

## OXFORD SS.

At the Court of Oxford County Commissioners begun and held at Paris, Maine within and for the County of Oxford at 9:00 AM on April 17, 2012 being a regular session, there were present:

Steven M. Merrill, Chairman  
Dave Duguay, Commissioner  
Caldwell Jackson, Commissioner  
Scott G. Cole, Administrator  
Becky Secrest, Commissioners Clerk

Various county employees, media representatives, and members of the general public were present at different times throughout the session.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### 9:01 Approve Minutes of Meeting Held March 28:

The minutes for the March 28 Commissioners meeting were tabled until later in the afternoon.

The agenda was adopted unanimously. The Chairman asked for public comment. There were no comments.

### 9:02 Dr. Dwight Hines, Right to Petition

Dr. Hines presented a letter to the Commissioners stating his intention to bring a federal suit against Deputy Sheriff Tim Holland for violations of his US Constitutional First Amendment rights and for violations of Maine's anti-SLAPP law; and to notify the Commissioners that several towns in Oxford County will likely be negatively affected by their failures to comply with Maine Freedom Of Information (FOI) laws. Dr. Hines expounded on his reasons for taking this action for several minutes. Chairman Merrill stated he had no comment at the present time but would take the matter under consideration. The Chairman further stated that all Commissioners had taken the FOI course.

### 9:10 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Roy Gedat handed the Commissioners his report highlighting the following topics:

- last week's payroll;
- payables – still need to integrate UT payments into payables approval system, and a request to establish a policy requiring two signatures on checks over \$10,000;
- cash position – noting the upcoming Board of Corrections payment of \$93,536;
- operations – financial reports went to department heads last Friday; the updated capital reserve account balance sheet was distributed; TD Bank account is still

open due to the fact that Probate numbers do not reconcile; and MUNIS training and a meeting with the new financial consulting firm are being scheduled.

#### 9:17 Items for Discussion and Action

- 1) Update from Maine County Commissioners Association: Howe and Cahill will be done as of the end of June. MCCA will be moving to offices located on Rt. 27 in north Augusta. Obtaining rooms for the conference in September are the responsibility of the county. Assistant Administrator Judy Haas is making reservations for the Commissioners and Administrator.
- 2) Authorize \$93,537 payment to Board of Corrections Investment Fund (2<sup>nd</sup> half of FY 12): A short discussion ensued around paying into a system for which solvency is somewhat in question. Consideration of payment is done to protect the fiscal integrity of the county. Commissioners unanimously approved authorization of the payment stating they would scrutinize the matter more closely prior to the November payment due date.
- 3) Authorize Purchase of Photocopier for Probate Office: The Administrator has received four bids for a copier purchase. The Commissioners tabled reviewing the bids until later in the afternoon. Since they approved the purchase at a not-to-exceed amount at last month's meeting, no other action was deemed necessary.

#### 9:30 Department Heads

- 1) EMA Director Allyson Hill stated she was halfway through getting the required towns' signatures on the Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution. Coincidentally, the Federal Emergency Management Agency sent a letter to all towns which do not participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) explaining the benefits of NFIP. Gilead is the only town in Oxford County that does not participate in NFIP. Director Hill said she would also be promoting the benefits of NFIP participation when she visited the selectmen's meeting to gain their signature on the Hazard Mitigation Plan Resolution. Director Hill and Assistant Administrator Haas met with Maine Forest Service Rangers Kent Nelson and Keith Smith last week. The Forest Service is actively promoting its service. They are currently rolling out a Community Wildfire Protection Plan through Northern Oxford Mutual Aid and Western Maine Fire Association to make home owners aware of steps they can take to mitigate wildfire losses. All Kenwood radios and pagers have been received and distributed. The state has requested bids for Motorola radios which should come back by April 25<sup>th</sup>. There is also some additional Public Safety Interoperability Communications (PSIC) funding for radios. The EMA is currently gathering information from Oxford County towns, schools and public works departments to determine who needs radios, how many and what type they need. Oxford EMA resubmitted the ham radio portion of the RCC homeland security grant which was not previously funded but there is the chance that the resubmission will be approved to complete the original project goals for the

