

M.C.C.A.

Richard Dutremble, President
York County

Norm Fournier, Vice President
Aroostook County

George Jabar, Secretary-Treasurer
Kennebec County

Stephen Gorden, Past President
Cumberland County

William Blodgett, Emeritus
Lincoln County



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Lauren Haven
Administrator

MAINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASSOCIATION

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

June 12th, 2024 at 10:00 am via Zoom

1. Call to Order

MCCA President Richard Dutremble called the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 am.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Androscoggin – Admin. Jeff Chute proxy for Comm. Garrett Mason
Aroostook – Comm. Norman Fournier
Cumberland – Comm. Steve Gorden
Franklin – Comm. Bob Carlton
Kennebec – Comm. George Jabar
Knox – Comm. Sharyn Pohlman
Oxford – Interim Admin. Abby Shanor proxy for Comm. Steven Merrill
Penobscot – Comm. Peter Baldacci
Piscataquis – Manager Mike Williams proxy for Comm. Paul Davis
Sagadahoc – Admin. Amber Jones proxy for Comm. Charles Crosby
Somerset – Comm. Robert Sezak
Waldo – Comm. Betty Johnson
York – Comm. Richard Dutremble

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

Androscoggin – Comm. Garrett Mason
Hancock – Comm. John Wombacher
Lincoln – Comm. William Blodgett
Oxford – Comm. Steven Merrill
Sagadahoc – Comm. Charles Crosby
Washington – Comm. Chris Gardner

OTHERS PRESENT:

MCCA Risk Pool - Manager Malcolm Ulmer
MCCA - Admin. Lauren Haven
Kennebec – Comm. Joe Pietroski
Knox – Admin. Lance Govang
Somerset – Admin. Tim Curtis
Verrill Dana – Lobbyists Jim Cohen and Brody Haverly-Johndro

2. Consent Agenda:

- 2.1. Approval of the Agenda
- 2.2. Approval of the Minutes
- 2.3. Financial Reports: Lauren Haven

President Dutremble requested a motion to move the consent agenda. Comm. Fournier made the **motion** which was **seconded** by Comm. Gorden, and the motion to approve the consent agenda **passed** with no opposition.

3. Officer Reports:

- 3.1. Secretary/Treasurer, George Jabar
- 3.2. Vice President, Norm Fournier

Comm. Fournier, Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee reported that the CD which the Board of Directors voted to acquire had been purchased.

- 3.3. President Report, Richard Dutremble

Comm. Dutremble reported that he was now working for the City of Biddeford on a part-time basis.

4. Standing Committee Reports:

- 4.1. NACo Update: Peter Baldacci & Sharyn Pohlman

Comm. Pohlman reported there was a threat to overturn the ARPA rules which was overturned. Currently, the money must be obligated by the end of December 2024, then the contracted work needs to be completed by the end of 2026. Comm. Baldacci said NACo is supporting a long-term reauthorization of the Farm Bill to help counties provide critical investments in our nation's most underserved communities. NACo supports rural economic development initiatives, education and nutrition programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). NACo will have its Annual Conference in Tampa, Florida from July 12th to July 15th.

- 4.2. Convention Planning Committee: Lauren Haven

Admin. Lauren Haven reported that the Convention Planning Committee had held a hybrid meeting on June 7th. The next meeting will be at Sugarloaf in July for a food tasting and walk through of the event space. The planning was ongoing for educational sessions, fun activities, food and entertainment. She invited interested county representatives to join the committee. Registration was expected to open in July for the September conference.

4.3. Legislative Policy Committee: Steve Gorden, Chair

4.3.1. James Cohen, Verrill Dana

- Legislative Update
- Next Steps

Lobbyist Brody Haverly-Johndro announced he was leaving Verrill Dana on July 1st for a position in Washington DC. Although he enjoyed working with us, he was looking forward to new challenges.

Lobbyist Jim Cohen talked about educating the legislators about county issues. He recommended scheduling a tour of the jail with legislators. It is important for new legislative committee members to understand our position on jail finances. Secondly, he said we need to work with the administration. MCCA and/or MSA needs to have a conversation with the Governor's political advisor, Mary Anne Turowski, about jail budget shortfalls. Admin. Scott Ferguson, who is gathering data, has asked for the county jail budget numbers by July 1st to demonstrate the need for additional funding. Comm. Gorden said we need to make sure the CRAS reports have been submitted to the Department of Corrections through May.

Mr. Cohen said the Legislature adjourned with hundreds of bills left hanging. Unless the Legislature goes back into session, these bills will probably die via the pocket veto mechanism in which the bills will be left unsigned until it is too late for it to be dealt with during the legislative session. Admin. Tim Curtis said it makes sense to focus on Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT) as the Governor has shown an interest in funding it. Jim said one approach that would be in our best interest would be some annual percentage. That way, as costs increase, the amount distributed to counties would also increase. It would be similar to school funding; 20% or some other relative number should be provided by the state on an annual basis. We can't argue that MAT is an unfunded mandate because, although the amount wasn't sufficient, four million dollars had been allocated in the supplemental budget for MAT. Admin. Jeff Chute said he was a jail administrator for twelve years. In his opinion, MAT is a driver but there are other needs. We don't want money to be set aside only for MAT. The problem is that the pool of money is limited, and everyone is fighting over the same dollars. Comm. Baldacci said Penobscot County had to use ARPA money to support their jail. Jim said if we want to push the argument that the jails need more money due to unfunded mandates, we might consider going to court to determine exactly what is the definition of an unfunded mandate. If we want to elevate the issue it would need to be a lawsuit which we might lose, but it would be the only way to get the question answered.

Comm. Gorden inquired about the policy language that extended the holding time from six months to nine months in county jails. Mr. Cohen said he could look into that for us. Comm. Fournier asked if Mr. Cohen could put together a document for all the counties summarizing our priorities for the next legislative session. Comm. Gorden said we should also write something with general information about county commissioners and what do they do. The group talked about contacting candidates prior to elections. Lauren said she could get a list of candidates in each county.

Jim requested that Comm. Gorden schedule a Legislative Policy Committee meeting. After some discussion, the date was set for Monday, June 24th at 11:00 am via Zoom.

5. Association Reports - MACCAM, MARP, MRODA, MSA, others.

6. Adjournment

President Dutremble invited a **motion** to adjourn at approximately 10:50 a.m. Comm. Fournier made the **motion, seconded** by Comm. Gorden, and the motion passed **unanimously**. The group thanked Brody for his help on legislative projects and wished him the best of luck in future endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,



MCCA Administrator, Lauren Haven

Attested:

MCCA Secretary-Treasurer, George Jabar