



COMMISSIONER'S MINUTES

Wednesday, July 2, 2025

3:00pm

SOMERSET COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS

Present: Commissioners: Robert Sezak, John Alsop, Cyp Johnson and Scott Seekins were present. Commissioner Joel Stetkis was absent.

Staff: Leanne Dickey, Sheriff Lancaster, Tanya Belanger, Patrick Dolan and David Spencer were present.

Public: Stacey Austin, Denise Ducharme and Jake Freudberg with the Morning Sentinel.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Pledge was observed.

B. CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 3:00pm.

C. MINUTES:

Resolution 25-119: To Accept the Minutes of June 18, 2025.

Motion: Commissioner Seekins motioned to Accept the Minutes of June 18, 2025.

Second: Commissioner Johnson

Vote: Motion Carries 3-0-1 (Alsop abstained)

D. PUBLIC COMMENT: (To allow members of the public to comment or reserve time to speak on an upcoming agenda item.) None.

WORKSHOP:

- 1. Discuss proposal from Kennebec Behavioral Health (KBH) for use of \$6,250 in Opioid Settlement Funds.** Stacey Austin, the Recovery Coach Coordinator for Somerset County for KBH discussed their work and proposal with the Commissioners. KBH has opened a recovery center on 34 High Street in Skowhegan. In May there were 75 individuals served at the Center, most of which received some level of treatment. KBH is seeking funds to help people in recovery get a head start on connecting to resources by purchasing cell phones, food cards and gas cards.

Commissioner Alsop asked if the County had sufficient funds. Finance Director Patrick Dolan says the majority of Opioid Settlement Funds are used for Medically Assisted Treatment for substance abuse, but there is more than enough to consider the request from KBH.

- 2. Continue discussion of Payment Options for Municipal Tax Payment to County:** Finance Director Dolan provided figures on the potential loss of interest income if the

County would accept two payments. His recommendation would be that if a Town chooses to pay in two installments, that Town would be charged an additional fee equal to the amount of interest lost. Commissioner Sezak asked if the law allows for the additional fee. Commissioner Alsop said this is conditional upon the County's discretion. Commissioner Seekins asked if smaller towns would be put at a disadvantage. Patrick said not with the option of paying a fee to split payments.

Commissioner Alsop asked about the purpose of two payments. Patrick said it's based on cash flow concerns with the individual Towns. Madison Town Manager Denise Ducharme spoke to the issue of cash flow for her Town and the concern about having to take a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN). She felt that the fee of 4% would be reasonable for the Town of Madison.

3. Discuss Commissioner Resolution pursuant to LD1971: The legislation, which restricts certain involvement of Maine Law Enforcement with Federal Immigration activities, passed narrowly by the Maine Legislature and is before the Governor. The Commissioners Resolution asks the Governor to veto LD1971. Commissioner Alsop spoke in opposition of the Commissioners Resolution even though he believes LD1971 is a poorly constructed bill. He reiterated his belief that the Commissioners should not be involved in legislation unless it has a direct financial impact on the County.

Commissioners Seekins, Sezak and Johnson spoke in favor of the Resolution. Commissioner Seekins said the County should support the Sheriff as the chief law enforcement official. Commissioner Alsop said the legislation as passed is not unconstitutional. Commissioner Sezak said the most recent media reports show that Governor Mills will not take action until the legislature reconvenes in January. Based on that and the fact that Commissioner Stetkis was absent, he recommends tabling the matter.

E. PUBLIC HEARING: None

G. NEW AGENDA ITEMS: (Commissioners Only): None

H. ADMINISTRATOR REPORT: Administrator Curtis submitted his report in writing prior to leaving on vacation.

I. FINANCE & OTHER REPORTING: Finance Director Dolan said the County is entering the new fiscal year with 6 open positions county-wide, which is better than previous years.

Register of Deeds Tanya Belanger provided the Commissioners with updates on legislation that has passed that impacts Deeds. Most notably the Appropriations Committee has amended LD1287 to reduce the 10% retained by the County to 9.2%. Based on that change the County could lose up to \$13,000 based on transfer tax transactions.

