

M.C.C.A.

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Penobscot County Commissioner

Thomas Coward, Vice President
Cumberland County Commissioner

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MCCA Legislation Development Committee *DRAFT* Meeting Minutes 10:00 a.m., Thursday, May 26, 2016

I. Call to Order & Attendance

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. The following were present: Comm. Peter Baldacci, Comm. William Blodgett, Sheriff Todd Brackett, Comm. Mike Cote, Comm. Steve Gorden, Comm. Newell Graf, Jail Adm. Cory Swope, and Executive Director Rosemary Kulow.

Comm. Cote nominated Steve Gorden as chairman, and there being no further nominations, all voted in favor of Comm. Gorden's serving as chairman.

II. Review Mission of Committee

A. Provide Guidance for the Creation of Legislation

1. Strive for flexible language that will allow counties to either opt in or out of compliance with the legislation's mandates.
2. MCCA's position on legislation will be determined by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Individual counties will be able to pursue different legislative courses of action if it is in their best interest to do so.

B. Develop County Government Legislation for Next Legislative Session

1. Legislation for County Jails – Review Existing Law & Recommend Changes

Several basic premises regarding jail legislation were identified, including the following:

- Committee members should re-read and become more familiar with P.L. Ch. 335 to fully understand how it should be revised.
- County commissioners should work and communicate with their county department heads/sheriffs and others to agree on and formulate their county's position on legislative matters.

- Committee members want a better understanding of the history of the jail issue.
- County jails should receive a portion of their funding from the State of Maine, and counties should track and provide data to justify the portion of jail costs that is the State's responsibility.
- Funds for Community Corrections programs should be defined and kept separate from other state funding.
- A cap on the portion of local property tax revenue raised for jail budgets should remain as defined in P.L. Ch. 335 (*with potential for adjustment by the county's LDI growth factor up to a maximum of 3%*) with the current dollar amounts re-evaluated and adjusted.
- Counties should illustrate efficiencies and effectiveness of jail operations to help encourage State investment in the county correctional system.
- The State's responsibility for helping to address the opiate addiction crisis as it affects county jails should be further defined.
- "Receiving" counties should be allowed to charge inmate boarding fees to "sending" counties, without restrictions placed on them by state legislation.

2. Survey County Governments for Ideas for Other Legislation

Individual county boards will solicit ideas for other legislation from their board and department heads and bring the legislative proposals back to the MCCA Board of Directors and Legislation Development Committee (LDC).

Comm. Gorden said he would like to see a change in current legislation that allocates E-911 fee revenue to the State Police E-911 bureau. He would like a portion of that revenue to go to emergency communication centers.

Sheriff Brackett said he would like a portion of speeding ticket revenue shared with local government, including counties.

3. Review & Analyze Survey Results

4. Develop Bills for Consideration by the Legislative Policy Committee

B. Plan and Host a Forum for Candidates and State Legislators

Individual counties will host forums for their legislators and candidates in September and October. MCCA staff will distribute a forum format and questionnaire for counties to use, so that data can be relatively easily compiled and analyzed to determine results. The forums will be used to educate legislators and candidates about issues facing county governments, ascertain opinions about county-related issues, and solicit support for county government issue positions.

III. Develop Strategy & Timeline

- July 2016 – All county boards will have an item on their agendas to obtain ideas for legislation from county commissioners and department heads.
- August 2016 – Counties will present their ideas for legislation to the MCCA Legislation Development Committee and the MCCA Board of Directors for consideration and development.

- September-October 2016 – Counties host forums for their legislators and candidates for the state legislature to educate them about county government related issues, ascertain their opinions about county issues, and solicit their support for MCCA/county positions on potential legislation.
- January 2017 – potentially a legislative forum/breakfast in Augusta jointly sponsored by MCCA and the MSA

The LDC will meet monthly to carry out its mission. The committee will develop a more detailed strategy and timeline in the near future.

IV. Assign Tasks & Homework

Sheriff Brackett will provide an executive summary of county jail history and related statutes.

Ms. Kulow will provide copies of the “Flannigan Report” to the committee, as it includes a history of the jail funding issue.

V. Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting of the LDC will be at 10:00 a.m., Monday, June 20, 2016 at the MCCA office.

VI. Other Business

No additional business was discussed.

VII. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted:


Rosemary E. Kulow, MCCA Executive Director

