

Minutes

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

The meeting was held via: Zoom

Franklin County Commissioners' Meeting

August 18, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Carlton at 6:00 p.m.

AUDIENCE: Mt. Blue T.V, Joe Roach, Ruthie Gusler, Sue Ann Cochran, Tammie Tripp, Sarah Caton, Steve Lowell, Shelly Lowell, Austin Couture, Alan Elmes, Rex Schweighofer, Ryan Close, Sue Pratt and Jamie Sullivan.

ZOOM: Donna Perry

RECOGNITION: The Commissioners recognized Ruthie Gusler of Phillips for the outstanding achievement of being crowned Miss Maine 2026. The Commissioners presented a Proclamation of Achievement recognizing Ruthie's dedication, perseverance, leadership, and commitment to serving others.

The proclamation highlighted Ruthie's strong ties to her community, her upcoming attendance at the University of Maine at Farmington, and her advocacy through her platform, Wonder Kids – Stance Against Childhood Abuse, which supports survivors, raises awareness, and encourages healing.

The Commissioners congratulated Ruthie on this remarkable accomplishment and expressed their pride in having her represent Phillips, Franklin County, and the State of Maine as she advances to the Miss America stage. The Commissioners wished Ruthie continued success and presented the proclamation in recognition of her achievements and positive representation of Franklin County.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Thank you for coming to Rangeley

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 Stephen Lancaster for the Maintenance position in the Facilities Department: Fen Fowler/Tom Skolfield (5/0).

2. **Minutes – Motion to accept the minutes as provided: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (4/0) Commissioner Fowler abstained.**
3. **Treasurer's Report – Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
4. **Sue Ann Cochran – Emergency Watershed Protection Program** – Sue Ann Cochran of Madrid, whose home is located along the Sandy River, is seeking sponsorship from Franklin County to apply for assistance through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection Program. Her property sustained significant erosion and damage as a result of the 2023 flooding. County sponsorship is required for the project to be eligible for consideration under the program. If approved, TIF funds would be proposed for use toward the County's portion of the project. A right of first refusal was also discussed. **Motion to sponsor the project: Tom Saviello/Fen Fowler (5/0).**
5. **District Attorney's Office – MOU – District 3 Regional Administrator Services – Discussion** – The Commissioners reviewed a proposed Memorandum of Understanding between Franklin, Androscoggin, and Oxford Counties provided by District Attorney Neil, McLean, to establish a District 3 Regional Administrator position serving all three District Attorney's Offices. Franklin County would serve as the employer of record, with the Administrator primarily based in Franklin County and providing weekly service to each county. The counties would share salary-related costs, with Franklin County responsible for 50% and Androscoggin and Oxford Counties each responsible for 25%. The Commissioners also reviewed the proposed job description for the District 3 Regional Administrator. Sarah Caton is the proposed Administrator for the position. Sarah brings 21 years of experience, along with significant institutional knowledge and continuity that would benefit the District Attorney's Offices across all three counties. In this role, she would work directly with the District Attorney to oversee and coordinate operations among the three county offices, including personnel supervision, budgeting and purchasing, grants, standardized policies and procedures, training, interagency coordination, and administrative support. **Motion to authorize the Chair to sign the MOU: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
6. **Sheriff's Office – Patrol Sergeant Job Description – Approval** – The Patrol Sergeant job description has been recreated and revised, as the Sheriff's Office and HR were unable to locate the most recently updated version. The Sheriff's Office is requesting the Commissioners' review and approval of the revised job description: **Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
7. **Sheriff's Office – Bureau of Highway Safety Grant** – The Sheriff's Office requested approval from the Commissioners to apply for the Bureau of Highway Safety (BHS) grant application totaling approximately \$67,000, with no local match required. The funding opportunities include Crash Reconstructionist training and equipment, Speed Enforcement Details, Impaired Driving Details, and two new speed radars. The funding is State-administered and supported by federal NHTSA funds. The Sheriff's Office also reported that a Grants Team has been established, supervised by Sergeant Austin Couture. The team consists of Deputy Maccione and Deputy Schweighofer. If awarded, the Sheriff's Office will return to the Commissioners with the specific grant award details and seek approval to accept the funding. **Motion to approve the Sheriff's Office submit an application for the Bureau of Highway Safety (BHS) grant: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