Changes to transfers in excess of \$1,000,000 would net the Deeds office an additional \$11,000. In addition, legislative changes to fee structures should net approximately \$90,000 to the County.

Unorganized Territory Coordinator David Spencer updated the Commissioners on Maine Revenue's revaluation of the properties in all the Unorganized Territories. The increases in valuation are substantial, but the true impact to the taxpayer will not be known until Maine Revenue establishes the tax rate for the UT's.

The Department of Environmental Protection has done a routine inspection of the Rockwood Transfer Station which has had a burn pile for many years. Some of the materials and ash will need to be removed and transported out of State, and that process will come with a cost.

Sheriff Lancaster reported some damage to County vehicles due to a deer crash and an incident trying to end a high-speed pursuit. The Sheriff's Office will be helping the Town of Cambridge to issue firearms permits.

J. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

K. NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 25-120: To authorize a Commissioner Resolution pursuant to LD1971.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson motioned to table resolution 25-120 to the next meeting.

Second: Commissioner Alsop

Vote: Motion Carries 4-0

Resolution 25-121: To establish payment options and interest charged on unpaid County taxes for FY2026.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson motioned to table Resolution 25-121 to the next meeting with the intent that the County Administrator and Finance Director will create a contract for the Towns to consider.

Second: Commissioner Alsop

Vote: Motion Carries 4-0

Resolution 25-122: To award \$6,250 in Opioid Settlement Funds to Kennebec Behavioral Health for Member Support Funding.

Motion: Commissioner Alsop motioned to award \$6,250 in Opioid Settlement Funds to Kennebec Behavioral Health for Member Support Funding.

Second: Commissioner Seekins

Vote: Motion Carries 4-0

Resolution 25-123: To approve paying the following Matching Grant Award based on completion of the project: Friends of the LC Bates Museum Marketing Project: Award \$2,066

Motion: Commissioner Seekins motioned to approve paying \$2,066 from Community Benefit funds to the Friends of the LC Bates Museum.

Second: Commissioner Alsop

Vote: Motion Carries 4-0

Resolution 25-124: To authorize the paying of Commissioners Mileage for the 4th Quarter of FY2025.

Motion: Commissioner Johnson motioned to authorize the paying of Commissioners Mileage for the 4th Quarter of FY2025.

Second: Commissioner Alsop

Vote: Motion Carries 4-0

L. CAPITAL RESERVE EXPENDITURES: None

M. UNORGANIZED TERRITORY: None

N. WARRANTS:

Resolution 25-125: To approve the Treasurer's Warrant for General Fund, SCJ, Unorganized Territories, TIF Tax Revenue and TIF Comm. Benefit:

General Fund:	FY25: \$ 59,908.79
	FY25: \$330,148.70
	FY26: \$102,565.29

Jail:	FY25: \$120,218.03
	FY25: \$ 54,472.96
	FY26: \$ 59,958.67

U/T:	FY25: \$ 60,324.64
	FY25: \$146,127.04
	FY26: \$ 34,552.84

TIF Tax Revenue:	FY26: \$ 20,000.00
-------------------------	---------------------------

TIF Comm. Benefit:	FY25: \$ 2,066.00
---------------------------	--------------------------

Total:	FY25: \$773,266.16
	FY26: <u>\$217,076.80</u>

Total	FY25 & FY26: \$990,342.96
--------------	--------------------------------------

Motion: Commissioner Seekins motioned to approve the Treasurer's Warrant for the General Fund, SCJ, Unorganized Territories, TIF Tax Revenue and TIF Community Benefit in the amounts shown in the resolution.

Second: Commissioner Alsop

Vote: Motion carries 4-0

O. MISCELLANEOUS DISCUSSION ITEMS: (Commissioners Only): None

P. RECESS TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS: Warrant documents and other items were signed.

Q. ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 3:55pm.