

Minutes

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

The meeting was held via: Zoom

Franklin County Commissioners' Meeting October 21, 2025

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

AUDIENCE: Mt. Blue T.V, Tamra Benson, Jordan Plog, Raymond Plog, Naomi Henderson, Earl Martin, Nathan Hiltz, Robert Lightbody, Scott Nichols, Ryan Close, Jake Nichols, Jake Ducharme, Susan Black, Heidi Jordan, Hart Daley, Brad Timberlake, David Rackliffe, Pam Prodan, Amy Bernard, Tiffany Baker and Jamie Sullivan.

ZOOM: Donna Perry

Executive Session 1 MRS 405(6)(A) – Personnel Matter – Follow-up of Employee Complaint Motion to enter Executive Session 1 MRS 405(6)(A) – Personnel Matter – Follow-up of Employee Complaint at 10:01 a.m.: Bob Carlton/Tom Skolfield. Commissioner Saviello indicated that he wanted to exercise his right under 1 MRS 405(6)(A)(3) to request that the complaint filed against him be held in public in an open session. **Motion to Table Executive Session: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).** **Motion to permit the chair to consult with the Attorney regarding the procedural legal ramifications: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**

RECOGNITION: Commissioner Carlton thanked Mike Uhas for his generous donation of the hand-crafted wooden Welcome to Franklin County Bear that is located in the main lobby of the Emergency Operations Center.

APPOINTMENTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Administrator's Report – Motion to accept the Administrator's Report: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
Motion to approve the hiring of Catherine Durost for the Administrative Assistant position at the Sheriff's office: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).
Motion to approve the hiring of William Johnson for the full-time corrections officer position: Tom Skolfield/Jeff Gilbert (5/0).
- 2. Minutes – Motion to approve the Minutes of October 7, 2025, as presented: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

3. **Treasurer's Report – Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
4. **Farmington Downtown Association – Courthouse Tree/holiday lights –** The Downtown Association is requesting to put lights on the Courthouse tree again this holiday season. The plan is to have the tree lit for Chester Greenwood Day and be taken down at the end of the year. **Motion to allow the Farmington Downtown Association to decorate the Courthouse tree with holiday lights: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
5. **Opioid Settlement Committee – Bylaws/Update –** The Opioid Settlement Committee revised the Committee Members section of the Bylaws to include up to five members of the public that have experience in providing recovery service or in opioid recovery in Franklin County, one member will be a Franklin County Commissioner or his designee, the Franklin County Sheriff or his designee. The Committee also requested that Susan Pratt be hired as the Opioid Settlement Grant Manager. Pay for her position will be compensated through the Opioid Settlement Fund. **Motion to accept the revised Bylaws and hire Susan Pratt as the Opioid Settlement Grant Manager, compensation will begin October 27, 2025, at the same rate of pay she receives as the ARPA Grant Manager and Commissioner Skolfield sit on the Committee while Commissioner Saviello takes a leave of absence: Tom Saviello/Jeff Gilbert (5/0).**
6. **Greater Franklin Economic and Development – MOU –** The County Administrator met with Charlie Woodworth and reviewed the current MOU with Great Franklin Economic and Development to increase the pay from \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year for the administrative costs for processing of applications received by the TIF Coordinator. **Motion to authorize the County Administrator to sign the MOU on behalf of Franklin County: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
7. **Center for Ecology-Based Economy – Update from Tamra Benson –** Tamra Benson the Community Resilience Director for the Center for Ecology-Based Economy approached the commissioners back in July to see if any of the Unorganized Territories wanted to enroll in the Community Resilience Partnership, which is a Statewide program that provides communities to apply for 1 of the 96 resilience projects. The CEB received the Service Provider Grant that will allow Madrid, Salem and Freeman Township to enroll in the partnership and apply for the grant. The application for grant will be due in May 2, 2026. Self Assessments will need to be filled out for each Township.
8. **UT Budget –** The County administrator has presented the UT Budget for FY2026-2027 Budget. Proposals were sent to the Towns requesting their proposals along with their justifications. This information will be provided to the State when they review the budget. The overall budget has decreased primarily due to not building any bridges this year. Amy indicated that this is a slight increase due to having to build back up the Reserve Account. There were increases in waste disposal, fire, and ambulance services. We have also added funds into the cemetery line due to taking on cemeteries that were not previously budgeted for as community members were providing the services at no cost but have aged out or are not able to perform the services anymore. \$400,000 has been set aside to the roads and bridges account in case of a washout or an unexpected event occurs. Commissioner Fowler suggested adding an additional \$100,000 to the budget to invest in the Byron Road. This was the amount State claimed would need to invest to bring this road up to standards, which is why the State put a fiscal note on it when the County asked Legislature to have the State take over maintenance of the #6 Road, so-called, Byron Road, in Township #6, the road

leading from Weld to Byron. The UT Budget needs to be submitted to the State by November 7th. A Public Hearing needs to take place between November 7th and December 12th. The final UT Budget needs to be submitted to the State on or before December 12th.

