We need appropriate representation in Augusta.
- > Strong qualities in the leadership positions of MCCA
- > PT / FT for the Exec Director is necessary. This need could be assisted and determined by the above comment.
- > There is a way for Risk Pool to play a part in the making of this transition successful.
- > There may need to be a realization that MCCA may have to re-boot before becoming successful. In other words, breakdown and start over!

I would like to review the budget before I commit to a specific course of action.

We need to live within our means . Dramatic cuts are coming forth due to our current situation . Companies are finding it cheaper to have employees work from home vs paying for office space , fringe extras are also being cut or cut back . We need to take a long hard look at our need vs want .

MCAA more than ever because of the upcoming financial crisis due to Covid 19 needs to be a strong united Organization advocating for the Counties best interest so we can remain viable. For example we can't have 16 Counties each testifying for or against a piece of Legislation or advocating certain initiatives or positions with the Governor. We have to stand united.

A lobbyist from a law firm can be retained for a fraction of the cost. I have previously sent some names and links in for professional lobbyists to be considered but Kate Knox is familiar with County Govt. and does a fantastic job. We used her 5 or so years ago and she was excellent!

**Other ideas about MCCA staffing:**

I have no personal issues with staff. They are great and do good work. I just question the full time status.

Cost Consideration: Since we are now in a New Technological ERA, maybe a smaller office configuration would make sense and lower costs. When larger space is Needed renting a Location or asking Kennebec to do as they have in the past and use their Facility. (Maybe offer a Small Payment for this use and/or reduction in their Dues.  
Don't see us going lower in staffing and right now there is not enough "Monies" not necessarily work to fund another.

The success of any staffing and / or Exec Director is solely contingent upon the actions of the Commissioners through the leadership of MCCA.  
As the old saying goes, "Be part of the solution and not part of the problem".  
All comments above are respectfully stated!!! :)

Just like in the county govts, a responsible clerk is all that is needed. Most counties are top heavy in administrative salaries.

I believe a part-time clerk to handle the more routine daily office tasks would be a benefit to the office manager.

Need to resolve first the PT/Full time ED or lobbyist position.

**Survey Participants:**

Aroostook County	Commissioners Norman Fournier and Paul Adams
Cumberland County	Commissioners Steve Gorden, Tom Coward and Manager Jim Gailey
MCCA	Executive Director Charles Pray
Hancock County	Commissioner Antonio Blasi and Admin. Scott Adkins
Kennebec County	Commissioner Nancy Rines and Admin. Bob Devlin
Knox County	Commissioner Sharyn Pohlman
Lincoln County	Commissioner Bill Blodgett
Oxford County	Commissioner Steven Merrill
Penobscot County	Administrator Bill Collins
Piscataquis County	Commissioner Wayne Erkinen
Sagadahoc County	Commissioners Charles Crosby, Brian Hobart and Carol Grose
Somerset County	Commissioner Newell Graf (submitted by Admin. Dawn DiBlasi)
Waldo County	Commissioner Amy Fowler
Washington County	Commissioner Chris Gardner
York County	Commissioner Mike Cote