

Minutes

PRESENT: Commissioner Carlton, Commissioner Fowler, Commissioner Gilbert, Commissioner Saviello, and Commissioner Skolfield

The meeting was held via: Zoom

Franklin County Commissioners' Meeting

July 1, 2025

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Carlton at 10:00 a.m.

AUDIENCE: Mt. Blue T.V, Earl Martin, Scott Nichols, Donna Perry, Robert Lightbody, Jake Ducharme, Richard Morton, Joyce Morton, Tamara Benson, Margot Joly, Brad Timberlake, Sarah Caton, Dave St. Laurent, Ryan Close, Neil McLean, Susan Black, Nathan Hiltz, Sue Pratt, Jake Nichols, Pam Prodan, Amy Bernard, Jamie Sullivan and Brenda Bittle.

Zoom: Eric Geisman, Charlie Woodworth

Executive Session 1 MRS 405 (6) (D) Labor Negotiations: Teamsters

Motion to enter Executive Session 1 MRS 405 (6) (D) Labor Negotiations: Teamsters at 10:01 a.m.: Tom Skolfield/Fen Fowler (5/0).

Motion to exit Executive Session 1 MRS 405 (6) (D) Labor Negotiations: Teamsters at 10:43 a.m.: Tom Skolfield/Jeff Gilbert (5/0). No Action Taken

RECOGNITION: Commissioner Carlton recognized Franklin County EMA, Maine Health EMS, Maine State EMA, Farmington Fire Department Farmington Police Department, Franklin County Sheriffs, Franklin County Regional Communication Center, Kingfield Fire Department, Strong Fire Department, Phillips Fire Department, Maine Warden Service, Maine State Police, Oxford County Sheriffs, RSU 9, Stratton School District, MSAD 58, Norway Police Department, Franklin County Commissioner's Office, and Franklin County IT Department for their role in the active shooter training that took place on June 26, 2025.

Sheriff Nichols commended Sergeant Close for his exemplary presentation at the National Sheriffs Association Annual Conference in Florida regarding suicide among law enforcement.

APPOINTMENTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Administrator's Report – Motion to accept the Administrator's Report: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

2. **Minutes – Motion to accept the Minutes of June 17, 2025, as presented: Tom Skolfield/Jeff Gilbert (5/0).**
3. **Treasurer's Report – Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report: Tom Skolfield/Fen Fowler (5/0).**
4. **Jensen Baird – Release of files to Libby O'Brien Kinglsey & Champion – Motion to authorize Chair to sign the letter to Jensen Baird requesting the release of legal files to Libby O'Brien Kinglsey & Champion: Tom Skolfield/Fen Fowler (5/0).**
5. **Personnel Policy – Elected Official Benefit Stipend –** Commissioner Saviello requested that we get a legal review on the reallocation of the county funds after the budget committee process. The County Administrator indicated that in order to remove the stipend for health, vision and dental for the Commissioners that is indicated in the Personnel Policy, the policy would need to be changed and approved by the Board. Commissioner Saviello indicated that Title 30A § 922 addresses how this can be done. Title 30A § 922 allows the commissioners to transfer funds from one specific appropriation to another within the same department of agency if the initial appropriation is insufficient to cover the required expenditure, however this must be a written request and be approved by the Commissioners. Commissioner Saviello also reiterated that any contingency funds used must be used for emergency purposes only. He requested that Title 30 A § 922 and Title 30 A § 874 be referenced in the Minutes and clarification made by the county attorney. **Motion to table: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
6. **Legal Consult**
 - A. **Reallocation of County Funds After Budget Committee Reductions –** Commissioner Saviello drafted a letter to the county attorney requesting a legal opinion regarding the commissioner's authority of the reallocation of funds after the budget committee process. **Motion to seek a legal opinion on the budget committee's actions with the changes discussed: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (5/0).**
 - B. **County Reporting Structure of Elected Officials –** Commissioner Saviello would like a legal opinion regarding the elected officials, their job descriptions and who they report to. **Motion to send a letter to the County Attorney requesting clarification of the reporting structure of the elected officials: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (5/0).**
7. **Set Interest Rate for late Tax Payment from towns –** The Commissioner discussed the interest rate on late tax payments from the towns after the 60-day grace period. The State of Maine interest in late payments is set at not to exceed 7%. **Motion to set interest rate for late tax payments from the towns at 4.5%: Fen Fowler/Tom Saviello, Motion to amend interest rate for late tax payments from the towns at 4%: Fen Fowler/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
8. **Use of County Vehicle Policy -** Sheriff Nichols offered one of the department's vehicles that has been taken off the fleet to be used as a countywide vehicle for employees to use for business purposes instead of using their personal vehicle. If accepted the current County Vehicle Use policy would need to be modified. Some departments spoke that they have budgeted for mileage and the use of a countywide vehicle would not work for their department. The HR Director indicated that a schedule would be created for the use of the vehicle, and it would decrease the potential liability for the employee and the county. **Motion to accept Franklin County Sheriff vehicle for use of a County-wide vehicle: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

Motion to table revision of the Use of County Vehicle Policy: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).