8. **Sheriff's Office – Sergeant Assessment Center** – The Sheriff's Office discussed changes to its Sergeant promotional and selection process. The department will be transitioning to an Assessment Center process, which provides a structured, multi-stage approach to evaluating candidates for promotion. As part of the process, the Sheriff's Office would like to include evaluators from outside the department to provide additional perspective, objectivity, and insight during the candidate evaluation process. **Motion to appoint Commissioner Carlton be part of the evaluation team assessment in the upcoming Sergeant evaluation: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**
9. **Snow Removal Contracts – Open Bids** – Franklin County went out to bid for snow removal for Freeman and Salem Township for a 3-year contract and for Madrid Township for a 3-year contract. One bid was received for Freeman and Salem Township, Fenwick Construction, LLC bid \$435,195.05 per year for the 3-years. **Motion to award the Freeman and Salem Township Snow Contract to Fenwick Construction, LLC in the amount of \$435,195.05 each year for three years: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).**

One bid was received for Madrid Township, Chase Logging & Excavation bid \$140,000 per year for the 3-years. **Motion to award the Madrid Township Snow Contract to Chase Logging & Excavation in the amount of \$140,000 each year for three years: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield/Terry (5/0).**

OLD BUSINESS: None

MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Commissioner Saviello reported that the Land Use Planning Commission (LUPC) is in the process of revising its Comprehensive Land Use Plan and that a public hearing will be held regarding the proposed revisions. He indicated that the Commissioners should provide input on the matter. Commissioner Saviello will work with Krista West of the Maine Forest Products Council to draft a letter outlining the Board's position and will present the letter to the Commissioners for review and approval. He noted that he did not have all of the details, however, the Commissioners may need to respond to the proposed revisions in the near future.
2. Commissioner Fowler indicated that he would be attending the Seniors Plus Ribbon cutting ceremony for their Food Distribution Center. Franklin County awarded them ARPA funds to support this project.
3. Commissioner Skolfield requested an update on the County's pending and ongoing legal matters.
4. Commissioner Gilbert requested that IIR Department provide the Commissioners with a monthly update on HR-related matters, including the status of recruitment and hiring efforts, employee safety matters, and other relevant personnel updates.
5. Commissioner Saviello indicated that he anticipates the Cultural Review Committee will develop recommendations for improving communication and ensuring that both the Commissioners and County staff are kept informed of relevant matters and developments.
6. Commissioner Fowler expressed his appreciation for the monthly reports submitted by Department Heads and included in the Commissioners' meeting packets, noting that the reports provide helpful updates on departmental activities and operations.

7. Commissioner Saviello expressed his interest in adding an open public comment section to the Commissioners' meetings. He explained that the purpose would be to provide members of the public with an opportunity to bring matters to the Commissioners' attention. The Commissioners would listen to the comments without engaging in discussion at that time. When appropriate, matters raised could be referred to the appropriate department or agency for assistance or considered for placement on a future meeting agenda.

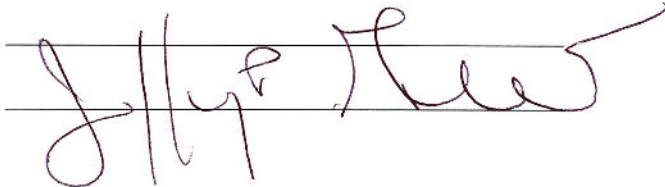
WARRANTS: None

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn at 7:29 p.m.: Tom Saviello/Tom Skolfield (5/0).

A recording is available for this meeting.







FRANKLIN COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST: , CLERK