Motion to increase the Summer Roads line of the budget by \$100,000 for the purpose of improving the Byron Road: Fen Fowler/Tom Saviello (3/2) Bob Carlton and Jeff Gilbert opposed. The County Administrator indicated another area of concern. Under the reserves line historically the County put away \$5,000 for the communications maintenance and towers. This past summer an outage occurred in the northern part of the UT. The Sugarloaf Tower failed again. Our space is rented, however, it is an integral part of our communication system with the northern part of the county. A study is needed on the equipment and infrastructure that we have, to make sure it is compatible with the other town's equipment. This line may change to hire a consultant to do this study. **Motion to add \$100,000 to the overall budget and submit the draft budget to the State: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield.**

Motion to Table until Fen comes back: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield.

Motion to take off the delay in the vote on the Budget: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).

Motion to hold the Public Hearing on November 18, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.: Tom Skolfield/Bob Carlton (5/0).

Motion to add \$100,000 to the overall budget and submit the draft budget to the State: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).

9. **Jail Collaboration Efforts** – Sheriff's from Franklin, Androscoggin and Oxford Counties along with the County Administrators met to discuss the possibility of a unified jail system. Each of these jail facilities has problems of being overcapacity and had to board their residents at other facilities. It was determined that a study that would consider all three counties in order to receive a professional opinion of what would be needed and/or required to have a regionalized approach to jail operations. Sheriff Nichols indicated that some benefits would include less staff, shared costs, in-house healthcare, unified MAT services, outside services, secured federal funding increase, all three counties move to having a 72-hour jail. Some of the challenges would include the initial costs, change of policies, unified computer system, and possible community resistance. **Motion to support the Sheriff's effort in a regional collaborative and a joint RFP for a consultant: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
10. **Courthouse – Electrical Upgrade** – Back in June the Commissioners voted to purchase the transformer and move forward with the electrical upgrade at the Courthouse. Adrenaline Electric was awarded the contract for this project. In order to move forward, electricity must be shut off to the building. This work will occur between Noontime on November 6th through November 10th, with November 11th being a holiday and can be used as a buffer. **Motion to close the Courthouse for the electrical upgrade from noon on November 6th through November 11th: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
Motion to pay the hourly employees that are affected by the closure of the Courthouse for the electrical upgrade: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).
11. **Franklin County Organizational Chart** – **Motion to accept the two organizational charts provided by the HR Director, include at the bottom "Per law Commissioners are responsible for the offices of all individuals": Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **HR Consulting** – Commissioners interviewed the three vendors on November 20th. The Board requested additional information from each company and asked that they provide a revised proposal before the next Commissioner's meeting on November 4, 2025. **Motion to make Commissioner Skolfield the point person with Commissioner Carlton being the backup in corresponding with the HR Consulting firm: Jeff Gilbert/Fen Fowler (4/1) Commissioner Saviello opposed. Motion to amend to only having Commissioner Skolfield serve as the point person reporting back to all Board members: Tom Saviello/Not Seconded.**
2. **Plog – Sandy River Stabilization Project – Update** – Commissioner Carlton and Commissioner Skolfield met with the Plog family and discussed the Sandy River bank stabilization project along with other possible options. **Motion to move forward with the project as outlined: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (4/1) Commissioner Fowler opposed. Motion to approve the TIF Application in the amount of \$50,000+/-.**

MISCELLANEOUS:

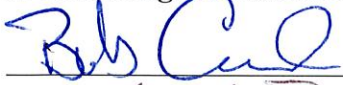
1. David Rackliffe requested the Commissioners review and initiate the process to move forward by making the Treasurer's position an appointed position verses an elected position and present it to the public to vote on. **Motion to authorize Commissioner Carlton or the County Administrator to reach out to the County Attorney to obtain the options available to move forward with Mr. Rackliffe's request to be included in a future agenda item: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (4/1) Commissioner Fowler opposed.**
2. Commissioner Gilbert indicated that the owner of the landfill in Jay, JayCo, Mike Carroll will give a presentation about his company to the Commissioners on November 18, 2025.

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

COSSUP Grant – Review at the Jail in the Library

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 2:00 p.m.: Jeff Gilbert/Bob Carlton (4/0).

A recording is available for this meeting.









July 8 1957

FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST: Ray L. B. Clerk CLERK