9. **Discuss installing badge access for Main Street entrance at Courthouse – A discussion was had regarding the locking and unlocking of the Courthouse. Facilities will still be responsible for locking and unlocking the door until the automated lock and key system are in place. Motion to purchase an automated lock with key system from A3 Communications for \$3,223.74 out of the Building Reserve fund: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (3/0).**

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Sign TIF Application – Plog Project, Madrid Township – Motion to sign TIF Application for Plog Project Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (5/0). Motion for County Administrator to sign the Application for Federal Assistance SF-424: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
2. **Compensatory Time Policy – Commissioner Saviello requested the proposed policy be sent to legal for review. This policy establishes guidelines for accruing comp time for all exempt employees. Motion to send Compensatory Time Policy out for legal review: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (3/2) Commissioner Carlton and Commissioner Gilbert opposed.**
3. **Inclement Weather – Office Closure Policy - Commissioner Saviello requested the proposed policy be sent to legal for review. This policy establishes procedures for employees' work expectations during extreme weather events when the offices close. Motion to send Inclement Weather – Office Closure Policy out for legal review: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (3/2) Commissioner Carlton and Commissioner Gilbert opposed.**

MISCELLANEOUS:


1. Sergeant Close provided an update on the COSSUP Grant. The Comprehensive Opioid Simulant Substance Use Program started July 1, 2025, at the jail with its data collection and re-entry planning. The plan is to begin giving out their first doses of subicaid injections in two weeks.
2. The Sheriff's office is looking to fund a device that will aid in search and rescue 75% of the purchase would be provided through grant funds, and 25% through their budget, however, they are requesting to use the preferred vendor versus sending out an RFP due to purchasing restrictions through the grant. **Motion to allow the Sheriff's office to use a preferred vendor to purchase a product to aid in search and rescue: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (4/1) Commissioner Fowler opposed.**
3. Tamra Benson the Community Resilience Director from the Center for an Ecology-Based Economy, spoke regarding the opportunity through the Community Resilience Partnership to apply for an annual Community Action Grant of up to \$75,000 per grant cycle. Letters of support deadline for the program is August 1, 2025.


4. Amy informed the Commissioners that we received the quote from Central Maine Power for the Courthouse electrical project. This is a separate Warrant for \$32,578.54 that is being paid with the ARPA interest.
5. Amy informed the Commissioners that the District Attorney's office was looking for badge access for one of the side doors for when they have court. A3 Communications provided a quote for approximately \$6,898.60. She is looking to use the lease funds that were budgeted for, which is \$6,000. The remaining balance will be paid out of the facilities. **Motion to use budgeted lease funds to pay A3 Communications for badge access for a side for the District Attorney's office: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
6. **Tax in Lieu Payment** – U.S. Department of Interior issues payments under the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program. This payment is based on acreage. Since the government cannot tax federal land, the Payment in Lieu of Taxes payments help to defray costs associated with that land. **Motion to Accept Payment in Lieu of Taxes in the amount of \$21,643 from the Federal Government: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

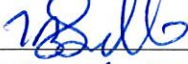
WARRANTS: Payroll, County AP, UT, and Payroll: Motion to sign Warrants: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).


ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 1:15 p.m.: Tom Skolfield/Fen Fowler (5/0).

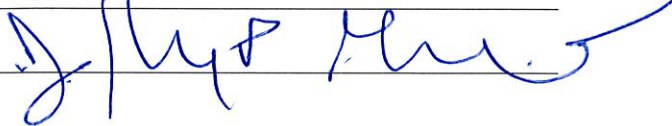
A recording is available for this meeting.



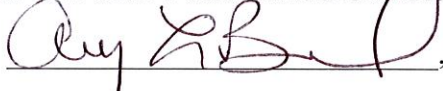








FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST: , CLERK