communications trailer project. The EMA staff will attend the MEMA conference on April 24 and 25. There will be a shooter drill at Stephens Memorial Hospital on April 28. The Rumford Community Home table top exercise will be on May 2. The Commissioners inquired if the EMA has been using social media to post the fire conditions. Director Hill stated that Deputy Director Glick is the point person for posting those notices and she has been posting regularly. Commissioner Duguay asked how easy it would be for the Director to be connected to necessary communications should there be an incident when the office is unstaffed. Director Hill stated she has a 24 hour cell phone and carries a laptop with her for establishing communications in an emergency in Oxford County.

- 2) Administrator Scott Cole said the work on the fire suppression system and fire alarm system in the court house is on-going. The electronics have been fixed after tracing a crushed wire to the District Attorney's office. A few speakers still need to be replaced. On another topic the Administrator mentioned the labor and costs associated with removing the winter sand from the parking lot and suggested looking into using another material (pure salt? calcium?) and/or working with a contractor that is up on the latest technologies to address issues such as pre-treating before a storm.
- 3) Geff Inman, Assistant to the RCC Director discussed a recent fire on Tumble Down Dick Mountain in Gilead. Recent communications training and use of the communications trailer were beneficial to fighting the fire. The trailer was up and running at 7:00AM and within a half hour all radio traffic was linked for maximum communication with minimal interference. A dispatcher in the trailer eliminated a need to relay communications through the Oxford County RCC in South Paris and streamlined all communications on-scene. As a result of the training that took place at the Communications Conference, most county fire chiefs are very interested in having ham radio capability. Many are signing up to obtain a ham radio license. Ham radios can operate on a broader range of frequencies because they are not required to switch to narrowband. On a side note, the Administrator mentioned a long term goal of removing the radio antennas from the roof of the court house building to improve the historical aesthetics of the building. There was no objection to this suggestion.
- 4) Treasurer Roy Gedat opened with thanks to Maintenance Director Hazel Paakkonen for the successful e-waste collection donation to the Norway /Paris Kiwanis club. There was a brief discussion regarding a donation to the Norway/Paris Kiwanis to help offset the cost to dispose of discarded electronics. No decision was made. Financial reports were distributed to each department last Friday and Roy encouraged department heads to review them and note any discrepancies or changes that need to be made. Treasurer Gedat expressed an interest in getting grants approved in the budget process earlier next year if at all possible, and encouraged the administration to develop a standard form/policy for employee reimbursement to replace the multiple forms currently being used.

Commissioner Duguay expressed his appreciation to the department heads that showed up for the meeting. Chairman Merrill and Commissioner Jackson expressed their gratitude as well.

10:08 Commissioners took a short break

10:15 Items for Discussion and Action

4) Authorize Execution of Agreement w/MSAD #17 re Backup Communications

Location: After a brief discussion on the need to create a list of all county fixed assets in each departments and designating who will be responsible for the maintenance of said equipment, the Commissioners unanimously approved the execution of stated agreement with MSAD 17.

5) Approve Applications for Liquor License Renewals: After a brief discussion regarding when an actual hearing is required, it was determined the first application requires a hearing and after that hearings are optional. The Commissioners unanimously approved liquor license renewals for Bosebuck Mountain Camps in Lynchtown and Cupsuptic Lake Park and Campground in Adamstown.

6) Request from New England Forest Rally to Close Portion South Arm Rd, Friday July 13, 2-6 PM: The Administrator stated he had called one of the residents to notify them of the closure. He did not receive a reply. Commissioner Duguay placed a call to the second resident identified as needing notification of the closing and a final decision was tabled until later in the meeting to await a reply from either caller.

7) Winter Closure of Certain Roads in the Unorganized Territory: In response to the Commissioner's request for a resolution defining the extent of winter maintenance on county roads, this item will continue to be on the list until June when the on-going project is expected to be completed. In the process the county has purchased a high end odometer for measuring roads, corrected some road signs that were incorrectly placed, and other actions.

