Minutes

PRESENT: Commissioner Carlton, Commissioner Fowler, Commissioner Gilbert, Commissioner Saviello, and Commissioner Skolfield
The meeting was held via: Zoom
Franklin County Commissioners' Meeting
July 7, 2026

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

AUDIENCE: Mt. Blue T.V, Jake Nichols, Nathan Hiltz, Scott Nichols, Steve Lowell, Brandon Gray, David Stein, Linda Dexter, Linda Joyal, Chris Joyal, Steve May, Nancy Perlson, Joe Roach, Robert Lightbody, Pam Prodan, Sue Pratt and Jamie Sullivan.
ZOOM: Donna Perry, Lee Ireland, Anthony Wu

RECOGNITION: None

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 Brandon Gray as the Facilities Supervisor to be set on Grade 5, Step 10, $29.18 per hour for a salary of $60,691.81: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (5/0).
2. **Minutes – Motion to accept the minutes as provided: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
3. **Treasurer's Report – Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
4. **Town of Byron - #6 Road** – Linda Joyal, Select Board Chair from the Town of Byron discussed her safety concerns with the #6 Road in Township #6 that the County is responsible for. During the flood of 2023 a portion of the road washed away and left behind a large hole. Given the condition of the roadway, timely action is recommended to reduce liability exposure and ensure the continued safety of the traveling public. Robert Lightbody, Road Supervisor, indicated that Fenwick Construction is scheduled to fix that portion of the road within the next two weeks. He discussed the scope of work that needs to be done. Commissioner Fowler indicated that he would like to see a five-year plan be developed with respect to the road. **Motion to make road safely passable to the traveling public with a prudent operator sometime this week if at all possible: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
5. **Dark Sky Initiative – Nancy Perlson –** Nancy Perlson along with other members of the community presented to the Commissioners an effort the committee has been working on to protect the dark sky. They are looking to create the Western Maine Dark Sky Reserve to incorporate the unorganized territories in northern Franklin and Oxford Counties and

connect with the Mount Megantic Dark Sky Researve across the border in Canada to form one of the largest designated dark sky regions in the world. They have been working with DarkSky International to designate a dark sky region in the county. They are looking to engage the County to be part of the process and to appoint a County Commissioner to serve as a representative on the planning/steering committee. **Motion for Commissioner Skolfield to serve on the committee: Bob Carlton/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
Motion to appoint Charles Woodworth, Greater Franklin Economic Development to the Dark Sky Initiative Committee: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).

6. **Jail – Refrigeration System** – The compressor in the large three door refrigerator is failing at the jail. They have repaired it several times and lost food due to it failing. The technician who has been repairing the unit has suggested/recommended purchasing a True Refrigeration Unit particularly for the 7-year labor/parts warranty. **Motion to purchase a True Refrigeration Unit from C. Caprara out of Winthrop, Maine in the amount of $8,045.00 to be paid out of the Jail Building Reserve Fund: Fen Fowler/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
7. **Major Rackliffe's Service Weapon** – Major Rackliffe is retiring at the end of July after 25 years of service. It has been a longstanding tradition for the Sheriff's Office to present the retiring officer with their service weapon. This will be at no cost to the County as the Sheriff's Office staff have donated money to replace his weapon. **Motion to allow the transfer of the service weapon to Major Rackliffe: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
8. **Enterprise Rentals – Agreement –** Recommendations were received from the Attorney with respect to the contact with Enterprise Rentals. The recommendations were forwarded to Enterprise for their review. Upon review most of the recommendations were able to be incorporated into the contract. It was suggested that MCCA – Risk Pool be included in the review of the final agreement. Anthony Wu indicated that Enterprise would be the conduit to provide the vehicle leveraging contacts, buying powers, provide recommendations for maintenance and would only drive the vehicles for the purposes of drop off, of which they would be held accountable should anything happen. He also indicated that he has worked with the MCCA – Risk Pool previously. A new copy of the contract was requested to provide to the County Attorney and to MCCA – Risk Pool. **Motion to approve the Enterprise Rental Contract pending approval of legal, MCCA – Risk Pool review and satisfaction of Administration: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
9. **UT Temporary Bridge – IRA Mountain Road Association Contract** – Jamie Martin, updated the Commissioners regarding the IRA Mountain bridge contract. He indicated that they have a draft and have obtained the services of an Attorney. They have also contacted CPM who has a bridge and would could do all the repairs. They are waiting for a quote from them. Commissioner Carlton indicated that the County would lease the temporary bridge for a one-year term of $25,000. **Motion to loan the bridge to the IRA Mountain Road Association for $25,000 per year: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
10. **EMA – EOC Reserve Fund** – In FY2025 there were discussions to move $10,000 into an EMA EOC Reserve Fund. This was discussed but never voted on. **Motion to transfer $10,000 into the EMA - EOC Reserve Fund from ARPA Interest: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
11. **Payment in Lieu of Taxes – Motion to accept the $22,203 from the Federal Government; Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