8) Policy on requests for Waiver of Vehicular Weight Limits in Unorganized Territory: Several weeks prior a request from Lowe's of Auburn, Maine to travel on posted roads in Milton Township to deliver material was approved by the Administrator. He asked how the Commissioners would like to handle these requests in the future. The Commissioners agreed the Administrator should continue to deal with the requests on a case-by-case basis.

#### 10:45 Executive Session:

The Commissioners unanimously voted to enter executive session to discuss labor negotiations.

- Corrections Officers (NCEU)
- Patrol Deputies (OCDA)
- Dispatch Employees (AFSCME)
- Dispatch Supervisors (AFSCME)

The commissioners came out of executive session at 12:50 PM and took no action. A brief inconsequential conversation took place before adjourning for lunch at 12:53PM. The Commissioners and Administrator traveled to the county airport and met with airport agents Phil Simpson and Todd Sawyer on site to inspect tree clearing projects and the new fuel system.

#### 2:30 The Commissioners reconvened over an informal bag lunch.

#### 2:40 Personnel Actions

- Electronic Timekeeping Update: A module to interface an electronic time clock to MUNIS has been ordered.
- Wage Review Update: Annalee Rosenblatt stated the report would be ready for the May Commissioners meeting.
- Policy Review, Amendment and Expansion: Administrator Cole is keeping a running list of policies that need attention and this is a work in progress. It was noted among other topics, computer use and two signatures on checks over a certain amount are two areas of policy development that will be addressed.
- Review and Update Mileage Reimbursement Rate as Needed: after a review of mileages rates for other agencies used to determine the county rate, it was determined the rate would remain at \$0.50/mile.
- Approve Job Description – Jail Operations Officer: After a brief clarification that this is a position without rank and does fall into an existing classification the Commissioners unanimously approved the job description for Jail Operations Officer.
- Accept Resignation of Member of Board of Assessment Review: The Commissioners unanimously accepted the resignation of Jodi Keniston of Albany from the Oxford County Board of Assessment Review (OXBAR).
- Appointment to Board of Assessment Review: As a follow-up the Commissioners unanimously voted to appoint Sheila Delameter of Rumford to OXBAR and acknowledged they still need to find another person to sit on OXBAR. The discussion followed that they are looking for someone with formal assessing training and will work to insure members are equally representative of the various disciplines (attorney, appraiser, assessor, and realtor) and equally representative across the county.
- Authorize Hiring of District Attorney Legal Secretary: The Administrator recommended hiring Suzanna Gallant of Norway to the position of Legal Secretary. The commissioners unanimously approved the action.

3:10 Items for Discussion (continued):

- 14) Update from Western Maine Economic Development Council: (WMEDC) Glenn Holmes provided an overview of current WMEDC activities including highlights about Envision Rumford and a series of zip lines that are planned to attract visitors; Western Maine Passport to the Arts; LURC reform and an effort to encourage other areas to adopt zoning similar to the approach used in the Rangeley area; tourism; and efforts to work with clients to match them to appropriate funding sources when possible or otherwise providing assistance to businesses either trying to grow or become established in Oxford County. He especially noted the potential business growth opportunities for restaurants, lounges and lodging establishments due to the Casino opening in June.
- 9) Policy on Countywide Communications Originating at Commissioners Office: There was a brief discussion on countywide communications and future protocols for information distribution. No action was taken.
- 10) Anticipated Impact of Record Hill Wind Project Valuation on Roxbury's County Tax: There was a lengthy discussion about how taxes are determined and the Administrator provided some background on previous tax rates and projected tax rates for future years. The essential outcome was that although Roxbury's taxes to the county could increase as much as three-fold, the individual tax rate per \$1,000 property value will actually drop. Since Roxbury is undergoing revaluation, calculations presented were only estimates.
- 11) Participation in Maine Power Options Programs: The general consensus of the Administrator and Commissioners is they have an obligation to look at alternatives in order to provide the best option for taxpayers.
- 12) Rental of Sheriff's Sub-Station in Bethel: This item was listed in response to a constituent's concern over taxes paying for housing the Sheriff's office in Bethel. It was explained that the cost of the office space is included in Bethel's payment for law enforcement coverage.
- 13) Accept Sheriff's Property Acquired Through Defense Reutilization Management Office: For clarification, a review of this item will be put on the May agenda.
- 14) WMEDC (previously addressed, see #14 above)
- 15) Administrator Chair Purchase: Administrator Cole previously purchased an office chair for \$515 for which he offered to pay if the Commissioners deemed it necessary. It was suggested that in the future, all purchases of this type should be passed by the Commissioners prior to purchasing.
- 16) Administrator Task List: The highest priorities are being dealt with and the Administrator will update the task list for the May meeting.

3:50 Coordination w/ U.S. Forest Service re Tyler Rd Improvements in Mason Township: The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) presented the draft plan for construction on Tyler Road including bridge improvements and culvert installation, stating all work is contingent on coordinating with the MDOT engineer to load rate the bridges. The USFS representatives requested help from the Commissioners in getting a response from Ben Foster, an MDOT representative. Commissioner Jackson agreed to attempt to contact Mr. Foster and request his attention to this matter. The forest service is prepared to put approximately \$70,000 into the road construction which will include some tree cutting, light ditching and upgrading bridges to the legal 100,000 pound load limit. The requested date for Commissioners' signatures on the agreement with the USFS is May 15.

4:08 Executive Session:

The Commissioners unanimously agreed to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter. They came out of executive session and took no action. The Commissioners again unanimously agreed to enter executive session to discuss a second personnel matter. They came out of executive session at 5:00 PM and again took no action.

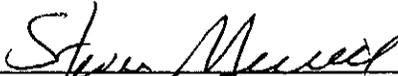
5:02 Airport Matters:

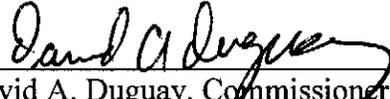
A brief discussion on airport matters ensued. The Administrator stated he was working on developing a new lease arrangement that would put the county in the best position possible. He further stated that to be audit compliant the Commissioners need to pass a formal resolution to spend the money on the airport even if it is after the fact. Stating that all bills should be in by next month Commissioners agreed to take up the matter at the May meeting. Commissioner Jackson commented that once the casino is open the county will receive a weekly deposit which could help offset the airport expenditures. The Commissioner further expressed his desire for casino money to be split fifty-fifty between the general budget and capital improvement.

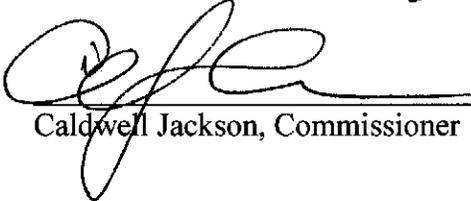
5:10 Tabled items:

- Approve Minutes of Meetings held March 28: The Commissioners unanimously approved the minutes with corrections.
- Authorize Purchase of Photocopier for Probate Office: The Commissioners unanimously authorized Administrator Cole to complete this action based on input from Register of Probate Bruce Rood.
- Request from New England Forest Rally to Close Portion South Arm Rd, Friday July 13, 2-6 PM: The Commissioners, stating the closure will never be the best for camp owners, unanimously approved the road closure with the condition it works for camp owners to access their camps. The Administrator also added that this event is good for local commerce and it would be a shame to lose it due to difficulty with road closure.
- There was a question about a particular disbursement and Treasurer Gedat stated it was a civil process refund.
- The Commissioners took note of a \$5,800 overdraft on the labor relations budget line item.

No other bills or accounts were given consideration on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2012. The Commissioners adjourned at 5:30 PM.

  
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Steven M. Merrill, Chairman

  
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David A. Duguay, Commissioner

  
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Caldwell Jackson, Commissioner

  
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Scott G. Cole, Administrator