12. **Cultural Evaluation – Discussion** - Steve Francek was available to present the Cultural Evaluation and provide the recommendations he developed based on the information received during the evaluation. The recommendations were broken down into three separate categories: Immediate Priorities, recommendations to be done within 0 to 90 days, to include: communicate the assessment results to the staff, establish a cultural improvement committee to oversee process, improve communication, address trust and psychological safety concerns, establish an employee evaluation process. Midterm Priorities, to be completed within 3 to 6 months, to include: leadership alignment and development, standardize core employment processes, clarify roles, responsibilities and decision-making authority, increase employee engagement opportunities. Longterm Priorities, to be completed within 16 to 18 months, building sustainable communication framework, strength and organizational culture through leadership accountability, establishing ongoing cultural assessment practices, and strength and cross department collaboration. **Motion to appoint Commissioner Saviello to the Cultural Improvement Steering Team: Tom Skolfield/Bob Carlton (5/0).**
13. **Employee Appreciation BBQ** – Administration scheduled the employee appreciate barbeque for August 13, 2026, at the EOC and would like to extend the time the offices are closed for the event. **Motion to approve closing the offices from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. for the employee appreciation BBQ: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
14. **Franklin County Food Pantry Application Process** – The commissioners were provided with a draft application to review and revise. **Motion to approve and the deadline to apply be the second meeting September: Tom Skolfield/Tom Saviello (5/0)**
15. **Disbursement Policy – Motion to Sign the Disbursement Policy: Fen Fowler/Tom Saviello (5/0).**
16. **May 2026 Reconciliation Report – Sign Off – Motion to sign the Reconciliation Report: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **CAD Administrator (COPS Office Technology Grant) – Sheriff's Office Follow-up –** At the prior Commissioner's meeting, the Commissioners requested Sergeant Close look into the possibility of this grant supporting a CAD Administrator. Sergeant Close researched this matter and reported to the Commissioners that the grant would not pay for personnel, it only covers equipment.

   A discussion was held regarding the need for a countywide CAD Administrator, recognizing that the CAD services provided by the County's IT Department benefit both Franklin County and the participating municipalities. Sergeant Close recommended establishing a committee to be formed and to come back to the Commissioners with a recommendation. During the discussion, it was noted that the County's IT Department is providing CAD-related technical support to numerous municipalities in addition to supporting County operations. Sergeant Close expressed concern that the current level of support is not sustainable and is placing an increasing workload on County IT staff, creating the risk of staff burnout. Sergeant Close will provide names of potential committee members to the Commissioners. **Motion for Sergeant Close to take the lead in forming a small committee to analyze this: Tom Saviello/Jeff Gilbert (5/0).**

MISCELLANEOUS:

1. **Technology Grant** – The Sheriff's Office requested permission to apply for the Technology Grant, which is specifically written for radio communications. This grant must be submitted by law enforcement. Sergeant Close recommended putting together another committee for the purpose of collaborating with EMA, law enforcement, Fire, EMS and Communications to submit the application. Committee consisting of EMA, 2 representatives from the fire department, and law enforcement. **Motion to form committee, limiting the committee members to 6 to be provided by Sergeant Close, et al, to Sue Pratt for approval: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
2. Based on the Commissioner's goals, it was discussed that the Commissioner's would hold four evening meetings to be held in different locations. It was suggested to hold meetings in Rangeley, Carrabassett Valley, Chesterville and Jay.
3. Sue provided the Commissioners with a summary of the Board's discussion regarding its goals and priorities.
4. Commissioner Saviello discussed forming an Abatement Boards of Appeals Committee. He indicated that Paul Binnett, the Town of Wilton' Assessor has agreed to be on the committee.
5. Commissioner Saviello requested the matter of the Treasurer being appointed verses elected be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
6. Commissioner Fowler requested a discussion regarding a five-year plan for the #6 Road to be on the agenda for the next meeting.

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

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 12:43: Tom Skolfield/Bob Carlton (5/0).

A recording is available for this meeting.

Bob Carlton

Thomas H. Skolfield

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FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST: Susan Pratt, CLERK